

SUBHAS BOSE

AND HIS IDEAS

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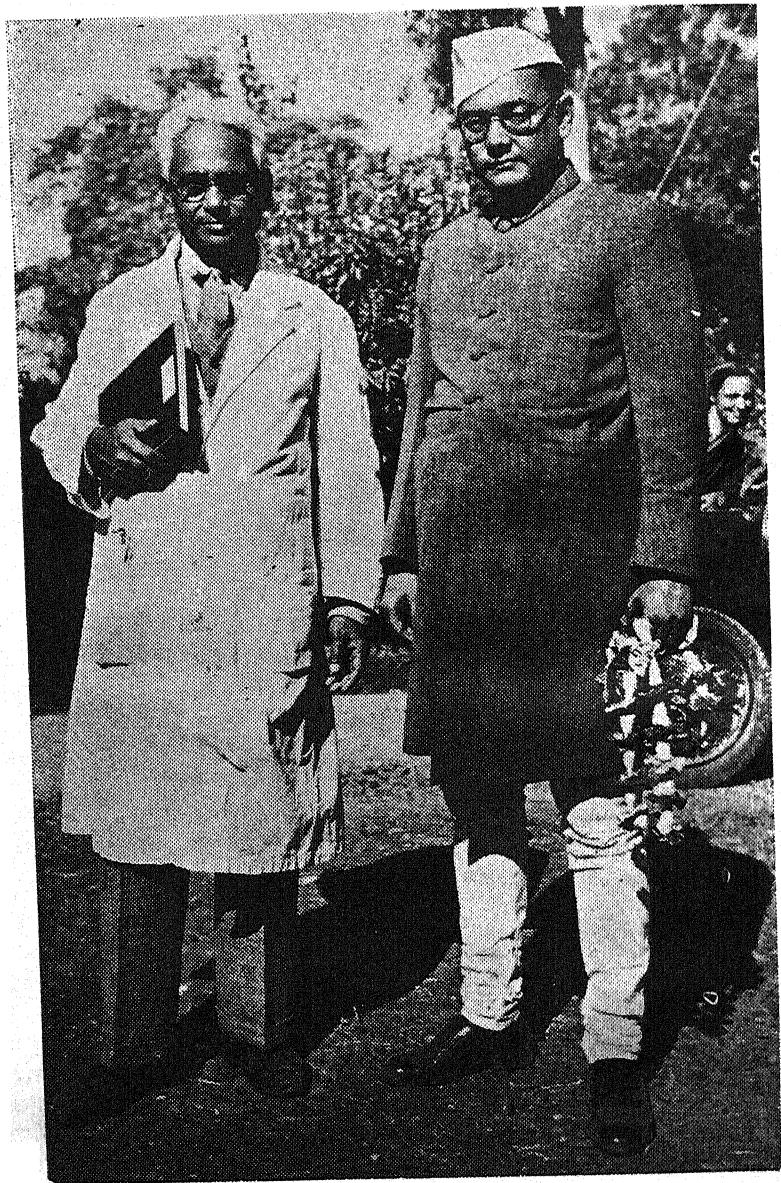
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Here is the Mystery Man who dodged the Japanese Fascists as well as the British Imperialists, and played with fire, staking his all, for the freedom of his Motherland.



Books and Bouquets—Subhas Bose,
with his host Dr. Dharam-Vir at Lahore,
knowledge and honour play their part in
“India’s struggle for Freedom.”

“Subhasbabu is an ex-Rashtrapati of the Congress, twice elected in succession. He has a record of great sacrifice to his credit. He is a leader born.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Preface

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE has been a constant victim of misrepresentation at the hands of friends and foes alike. There is very little literature available on Bose, and that little is very far from being authentic. This book may be looked upon as the first attempt to paint a full-length picture of the hero and to make an all-round comprehensive study of his views. This book is the latest and the freshest approach to the great personage and his great principles.

Bose was neither a Fascist nor a Socialist or a Communist. He has always been a Nationalist to the backbone, and he made most daring experiments in the laboratory of nationalism.

Subhas Bose has been ranked as the rival of Mahatma Gandhi. While Gandhi is the sun of nationalism round which all the planets of the Indian National Congress revolve, Bose is a star that pursues an orbit of its own.

This book brings out not only the personality and philosophy of Bose, but also illuminates the ideological gulf that separated him from the Mahatma.

It is worth while to make an unprejudiced study of Subhas Chandra Bose and his political philosophy. As the world has come jagged and jaded out of the deadliest war in history, it is time to make a scientific approach to this most dynamic personality of India who risked his all on the lofty altar of national independence, even though his efforts were not crowned with success. Battling helplessly against heavy odds, hoping against hope, Bose has acquired the tragic grandeur of a Shakespearean dramatic personality.

This book is intended to bring out the great tragic beauty of the great tragic figure. "To-day I must die," said Bose before his mysterious disappearance, "that India may live and win freedom and glory."

J. S. B.

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SUBHAS BOSE AND HIS IDEAS

FIRST PART Biography of Bose

CHAPTER I REBELS AND PATRIOTS

“Your leaders have triumphed. They have come from prison to the Viceroy’s palace. The fact of history has been established that we, Englishmen, make peace ultimately with rebels,” so said a titled and high-placed Englishman, to the Tribune representative during the Simla Conference.

Who is a rebel? And who is a patriot? And who can be a patriot without being a rebel? Rebellion and patriotism are the two sides of one and the same political coin. The spirit of revolt runs in the very veins of a patriot. Every rebel may not be a nationalist, but every nationalist is definitely a rebel. Everywhere and everywhen, through ail times, climes and countries, the greatest publicists have been the greatest revolutionaries.

Who can serve the masses and not displease the masters? Who will tread upon heads of the masses? Who can run with the political hounds and not hunt the tempting hare? And he who decides to defend the down-trodden hare, how can he dine with the dogs? The interests of the rulers and

the ruled have been poles apart ever since Adam and Eve fell victim to the tyranny of God, and were pushed out of the Garden of Eden. Although the brave British people have laid down their lives "for the King and the Country," the British history is replete with brilliant sons of Britain who fought *against* the King and for the Country. They fought against the King, because they realised that the King is not the Country.

I

Where would have been England to-day if Saxons did not rebel against Cæsar? Fifty years before the birth of Lord Christ, the Romans were "masters of all the rest of the known world"—a claim which the British have never been able to make, and will never be. Even though the sun never sets on the British Empire, yet the British have never been "masters of all the rest of the known world." But the brave, bold, death-defying Britons, ill-trained and ill-equipped, had patriotism enough to rebel even against the might of Julius Cæsar.

"I dare say," writes Charles Dickens, "he found tough Britons—of whom, I dare say, he made the same complaint as Napoleon Bonaparte the great general did, eighteen hundred years afterwards, when he said they were such unreasonable fellows that they never know when they were beaten. They never did know, I believe, and never will."

What could the Britons do, if not rebel under the Romans? How could the patriots compromise their sense of duty? What could Caradoc do, if not give battle to the Romans among the mountains of North Wales? "This day," said he to his soldiers "decides the fate of Britain! Your liberty or your eternal slavery dates from this hour." Was Caradoc a rebel or a patriot? If Caradoc was a patriot, why Subbas Chandra Bose

a rebel? Bosc failed, but so did Caradoc. The British patriots rushed upon the Romans, but the strong Roman swords were too much for the weaker British weapons in close conflict. The Britons lost the day. The wife and daughter of the brave Caradoc were taken prisoners. His brothers delivered themselves up. He himself was betrayed into the hands of the Romans by his false and base step-mother. And they carried him and all his family in triumph to Rome.

And yet the Britons would not yield! They rose again and again. They died by thousands, sword in hand. They rose on every possible occasion. The Roman generals burned the Britons in their own huts by their own fires. And yet the people rebelled and went on rebelling, because the patriots always rebel against tyranny, and go on rebelling. Then there rose Boadicea, a British queen, the widow of the King of the Norfolk and Suffolk people. Like the Rani of Jhansi, she resisted the Romans sword in hand. Boadicea was scourged by a Roman officer. Her two daughters were shamefully insulted in her presence. Her husband's relations were made slaves. To avenge this injury, the Britons rose, with all their might and rage. They laid the Roman possessions waste. They forced the Romans out of London, then a poor little town. They hanged, burnt, crucified and slew by the sword, seventy thousand Romans in a few days. The Britons strengthened their army. Boadicea drove among the troops in the war chariot. Her fair hair streamed in the wind. Her injured daughters lay at her feet. She cried to Britons for vengeance on their oppressors, the licentious Romans. The Britons fought to the last. But they were vanquished with great slaughter. And the unhappy queen took poison.

Still the spirit of the Britons was not broken. Why do the Britons expect the spirit of Indians to be broken after the

“Quit India” struggle of 1942, which was only a scratch as compared with death and destruction caused in the Anglo-Roman wars?

“When Suetonius left the country,” writes Charles Dickens, “they fell upon his troops and retook the Island of Anglesey. Agricola came, fifteen or twenty years afterwards, and retook it once more, and devoted seven years to subduing the country, especially that part of it which is now called Scotland, but its people, the Caledonians, resisted him at every inch of ground. They fought the bloodiest battle with him; they killed their very wives and children, to prevent his making prisoners of them; they fell fighting in such great numbers that certain hills in Scotland are yet supposed to be vast heaps of stones piled up above their graves. Hadrian came, thirty years afterwards and still they resisted him. Severus came, nearly a hundred years afterwards, and they worried his great army like dogs, and rejoiced to see them die, by thousands, in the bogs and swamps. Carcalla, the son and successor of Severus, did the most to conquer them, for a time; but not by the force of arms. He knew how little that would do. He yielded up a quantity of land to the Caledonians, and gave the Britons the same privileges as the Romans possessed. There was peace, after this, for seventy years.”

Must these golden lessons from the British history be lost upon our British masters? Should they not apply them to the current political affairs of India? Should not the British give Indian rebels the same privileges which the Romans gave to the British rebels? And would not there be peace in India for seventy years? Rebellion can be crushed, but can patriotism be suppressed? And who can quench the flame of nationalism? How can the oppressor win over the oppressed except by mutual understanding?

And while there is oppression in the world, will the rebels ever cease to be ?

II.

Could there be a Stephen Langton without a King John ? And who was Stephen Langton if not as good a rebel as Mahatma Gandhi against the British Empire? And yet was not Stephen Langton the greatest patriot that England has ever produced ? And can there be a greater patriot than Mahatma Gandhi ? The greatest patriots are always the greatest rebels. What would have happened if Stephen Langton had refused to rebel against the authority of King John ? Where would have been the Magna Charta without Stephen Langton ? And where would have been England without Magna Charta ? The greatest feats of patriotism cannot be accomplished without rebellion, without suffering, without sacrifice.

“Of all men in the world,” Says Charles Dickens, “Stephen Langton seemed raised up by Heaven to oppose and subdue him (King John). When he ruthlessly burned and destroyed the property of his own subjects, because their lords, the barons, would not serve him abroad, Stephen Langton fearlessly reprovved and threatened him. When he swore to restore the laws of King Edward, or the laws of King Henry the First, Stephen Langton knew his falsehood, and pursued him through all his evasions. When the Barons met at the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury, to consider their wrongs and the king’s oppressions, Stephen Langton roused them by his fervid words to demand a solemn charter of rights and liberties from their perjured master, and to swear, one by one on the high altar, that they would have it, or would wage war against him to the death. When the king hid himself in London from the barons, and was at last obliged to receive them, they told him roundly that they

would not believe him unless Stephen Langton became a surety that he would keep his word. When he took the cross to invest himself with some interest, and belonged to something that was received with favour, Stephen Langton was still immovable. When he appealed to the Pope, and the Pope wrote to Stephen Langton in behalf of his new favourite, Stephen Langton was deaf, even to the Pope himself, and saw before him nothing but the welfare of England and the crimes of the English King."

Such is the background of the Magna Charta, the corner-stone of political freedom in Britain. And it was not achieved by worshipping the King and the Country. It was accomplished by a rebel, fired with patriotism, who arranged the country against the king.

III.

And who was Lord Cromwell? Shall we class him as a rebel or a patriot for executing Charles the First? He was a people's man and did everything for the good of the people. He pencilled out the line of demarcation between the King and the Country with his sword. Charles II believed that he was dying "for the laws and liberties of the land." And in a way, no doubt, he was, although negatively! Notwithstanding all interventions, the warrant for the execution was signed. There is a characteristically English story. As Oliver Cromwell went to the table with the pen in his hand to put his signature to it, he drew his pen across the face of the Commissioner, who was standing near, and marked it with ink. That Commissioner had not signed his own name yet. The story adds that when he came to do it, he marked Cromwell's face with ink in the same way. Thus the patriots were prepared to stain their honour as royal rebels in the public cause. The King

slept well, untroubled by the knowledge that it was his last night on earth. "I have a good cause," said Charles, standing before the scaffold, "and a gracious God on my side." The Bishop told him humorously that he had but one stage more to travel in this weary world. Though it was a turbulent and troublesome stage, it was a short one. And it would carry him a great way: all the way from earth to heaven.

"With all my sorrow for him," writes Charles Dickens, "I cannot agree with him that he died 'the martyr of the people,' for the people had been martyrs to him, and to his ideas of a king's rights long before. Indeed, I am afraid that he was but a bad judge of martyrs; for he had called that infamous Duke of Buckingham, 'the Martyr to his Sovereign.'"

IV.

Who was George Washington if not a rebel? And where would have been America to-day without the rebellion of this glorious patriot against the rooted British authority? And in fact where would have been Britain to-day without the existence of a strong independent America which has been a shoulder of strength to Britain against Germany in the two World Wars? Would an undeveloped America have done anything for Britain? And would a Free India not have proved even a greater pillow of strength to Britain in the Second World War than it actually did, instead of locking up the energies of the masses in a political deadlock?

These are not mere conjectures but historical facts, because nothing repeats itself so unfailingly as history under diverse forms and figures, climes and conditions. The freedom of India is a business proposition for the welfare of Britain if only the British statesmen would put two and two together in a matter-of-fact spirit.

Where would have been Russia to-day without the red rebels? Who was Lenin if not a rebel to the Czarist Government? Kaiser knocked out Czar with a single blow, but all the might of Hitlerite Germany spent itself to exhaustion on the rocks of Russian patriotism. Would Stalin have lived a day were he not a rebel?

Indian history overflows with rebels in the country's cause. If our chronicles are imperfect, it does not mean that they are unpatriotic. Every tyrant king in India has been challenged by a mass leader. Rana Partap? Shivaji? Ranjit Singh? Guru Gobind Singh? These were illustrious rebels. And let us not forget the Indian Mutiny of 1857. It was a glorious rebellion and nobody can forget the heroic deeds of the Rani of Jhansi. And what were Bhagat Singh and his band if not rebels in modern history? And let us not forget our social and religious rebes. Guru Nanak was a rebel. So was Kabir. Emperor Aurangzebe was also an experimenter in Indian unity, according to the best of his convictions. What does it matter if the experiment failed? Failure is the badge of the patriots.

And what have been the Indian nationalists doing if not rebelling against the British authority? And what else could they honestly do if not rebel? Could Mahatma Gandhi nestle among the books when Indians were colour-barred in Africa? And could Motilal Nehru enjoy in his palace when the masses were down-trodden? What other way except rebellion was open to C. R. Dass? Subhas Chandra Bose? Maulana Abul Kalam Azad? Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru? The price of patriotism has made rebellion a very cheap bargain.

V

Let us move back the hands of clock to the year of grace, nineteen hundred and twenty-one. The closing weeks in India were full of feverish activity for the British Government.

During the whole year there had been defiance of law and authority. This reached its climax when Ali Brothers were arrested. They had rebelled. They were found tampering with the loyalty of the Indian soldiers. But they were patriots. And protest rang throughout the country. In imprisoning Maulana Mohammad Ali, the Government had imprisoned the Khilafat Movement. "Let us imitate," said Mahatma Gandhi, "the courage, the faith, the fearlessness, the truthfulness, and the vigilant incessant activity of the Ali Brothers." This was a unique call to colours. The Government of India began to clarify its position.

"The Governor of Bombay," said Gandhi, "evidently does not know that the National Congress began to tamper with the loyalty of the sepoys in September last year, that the Central Khilafat Committee began it earlier, and that I began it still earlier, for I must be permitted to take the *credit* or *odium* of suggesting that India had a right openly to tell the sepoys and everyone who served the Government in any capacity whatsoever that he participated in the wrongs done by the Government."

Credit or odium? Mahatma Gandhi should rather have said credit and odium. Our rebels and patriots are bosom bed-fellows. "Sedition", said Gandhi, "has become the creed of the Congress." Every non-co-operator was pledged to preach disaffection towards the British Government. Soon there followed a vigorous strongly-worded manifesto by the Congress leaders:—

"We, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the property of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government whether in the civil or the military department. We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion that it is contrary

to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more especially as a soldier, under a system of government which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as for instance at the time of the Rowlatt Act Agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks and other nations, who have done no harm to India. We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood."

Call it a rebellion or an act of highest patriotism ?

No wonder the Prince of Wales received an icy welcome. The Congress decided to boycott all functions connected therewith. There was no insult intended to the Prince as a man, but there was a resolute decision to boycott the visit, as it was obviously being exploited for advertising the "benign" British rule in India. There was no meaning in spending millions of rupees on receiving the Prince of Wales. What was the fun of arranging a luxurious pleasure trip when the country was in a chronic grip of starvation ? It was an outrage and a crime. The Congress proclaimed an all-out boycott. Volunteers began to be enrolled in every province. The Government answered by declaring the organization illegal. Enlisting of volunteers was pronounced an offence. The challenge was taken up everywhere.

C. R. Das made a clarion call to his countrymen, "I feel the handcuffs on my wrists," he said, "and the weight of iron on my body. It is the agony of bondage. The whole of India is a vast prison. The work of the Congress must be carried on. What matters it whether I am taken or left ? What matters it whether I am dead or alive ?"

The whole country was electrified. Allahabad and Calcutta presented a sepulchral appearance. Wherever the Prince went, only a handful of Government employees greeted him. An orgy of arrests followed everywhere. The highest in the land were sent to prison. Thousands of the rank and file proudly went behind the bars. Between December and January no less than thirty thousand people were locked up. They refused to defend themselves. Their ringing statements made a mockery of British justice.

The trial of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was allowed to drag on for three months. Then he was awarded a year's imprisonment. The Maulana regretted that he had been let off with such a light sentence. He made a magnificent statement before the court. It covered over thirty closely-typed foolscap sheets. Gandhiji hailed it as an eloquent thesis on nationalism. It was a rebellion deserving penal servitude for life. The statement constituted a very good political education. Twenty-five years have not staled the freshness of this utterance. President Azad proudly claims to belong to the long line of rebels from Jesus and Socrates downwards who suffered for adherence to truth.

“The iniquities of courts of law constitute an endless list, and history has not yet finished singing the elegy of such miscarriages of justice. In that list we observe a holy personage like Jesus, who was led to stand in his time before a foreign court and he was convicted even as the worst of criminals. We see also in the same list Socrates, who was sentenced to be poisoned for no other crime than that of being the most truthful person of his age. We meet also the name of that great Florentine martyr to truth, the inventor Galileo, who refused to belie his observations and researches merely because their avowal was a crime in the eyes of constituted

authority..... When I ponder on the great and significant history of the convicts' dock and find that the honour of standing in that place belongs to me today, my soul becomes steeped in thankfulness and praise of God."

Glorious rebels ! Magnificent patriots !

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was invited in 1928 to preside on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the Mahila Vidyapith Hall of Allahabad. He found from a reference to the report of the institution that it was started to give special instruction to women. It was laid down that while man was the bread-winner, woman's place was in the home and her ideal should be that of a devoted wife and nothing more. Her chief delight should be in skilfully rearing her children and serving her revered elders. "May I say," said Nehru, "that I do not agree with this ideal of women's life or education?" He does not want a woman to follow the profession of marriage only. The future of India cannot consist of dolls and playthings.

"Being a rebel by nature," said Nehru, "I am no lover of the platitudes of the by-gone age."

Nehru advised women to face the problem boldly and attack the roots of the evil. They must come out of the *purdah*. They should not lock themselves up in cages. They must not stunt their physique and intellect. They must attack evil customs. "No people, no group, no community, no country," he said, "has ever got rid of its disabilities by the generosity of the oppressor. India will not be free until we are strong enough to force our will on England and the women of India will not attain their full rights by the mere generosity of the men of India. They will have to fight for them and force their will on the menfolk before they can succeed. I hope therefore that this Vidyapith will be instrumental in sending

out, into the province and the country, women who are rebes against the unjust and tyrannical social customs of the day and who will fight all who oppose this progress, women who are as much soldiers of the country as the best men."

It is the realisation of the common bond of humanity that has given rise to the great youth movement of to-day. There is a despair and feeling of revolt in the minds of youth. Old men sit in their comfortable cabinets and banking houses. They hide their selfishness and greed under a cover of fine phrases. Their appeals for freedom are a mockery. "And the young," says Nehru, "believing in these fine phrases, went out by the millions to face death, and few returned." They were all young men with their lives stretching out before them and their hopes unfulfilled, And what did this awful sacrifice bring forth? A peace of violence and an aggravation of all the ills that the world was suffering from. "Is it any wonder," said Nehru, "that youths of the world rebelled and cast out their old-time leaders?"

That is the basis of the world movement to-day. It is a larger and wiser basis than that of national freedom. The narrow nationalism of the West lays the seeds of war. The youth of the world must probe deeper into the cause of present-day misery. They must study the economic and social conditions of the people. The changes of science have covered the track of centuries. The minds of men still lag behind and think in terms of dead past. Science has made the world international and independent.

"If mankind is foolish and errs," says Nehru, "facts do not adapt themselves to errors and the world of our imagination conflicts with the world of reality and is it any wonder that chaos and misery result?"

The young men should stand upon their own legs and not on wooden stilts provided by the elder generation. Patriotism and rebellion go hand in hand. If the youth want to be patriots, they must be rebels.

“The great men,” says Nehru, “who have come, have always been rebels against the existing order. Two thousand five hundred years ago, the Great Buddha proclaimed his gospel of social equality and fought against all privileges, priestly and otherwise. He was a champion of the people against all who sought to exploit them. Then came another rebel, Christ, and then the Prophet of Arabia, who did not hesitate to break and change almost everything he found. They were realists, who saw that the world had outgrown its ancient practices and customs and sought to bring it back to reality. Even so we have outgrown the creeds and rituals of yesterday and as realists we must not hesitate to discard them whenever they clash with reality. The *avatars* of today are great ideas which come to reform the world. And the idea of to-day is social equality. Let us listen to it and become its instruments to transform the world and make it a better place to live in.

“I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little by myself in spite of my ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working with the awakened youths of this country we can and will achieve freedom. For youth alone can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I admire them for having their war-cry a hymn to youth : *Grovienna*. And I wish you would also adopt their motto ‘Live dangerously.’ Let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, because adventure is a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world and security and stability to the millions who have it not.

“ You and I are Indians and to India we owe much, but we are human beings also and to humanity we also owe a debt. Let us be citizens of the Commonwealth or Empire of Youth. This is the only empire to which we owe allegiance, for that is the fore-runner of the future federation of the world.”

The conferences of youth are unlike the gatherings of the older folk. Young men and women must not fall into the ancient ruts and forget the spirit of adventure and dare-devilry. The call of youth is an imperative one, because the future rests in the hands of youth. They do not believe that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. They feel on their young shoulders the weight of national and international sorrow. With the energy and fine temper of youth they believe they have in them to remove this load of sorrow. Yes, the young rebels alone can lessen the weight of human misery. The old exhausted eyes look towards young strong hands for help and support. Something of permanent value emerges out of youthful deliberations.

“ But if you are not dissatisfied with existing conditions, if you have not felt this urge which makes you restless and drives you and lashes you to action, then where do you differ from the gathering of older people who talk and debate and argue much and act little ? It is not those who are continually seeking security and have made a god of discretion who reform the world. It is not the sleek and shiny people having more than their share of this world's goods who are the apostles of change. The world changes and progresses because of those who are disaffected and dissatisfied and who are not prepared to tolerate the evils and injustice of things as they are or have them.”

There can be no patriotism unless it is charged with a spirit of rebellion. Security and stability are to some extent essential, but to a large extent these are the enemies

of progress. Security and stability is only good if it is security and stability for all, and not for the chosen few on the top. But how many in our present-day society have this security and stability? The millions have it not. They just linger out their existence on the shifting sands of time. They have hardly food enough to keep body and soul together. It is mockery to speak to them of security. So long as the masses do not share in security, there can be no stable society. And so we see in the history of the world revolution after revolution. No single man or group is fond of bloodshed. And yet revolutions are caused. It is due to the desire for greater stability for a larger number of people. We shall have real security only when it has come to signify the well-being of the vast majority of the people. Society is blindly struggling towards that goal. The greater the urge to that end, the healthier and more vital the society. If this urge is wholly absent, society becomes static. It grows lifeless. Gradually it withers away and perishes.

“So long, therefore, as the world is not perfect,” says Nehru, “a healthy society must have the seeds of revolt in it. It must alternate between revolution and consolidation. It is the function of youth to supply this dynamic element in society; to be the standard-bearers of revolt against all that is evil and to prevent older people from suppressing all social progress and movement by the mere weight of their inertia.”

Most of the troubles in the world are due to false ideology. Foreign political and economic domination is bad enough. The acceptance of oppressor's ideology is even worse. It stunts all efforts. It sends us wandering aimlessly in blind alleys. There is no opening for a political imitator in the world. We must get at our own thinking straight. An intel-

lectual rebellion alone can sweep the cobwebs of brain. It alone can create a spirit of adventure. There is no use in repeating the political catchwords without clear thinking. We must know clearly what we are aiming at and how we wish to achieve. We must have a true appreciation of the present conditions. We must have a passionate desire to better it. There is call for an earnest spirit of enquiry as to what to do and how to do it. Reject utterly what you think to be wrong. "Reject also everything," says Nehru, "however hallowed it may be by tradition and convention and religious sanction, if your reason tells you that it is wrong or unsuited to the present condition. For 'religions' as the Chinese says, 'are many, but reason is one.'"

Utter misery is the lot of vast number of people in the world to-day. A few live in luxury. The many lack even bread and clothing. They have no opportunity for development. Wars and conflicts ravage the world. The energy that should go to build up a better order of society is spent largely in mutual destruction. "If that is the condition of the world at large," asks Nehru, "what of our own unhappy country? Foreign rule has reduced her to utmost poverty and misery and a rigid adherence to outworn customs and ideas has sapped the life out of her." There is obviously something radically wrong with the world. One is led to doubt if there is any ultimate purpose behind this chaos and unhappiness. Two thousand five hundred years ago, the Prince Siddhartha, who later became the Great Buddha, saw this misery and in agony of spirit put himself the same question :—

"How can it be that Brahma
Would make a world and keep it miserable?
Since if all powerful He leaves it so,
He is not good, and if not powerful,
He is not God!"

VII

In this light how are we to judge Subhas Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army? If they are rebels, they are glorious rebels indeed. Nothing but a profound sense of patriotism moved them in their actions against the Indian Government. The story of Indian Independence Movement in East Asia is thrilling and breath-taking. Indian National Army was not a "Jap puppet show." That has now been fully and finally established.

"The background of British rule in Malaya," says the Free Press Journal of Bombay, "for the previous few years spoilt by the firing on estate labourers, who had struck work demanding an increase in wages in keeping with the rise in cost of living and other prejudicial acts towards Indians, like ordering pre-censorship of the Indian-owned papers, while the British-owned press were free, and similar acts had produced a spirit of suppressed antagonism to the British in the Indian mind. In the case of Indian troops, particularly among the officers, there was disaffection owing to the exhibition of colour prejudice, as in the case of the order prohibiting Indian Officers from using the swimming pool of the Singapore Swimming Club, though they were allowed membership, after much agitation."

Mr. S. C. Goho, the ex-Agent to the Government of India in Singapore, does not consider that Mr. Bose was a "quisling." Mr. Goho was in Singapore during Japanese occupation. He sums up the characteristics of Bose as follows :—

1. Bose was violently anti-British
2. Bose was an intense and sincere patriot.
3. Bose was not pro-Japanese, but he was perfectly prepared to use the Japanese as a dominating power for establishing complete independence in

India, to obtain which—unlike Mr. Gandhi—he was prepared to go to the extreme measures.

4. Bose liked ostentation, unlike Pandit Nehru, and always went about with ceremony and escort.

If Subhas Chandra Bose was a rebel during the war, surely he was a glorious rebel. No wonder, he has been described in London as “India’s greatest patriot and the greatest man in India after Mahatma Gandhi.”

A conference was held at Tokyo from 28th to 30th March 1942. Sri Rash Behari Bose was in the chair. Apart from the Goodwill Mission from Malaya, there were representatives from Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan and other parts of East Asia. Thailand was not represented owing to the death of the representatives in a plane crash on the way to Tokyo. It was resolved to start the Independence Movement among the Indians in East Asia. It was decided that military action against India would be taken only by the Indian National Army and under the command of Indian Officers. They wanted military, naval and air co-operation and assistance only “as may be requested” from the Japanese authorities. The Indian Independence League was set up. The Council of Action was formed.

The Indian Independence League demanded from the Japanese Government a clarification of their position. There was a general reply renewing Japan’s determination to help India to get Complete Independence. The Japanese Government stated that they had no territorial ambition in India. The Council of Action was not satisfied with this response. A crisis was reached in December 1942, when the Council of Action refused to allow Indian National Army, that had been organized in Malaya to be transferred to Burma before all outstanding points were clarified by the Japanese Government. Col. N. S. Gill of the Indian National Army was arrested by the Japanese as a British spy. Consequently, the members of the Council of Action resigned.

Thus Subhas Chandra and his followers had no easy time with the Japanese. They were patriots but not rebels. They did not want to betray India into the hands of the Japanese. Mr. Bose never contemplated or designed a situation in which the Japanese soldiers would be on Indian soil as an invading army. If he had little illusions about the English, he had even less about the Japanese. Thus the Indian National Army had a very hard time between the devil and the deep. Bose was really responsible for the Japanese not launching an invasion of Ceylon and organizing a large scale attack on the country. Shri Bose did not want India to become a Colony of Japan. Also he played a valuable part in protecting the lives and property of Indians from being looted by the Japanese and hostile sections of the local population.

So we can understand what a hard work Subhas Chandra Bose and his men had to perform for the cause of India. Deeply imbued in patriotism they were rebels alike to the British and the Japanese. The Indian National Army could not brook to see India under the heels of any foreign dominating factor. They fought for freedom of India and for freedom of India they laid down their lives. Consequently, we can appreciate the flame of patriotic fire which moved Shri-Subhas Chandra Bose in Singapore to address the Indian National Army as follows :—

“ Below the horizon, beyond the stream, behind that forest, is our Motherland. We are born out of its holy atoms. There we have to return. Listen ! Our India is calling us. The capital of Delhi is our goal. Slavery of India curdles our blood. There is a long road ahead of us. If God wishes we will drive our way through our opponents, or we shall die martyrs and kiss the dust of the path that leads to our Motherland. Onward to Delhi ! This is the road to freedom !”

CHAPTER II

BOSE IS BENGAL

*Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died :
Oh Motherland, we pledge to thee,
Head, heart and hand, through the years to be !*

—Rudyard Kipling.

Bose is Bengal and Bengal is Bose. No other leader has ever embodied within himself all the characteristics of his soil that gave him birth. Fret, fume, fury and fire have long been the characteristics of the flame of patriotism that burns bright in the beloved province of Subhas Chandra Bose. And he lit the whole wilderness of politics in the country with that shining torch.

If Bengal produced Bose, Bose has quite reproduced Bengal. He has added new qualities of his own to the freedom fighters of his Beloved Bengal. Coming out of the womb of terrors, he saved the masses from the fever of terrorism. He bridled their sensitive minds and directed their energies to wholesome channels. He taught them outspokenness and infused them with a spirit of rebellion, but not the rebellion of lurking in a dark corner with a pistol.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose tempered the terrorism of the meek-eyed Bengal youth with tremendous secret soul force of non-violent non-co-operation let loose by the meek-minded Mahatma. Bose is a magnificent mixture of Gandhi and C. R. Das. Although Bose learnt much from Das, he also learnt a little from Gandhi, almost as much as Gandhi learnt from Bose.

I

Subhas Bose is the stormy petrel of Indian politics. He created a new epoch, the period in which Bengal achieved its political maturity. Before Bose came into lime-light, Bengal was a province of great political consciousness. British rule made its advent first in Bengal. The Bengal rulers sought to perpetuate serfdom. The result was resurrection of an intense nationalist spirit in Bengal.

Did this Nationalism in Bengal follow a straight forward course ?

No, Bengal politics took a different turn. If the Congress had very great task ahead in winning over the population of India to its own ideals, greater was the task of converting people of Bengal. Bengal did not take any course which would have brought political maturity visibly near in that province. It suffered from chronic indigestion of Western ideas. It never had time to end conflicts in the province, and follow one doctrine. It followed many creeds. The notable of these was a faith in liberalism and in campaign of violence. The leaders of Bengal were inclined to be whole-hog. They wanted even to pursue the doctrines of terrorism.

Consequently the early Bengal leaders were either great liberals or great terrorists. Sometimes Bepin Chandra Pal or Aurobindo Ghose sought to find out a middle way between these extremes. But Bengal was destined to remain in wilderness. Subhas Bose spent his boyhood in such an atmosphere. He might have been easily carried away by these doctrines which were then the articles of faith. But Subhas Bose was made of a sterner stuff. His well-to-do parents gave him the education in keeping with their middle-class ideals of bringing up children in puritan surroundings. Subhas Babu imbibed these religious ideas, as well as he learned his English and Arithmetic

at school. He wanted however to find out the truth about religion which his parents imparted to him.

With this zeal he undertook wanderings from end to end of the province. He ran away from his house as a young boy, met numerous *Sanyasis* and passed time in their company. But these spiritual dupes did not satisfy him. However, he saw light in these roamings, and realised that he must saturate his mind with learning and then find out the truth about religion.

Terrorist gangs were just then active in Bengal, and they showed unmistakable shrewdness in recruiting middle class youngmen. The latter happened to be extremely restless in their surroundings. They showed an impatience to break away from them. Subhas Bose, in the frame of mind in which he found himself might easily have been lured away by these terrorist gangs. But he was not.

In his college days there were other incidents, which might have brought about the conversion of Subhas Bose to the doctrines of terrorism, if he were so inclined. Students were then taking increasing part in strikes. Some of them were of particularly violent nature. Subhas Bose, though he often took part in these strikes, refrained from all rowdy acts.

After his education at Presidency College, Calcutta, Subhas Babu was despatched to England by his parents, to have higher education and qualify for I. C. S. Examination. He had his schooling in the British Universities, but he did not show any inclination to become I. C. S. official. He imbibed the radical ideas then in vogue and his nationalism became deeply-rooted. He had thus escaped the temptation of aligning himself with those who were the henchmen of bureaucracy. This shows that he was as much averse to bureaucracy as to terrorism. Bose who

became an I. C. S. man even against his wishes, resigned immediately after. While he was contemplating a return to India, a mighty change had swept over the political surface of the country. Slowly in Bengal as elsewhere the Congress was armed with the doctrine of non-violence. It was winning over those elements which were formerly given over to the terrorist groups. It also shepherded henchmen of bureaucrats.

The non-violent non-co-operation was becoming an article of faith. All Indians of any political consciousness took to it. In this new awakening Gandhi was playing a great part. So far as Bengal was concerned, a new leader had arisen there in the person of Deshbandhu Chitranjan Das. He had rallied round himself great number of Bengalis and was an earnest supporter of active non-violent struggle for freedom. Deshbandhu Das ended the chronic indigestion of Western ideas in Bengal and gave the province a position of eminence in political counsels of the rest of India. Chaos in Bengal politics having ended, Bengal was well on the way towards political maturity. Before Deshbandhu closed his eyes, great strides were taken in this direction. And after him Subhas Bose carried on his life mission. Many of the ideas of Deshbandhu Dass about unification of Bengal, and organisation of the political movements in the province, in keeping with the traditions of the Congress, were given practical shape. Bengal had come of age.

Immediately after his return from England, Subhas Bose avowed faith in leadership of Das. He pledged himself to active struggle. No doubt it was considered a very sensational move in his family circle. So it was also in the Province. His resolve to give up I.C.S. career was in itself a revolutionary move. Though many middle class youths take part in partiotic movements, few give away high jobs. The action of Jawahar

Lal Nehru, in joining the political struggle was one brilliant case. Bose set the radiant example of renunciation.

But troubles lay ahead for Bose. The country was in the throes of a boycott organised by the Congress on arrival of the Prince of Wales. Arrests were taking place all over the country. Bose's Chief, C. R. Dass, was put in prison, so was Bose himself.

Thus Bengal strengthened the foundations of the Indian National Congress. And Subhas built a glorious tower on them. The Bengalis have always been the standard-bearers of Nationalism. Bose was destined to become a lion of patriotism. The mild-minded youth became an astounding hero. He was not going to be a man who would shrink from the supremest sacrifices. Emotional in nature like any other Bengal youth, he was not going to become an inflammable material for terrorists. Bose was going to be a rebel, but a rebel of another sort. A glorious mutineer !

Disgusted with Gandhi, Mr. Bose imbibed all the golden qualities of Gandhism. He exercised great self-control. If Gandhi could eat his anger, so could Bose.

“Terrorism,” said Sir John Anderson, the Governor of Bengal, “is the perverted expression of the extreme love of the Bengali race for the motherland.”

II

Subhas Chandra Bose, born on 23rd January 1897, was pre-destined to purge Bengal of the perverted love of terrorism. At the same time, he was not going to be a weak-kneed patriot. He was going to steer clear between revolutionary action and political inaction. If in Mahatma Gandhi, we are blessed with a man of God and in Jawaharlal a god of reason, in Subhas Chandra Bose we found a very dare-devil of action. Bose Bahadur, the father of the family, was very lucky in having this boy of many promising traits ; but he was a

drop in the ocean of the big family, and so the boy had to manage himself as best as he could. So Subhas Chandra grew up as much of a dare-devil as Oliver Cromwell. Bose, like Oliver, has floored many a Charles the First of Indian Bureaucracy.

In spite of play-truant habits and a breeze of brilliant naughtiness about him, Young Subhas passed the Matriculation Examination with distinction standing high in the Calcutta University. But soon a wave of spirituality overtook the promising lad. He practised meditation in the solitary corners of the home. Bose was deeply absorbed in ideas of eternal peace at an age in which Gandhi had completely sunk himself in sensuous orgies and Nehru was playing cricket at Harrow. While Gandhi has all the monopoly of pretensions to spirituality, Bose has always been spiritual without pretending it.

At one stroke the Boy Bose decided to forsake all the pleasures of this world. He set at naught the love and luxury of his prosperous house. Off he set into the heart of a jungle. The verdant trees welcomed the bright-eyed boy. He sauntered along the valleys of Himalayas. God was his adventure in the woods of godliness. He wanted a teacher. A spiritual master he sought. He was soulfully earnest in his religious errand. His figure haunted the glorious resorts of the saints and *sadhus*. He found the places more enchanting than the self-styled prophets who dwelt therein.

Imagine a young child in a dark dreadful forest in a dark dreadful night. The whole world round him was steeped in horror. None but the criminals stalked abroad. But young Bose was not afraid. Like Nelson he could have asked "What is fear?" He was testing his godliness on the anvil of practicality. The ferocious animals came and passed by. They touched not the young ascetic. The roaring rivers did not block his way. The icy winds did not chill his heart. The

young *Sadhu* went up the Himalayas with the banner of "Excelsior" in his mind.

*His brow was sad : his eyes beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue.*

Excelsior !"

For half a year the boy wandered round but he came to no good. From temple to temple he went with a religious fervour, but all in vain. Like a great devotee his feet measured the ground from Bindraban to Benares, but his soul was not at ease. He studied the private lives of the *sadhus* and iron entered into his soul. He found them bigoted and besotted fellows. All his journeying had been in vain. But he made his way homewards.

It was the dramatic return of a prodigal. Nobody expected him. The family had long lost all hopes of the boy. But the boy did come. All were sitting in the drawing room. And thither he made his way.

"Subhas!" said the mother, "you have been born to kill me."

Straight the boy proceeded to his mother. She was the most aggrieved member of the family. Down he knelt before her, and touched the dust of her feet. The mother wept bitterly. There were mixed feelings of love and agony. The gloomy atmosphere presented a touching sight. Parents embraced their darling son. The brothers welcomed their worthy brother. The friends rejoiced at the return of the most lovable figure.

The adventure broke him down. It took a heavy toll of his health. Having abandoned his princely living he had wandered along, in search of a spiritual Europa. And he did not know how tired he was until he reached the end of the

journey. So directly he was confined to bed. But he had not left his home haphazardly. He was an inspired boy. And he had a set purpose before him. Soon after his return in 1915, he wrote to a friend:

"I have been realizing day by day that I have got a definite mission in my life and for that I am bearing the body and I am not to drift in the current of popular opinion. People will speak well or ill, this is the way of the world—but my sublime self-consciousness consists in this that I am not moved by it."

III

Young Subhas joined college. He passed F.A. in the First Class without much ado. And so he became an undergraduate. Soon he became the leader of the students. There arose an opportunity for action in the national cause. And the leadership of the brilliant Bose was not found wanting.

A European Professor created trouble. He was called F.C. Oaten. He had an overpowering sense of imperialist pride. He behaved towards Indian students in insolent manner. Oaten was really made of oats. There was little true stuff in him. One day Mr. Oaten slapped a degree student. It set the national respect aflame.

Subhas was enraged at the continual and continuous high-handedness. The Professor's attitude was provoking. It was shocking. He was overwhelmed with indignation. Secret meetings were held. A complete strike was resorted to. The strike forced the College Committee to come to terms with the students. The Professor was warned. But warnings are for men, not for oats. After a continuous self-control for a few weeks, Mr. Oaten slipped back to the old position. He insulted the Indians. And the Indians returned the insult at a compound interest. They thrashed him in the open

daylight. Subhas was accused of a leading part. The Calcutta University dismissed the leading spirits for two years. And we should not wonder if we found our hero among the highlights. So the national cause cost the boy two years' unnecessary waiting for his degree. He got First Class Honours, that was usual with him, in Philosophy which is noteworthy. Not only did he combine Philosophy with his would-be political career, but also he joined the Infantry Class and received many distinctions as a cadet under military training. This was, no doubt, the road to Singapore. The young cadet was destined to become the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army.

Then there came the Rowlat Bill. Amritsar was in agony. The Punjab tragedy thrilled the nationalists. The Khilafat question was agitating the country. A deep gulf was cut between the British rulers and the British subjects. The rulers showed a lack of statesmanship. The ruled were full of scorn. Young men were boiling with enthusiasm. Wholesale arrests were order of the day. Long convictions were popular. All popular leaders were behind the bars. There was heartless firing on peaceful people. Public flogging was an everyday affair. Severe sentences were imposed and severely exacted. These were not the days for tender skins of darling children.

Bose Bahadur was aware of the fiery elements of his son. He was fully familiar with his emotional habits. The dare-devilry of Subhas was an open secret. His parents were afraid of his inexplicable manners. They did not want to involve him in the political cauldron. So they induced him to sail for England and take the I. C. S. Examination. Their real aim was to inculcate in him an affinity for the glory and glamour of Western civilization. That is the best way to drag a man away from the dirt and disease of the downtrodden Indian masses.

Subhas was not pleased with the prospect. He dare not steal away from the Motherland in her agony. The Indian tragedy wetted his eyes. How could he enjoy when the millions were suffering? The patriotic feelings also stood in his way. How could he sit for I. C. S. and be a nationalist? His friend Hamanta Kumar advised him differently. And he valued the advice of Hamanta Kumar. But the eternal question persisted.

"But there will be great difficulty," said Subhas, "if I come out successful in the Civil Service Competition. Then I shall lose sight of my ideals."

Subhas underwent a great mental storm. At last, willy-nilly he decided to accept the offer. After great fight within himself he gave his consent. But his conscience was still unreconciled.

"I cannot console myself," he said, "that my decision has been right."

IV.

Thus Subhas Bose left for England in the teeth of his conscience. He was fully conscious of his high ideals as he said good-bye to the Indian shores. He had a heavy sense of stooping rather low as he touched the green banks of Merry England. The glamour of the West failed to dazzle him. His mind rather perched on the glamourlessness of India.

Sub has contrasted civil liberties in England with lack of liberties in India. While the British breathed the free and fresh air, the Indians were being choked in the foul atmosphere of subjection. While Britain reared bright-eyed children, India was plagued with dull-headed dolls. While the British youth chalked their plans, the Indian students had no plans to

chalk. Their eyes were fixed on the doorknob of an Indian office. England awakened Bose terribly to the realities of India.

Subhas wanted India to be respected and prosperous. That was the sole aim of his life. "I feel most happy," he said, "when I see white people serve me and brush my shoes."

Subhas heard a speech of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu at the annual dinner of the Indian Majlis in London. He glorified over the brilliant oratory of the Nightingale of India. "When Mrs. Sarojini Naidu made a speech here," he wrote, "my heart was filled with pride. I saw that day an Indian woman had such culture, education and qualities as would stand her in good stead before the West." From that day he came to an excellent conclusion. "The country, which produces such women," he thought, "could not but have a bright future."

Like Gandhiji his ways of living were thrifty. Unlike Gandhiji, Bose never took dancing lessons. He refused to play ducks and drakes with his father's money. The fact is that Gandhiji, became a Mahatma only after his return from London. But Bose was a Sadhu even before he left the shores of India. Consequently Bose did not fall in the snares of glamour which dazzled Gandhiji for a while.

No wonder, Subhas passed the I.C.S. Examination brilliantly in the Autumn of 1920. He held fourth position in the competition. He could have got the first if he cared to put his heart into the work. But his heart was cooing elsewhere. Also he got Mental and Moral Science Tripos from the Cambridge University. That was worth while.

Subhas did not throw his ideals overboard. He was repentant over the success. It simply made his position

awkward. He wrote to a friend that he had "unfortunately" passed the I.C.S. Examination. Bose felt heavily burdened at his success. So one fine morning he asked for interview with Mr. Montague, the Secretary of State for India. And there he tendered his resignation. Entreaties were made to him. But entreaties fell on ears deafened with patriotism. Subhas was sane. Subhas was sober. And Subhas was taking a meaningful step. He resigned his princely career with a purpose. And he summed up his purpose as follows :—

"I had passed the Indian Civil Service in England in 1920, but finding that it would be impossible to serve both masters at the same time—namely, the British Government and my country—I resigned my post in May 1921, and hurried back to India, with a view to taking my place in the national struggle that was then in full swing."

In the middle of July he touched Bombay. Directly he sought an interview with Gandhiji. And got it immediately. He met the Mahatma the same evening. The historic meeting took place at Mani Bhawan. The young patriot desired a clear understanding of the entire plan of action. But Gandhiji had no such plan to offer. So Bose left for Calcutta "depressed and disappointed."

There Bose met G.R. Das. The latter wielded a magnetic influence. Das was a prudent diplomat Das was a shrewd politician. Das was an intellectual stalwart. This was the man Bose wanted and worshipped.

V

It was the time of the Prince of Wales's visit to India. The country was getting ready to tender him a frozen welcome and cold-shoulder him out of India.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was baptised into Indian politics by Deshbandhu C. R. Das. It was a baptism of

fire. It was the flaming atmosphere of nineteen hundred and twenty-one. India was burning with patriotism. Many vital problems were in the oven.

Mahatma Gandhi launched his non-co-operation movement. The lawyers left their law. The teachers bade good-bye to education. Students poured out of schools and colleges. They put their services at the disposal of the Congress leaders. So the Congress leaders became responsible for their education. And well did the Congress Command shoulder this responsibility.

National colleges and universities came into existence almost overnight. Lala Lajpat Rai took command of the Punjab educational zone and C. R. Das took responsibility for the Bengal circle. Having tremendous confidence in Bose's qualities of head and heart, Das shifted his burden to the younger shoulders. And well did Subhas Chandra Bose live up to the expectations of his captain and his beloved country.

Subhas abroad had learnt more of international politics and code of patriotism than of British Bureaucracy. He had refused to drink elixir at the fountains of imperialism and quitted I. C. S. as a thing of naught while others were hugging it to their breasts as a feather fallen from the "Blue Bird." As Principal of the National College, Subhas brought his mind to bear upon the Indian students in the light of his luminous lore. Selflessness and sacrifice was the first and the foremost lesson that he imparted to his students. The world is founded on the rocks of martyrdom. Without self-mortification there can be no progress. Patriotism alone is a nation's strength. The education of Subhas was the education of Emerson :

*Not gold, but only men can make
A people great and strong—*

*Men who for truth and honour's sake,
Stand fast and suffer long.
Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep,
And lift them to the sky.*

No wonder the National Colleges showed wonderful results. Patriotism breathed a new vitality into education. For a while the British Bureaucracy tolerated them, but it could not tolerate them long. John Bull's power of toleration is exceedingly limited. The Government grew anxious. A discipline of discouragement came forth. The Bengal authorities were gravely concerned. They awaited an opportunity with sleepless nights.

The visit of the Prince of Wales provided that opportunity. The Congress cut off all functions at the root. It was a bitter battle between imperialism and nationalism. Patriotism was strained to the bursting point. Pledges made easily under the shadows of war were broken as easily in the sunshine of peace. The very men who had fought on the front for His Majesty now worked together in thousands to boycott His Highness. Pro-British patriots became anti-British rebels.

The Prince of Wales was received with black flags. Complete strikes greeted his visit. Everywhere he met with ghosts of cities. The school children and the children of bureaucracy were called forth to line up the roads and cheer up the royal personage. The author, as a school child, had the honour to be one of them. We stood in the burning sun at Peshawar Cantt. holding tiny Union Jacks, in return for packets of sweets, and thanked His Highness for the gift.

That is exactly what the Congress feared. The Congress feared that the Government was going to waste Indian revenues like water in order to create an impression of British generosity among the ignorant masses. They had no personal grudge against His Highness. Their sole purpose was to axe imperialism.

The Prince had come to thank the country for princely assistance during the war. But it was a very costly thankfulness. And the Congress was not in a mood to accept extravagance as an expression of gratitude. When His Highness landed at the Gateway of India, it was a day of boycott. It was not a day of celebrations. The country responded splendidly to the voice of Mahatma Gandhi. The Government also replied splendidly. The National Volunteer Corps was declared illegal. Subhas, the glorious rebel, was in charge of the brigade. The Congress Command decided to defy the order. Immediately all the leaders with thousands of followers were shepherded into prisons.

Under the leadership of Subhas Bose, the people of Calcutta conveyed to the majestic heir of His Majesty that the country resented the bullish behaviour of John Bull. So Brilliant Bose was accused. He was summarily convicted. Forthwith he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He longed for a longer sentence.

"Six months only!" said Subhas Chandra Bose, the Captain of Mutinous Corps, to the Magistrate. "Have I then robbed a fowl?"

VI

Bengal played a prominent part in the boycott of the Prince. Also it headed the Satyagraha movement launched by Gandhi. C. R. Das's popularity was already on the increase. Now it received a fresh impetus as a result of this campaign.

The National Congress conferred on him the well-merited honour of Congress Presidentship. Das was again arrested a little before the Congress Session. His address was read in his absence.

The political views revealed by Deshbandhu Das in his address have an important bearing for us to-day. Bose's ideas bear the stamp of his illustrious chief. For that reason they should be discussed. He affirmed the Congress faith in non-violent struggle. He was a man of broad international vision. He said that non-violence was the panacea for political ills of India. Also it was an invaluable weapon for other countries. He analysed the sufferings of the world. These were not due to economic reasons but to its faith in violence. He wanted India to have contacts abroad. He was the first Indian leader to suggest formation of Congress branches in other countries of the world. So far as the Government of India Act was concerned, he was disappointed with the niggardly way in which reforms were offered to India. But he wanted Congressmen to enter the Councils. They should voice their protest against the arbitrary rule from within. He also expressed his abhorrence with the revolutions in Germany and Russia. Especially he was against Marxist dogmas. He thought that Marxism was bound to fail in Russia. These were the salient points from the speech of Das. Bose acknowledged him as his chief.

How far did Bose agree with him ?

Like his chief he believed in the efficacy of non-violent struggle. Later on he introduced certain changes. He stressed the need of stiffening non-violent programme so as to make it a dynamic creed. He believed in India's contact with the rest of the world. He elaborated this doctrine to cover all countries. He included Germany and Russia. Unlike his chief he did not evince abhorrence of revolution in Germany or Russia. Being a younger man than Das, he believed in socialistic doctrines.

He praised the achievements of German and Russian Revolutions. He was a whole-hog believer in the programme of Council entry. Later on it came to be known as Swarajist programme. To this programme of C.R. Das he adhered all his life. He worked for the Swarajist cause. The Swarajist successes in Bengal were due to his efforts. He joined hands with other lieutenants of Das. Das carried on Swarajist work mainly inside the Central Legislature. He censured the Government on several subjects. In Bengal, Bose and Sen Gupta were the leading lights of Swarajist opposition.

Later on in 1933-34, Bose opposed Congress in the suspension of Civil Disobedience Movement. He was also in favour of continuing the Swarajist work in Legislative Council. He wanted the Congress to fight on both the fronts. The same programme was emphasised by him in 1937 on his release. Then the provincial autonomy came into force. He wanted Governor's safeguards to go before the Congress accepted office. He was not opposed to Parliamentary work. In spite of this fact, he had come to be known as an extremist in Congress and a Left Winger of repute. Very few politicians understood him. His own brother, Sarat Chander Bose, became leader of the Bengal Parliamentary Board. Bose did not enter the Bengal Assembly. He continued to guide activities of the Party from without. Sarat was his able lieutenant within as he himself was the lieutenant of Das without.

In 1940 when Bose was imprisoned for demanding India's right of self-determination, and a coalition of free nationals to crush Hitler, he did not order dissolution of Bengal Congress Assembly Party. That party continued to work inside the Legislature. Later on when Bose disappeared, the Bengal Congress Party, which was under his influence, continued to play its previous rôle in Assembly. It continues to do so today. Under Fazal-ul-Haq regime, the Bose group of Assembly

members, agreed to accept offices and functioned as Ministers. Such is the heritage of Swarajist work. Bose carried it forward after the death of C.R. Das. He was loyal to tradition in the life-time of his chief. He is the same to-day. Swarajist work represents the hall-mark of Bose-Das-Gupta trio. It was also the first manifestation of differences between Bose and Gandhi. These differences cropped up in the life-time of Das. These were consequently the main reasons of conflict between Gandhi and Das. But then the conflict was subdued. Later on it became acute. The gulf widened.

Why did the followers of Gandhi differ from Das in matter of Swarajist work? The Gandhites wanted "No-change" on the Satyagraha Front. They were called "No Changers" after 1922. They would not permit Congressmen to enter New Councils. This, they thought, smacked of constitutionalism. The Swarajists declined to admit this charge. Subhas Bose pointed to Ireland. The Sin Fein Party had permitted an inauguration of the constitution. They entered the Parliament. But they refused to accept offices. They should not co-operate in any way with the administration. After the lapse of several years, the gulf continued. The ultra-Gandhists had scarcely a justification in putting a ban on Council entry. Of course so far as co-operation with Britain through constitutional methods was concerned, some of the Swarajists did in the end resort to such activities. Subhas Bose towards the close of that decade, noted this with regret. Men of eminence in Swarajist Party, like Moti Lal Nehru were siding with the ultra-Gandhists. They were aiding them in fostering a reactionary programme for the country.

But these defections from Swarajist ranks only strengthened determination. Men like Bose pushed forward the heritage of Das. It also made the conflict with Gandhi more marked than before.

Another hall-mark of Swarajist activity under Das was the acceptance of leader-principle by the Bengalis. Bose had acknowledged Das as leader. He also revealed faith in the doctrine of leader-principle. This meant loyalty to the leader under all circumstances. This decision had been arrived at in a democratic way. In Bengal, the Swarajists owed their success to their unflinching loyalty to C. R. Das. There was a great sense of duty and discipline among them. It may be said that leader-principle prevailed among the Gandhites too. They followed the lead by Gandhi with blind submission. But Gandhi was a saint. As such often was he carried away by emotions. He made decisions which were sometimes in conflict with the will of the majority of his countrymen. The suspension of satyagraha after the Chauri-Chura incident in 1922 is a notable example. Gandhi's followers acted up to his orders. It was due to the respect in which they held him. And if he chose a different course, they would follow him all the same. It was the discipline of a congregation. Neat rows. A mass under the leadership of a priest. It was not a political body governed by a stern watchman of the rights of people. Gandhi's discipline could be often lax. He would send his soldiers away on long furloughs. Not so with Das and Bose. Later on Bose tried to infuse this leader-principle among the Congressmen. The Congress reactionaries were up in arms against him. They threw him overboard.

Municipal work also engaged the attention of Bose in those early days. The Swarajists were using Council Chambers to propagate their ideas. They were no less keen about capturing the local bodies. The former programme was an innovation in national politics. The same could be said about the latter. The Swarajists made a bid to capture Calcutta Corporation. Similar efforts were made in other parts of the country. C. R. Das became Mayor of Calcutta. Vithalbhai

Patel headed Bombay. Patel the younger became President of Ahmadabad Municipality. Jawaharlal took reins of Allahabad. While C. R. Dass was Mayor, Subhas Bose became the Chief Executive Councillor. Later on both Sen Gupta and Bose held the high offices in the Calcutta Corporation. Useful work was done by the Swarajists in Calcutta. The Nationalists there do not now go by that name. C. R. Dass, Sen-Gupta and Bose strove hard to make Calcutta one of the best administered cities in the Empire. Later, the fight on the political front required great attention. The Bengal leaders especially Bose had to relinquish their active work in the Corporation. They only guided the activities of Congress Municipal Party from without.

When Bose went to Vienna in 1933, to get medical treatment, he met the Mayor of Vienna. The later took him round the Municipal Buildings of the city Also the Mayor showed him other fine achievements of Vienna Social Democrats. He had made that city the cleanest and most beautiful in the world. Bose praised the achievements of Vienna administrators. On his return he was able to suggest certain improvements in the existing plans of Calcutta City. Calcutta could not be Vienna. India was not Austria. No free country. But even then great strides were made.

An organiser of no mean repute, a great exponent of Swarajist cause, an able speaker, and a wise civic administrator. Bose was also a great writer. He proved his abilities when he edited the Swarajist Paper "Forward." It was a representative organ of progressive public. The Anglo-Indian newspapers dominated the field. And staunch nationalist journals were few in numbers. But Bose held out boldly. He was able to repeat his journalistic feats years later. He wrote that epic book, "The Indian Struggle." It was not only the Odyssey of the life of a great leader. It also revealed Bose as an accomplished writer. He showed great

knowledge of Indian history. He was able to demolish the myth that India was not a United Nation but a strange assortment of unassimilable races, castes and creeds. He knew as much about foreign affairs as Nehru. He also revealed insight into the doctrines of Socialism, Fascism and Communism. He wrote with the ease of Nehru, and better certainly than Gandhi or Jinnah. Their sentences sometime become hopelessly confused. Bose's book had a great sale in England and America.

Journalism is a life-long passion. It is not to be easily set aside. It was proved once again when, in 1939, he started his paper "Forward Bloc." This represented his political views, but it was in no sense a partisan paper. The level of production was very high. He wrote numerous articles in Indian and foreign papers. These revealed his views on Fascism, Democracy, Congress, etc. One of these articles which appeared in "Modern Review" of Calcutta was headed "Europe to-day and to-morrow." It was a merciless denunciation of Hitlerite regime, and Hitler's designs in Europe. The other captioned "Japan's role in the Far East," showed in unmistakable terms that Subhas Bose thought Japanese rulers to be a group of blood-thirsty Imperialists. Thus the journalistic career of Subhas Bose, which is spread over a period of twenty years, proved to be an eventful one. Subhas Bose has been an accomplished editor, a good columnist, historian and a sociologist.

When Bose went to Europe, he was able to learn something about organisations of youth. He saw for himself how the youth received cultural and educational training in such countries as Austria, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia. He also visited Germany and Italy. He had occasion to see youth organisations in these countries. From all these visits he returned richer in experience. But he had very little time to

translate these ideas into action. He remained President of the Congress for one year to be sure. But then the constitutional issues loomed large. These needlessly diverted the attention of the Congress President.

Later on he formed the "Forward Bloc." It was then that organisation of youth was made a cardinal principle of the new Party. "Forward Bloc" was soon to suffer eclipse as a result of repression. But the genii had been let out of the bag. The organisation of youth proceeded at a brisk pace. Bose was, to a great extent, responsible for awakening among youth. The formation of youth organisations, however, has recently taken such lines which can not meet with approval of the great Indian leader. To begin with communalism has crept in youth organisations. Hindu, Muslim and Sikh youths hold separate conferences. There is a students' federation representing all religions. Another organisation known as Muslim Students Federation aims at knitting together the Muslim youth of the country. But right men are not on the spot to lead them. Years of laborious work of Bose to build up the youth organisation on a sound footing seem to have been undone in a short time. There is no other man who could avert this disaster, except of course Nehru. But even Nehru has his hands too full elsewhere to devote much attention to this subject. Students politics' remains in a state of flux.

VII

Sectionalism is rampant in youth politics to-day. Utterly disreputable elements are "cashing in" on communal slogans. The same is the condition of Subhas Bose's own province, Bengal. There, too, sectionalism is rampant. And various parties are making a determined bid to smash their way to power. But it may be said that sectionalism is not a new phenomenon in Bengal.

Subhas Bose held the situation well in hand in Bengal. He was able to maintain discipline among the youth organisations all over the country. In Bengal politics, divisions had crept in. These resembled those prevailing among the youth of the country. There were communalists like Hindu Sabha and Muslim League. There were rival parties, like the Bengal Labour Party, the Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party. Other smaller organisations also existed. These are too numerous to be mentioned. Prominent is the Krishak Praja Party.

Inside the Congress Party too, there were divisions. The warring elements (except a small section of Congressmen) of Bengal were ever at loggerheads with each other. They were united in their loyalty to the leader—Subhas Bose. They were at first loyally attached to Deshbandu Chitranjan Das. Then with remarkable unanimity, they transferred the same loyalty to Rashtrapati Bose. In the life-time of Deshbandhu, Subhas played the same role in Bengal politics, which Stalin did in Russia under Lenin.

In 1930 Bengal proved its loyalty to him. He was elected to be the President of Provincial Congress Committee. Thereafter the interest of Bengal centred over this young hopeful. If he was in prison, Bengal felt his absence. The Province was then left to grope forward without a leader. It was difficult to fill up the place vacated by him. If he was ill, the souls of men and women of Bengal writhed in painful agony. If he was in exile, all Bengal waited breathelessly for his return. And looked anxiously towards sea-shores. The province then felt about him as a young girl would about her lover who was away. And for him she was waiting. And when he did come back, they gave him a reception fit for kings.

Finally, if there was a conflict between him and Gandhites all Bengal backed him, including such men as Rabindra Nath Tagore and Prafulla Roy, who were only remotely interested in politics.

Although his popularity as a provincial leader was on the increase after 1930, a small recalcitrant element of Congressmen stood out and tried (ineffectively) to stage a revolt against his leadership. This element is mainly responsible for the present chaos in internal situation in Bengal. Its history should be examined from the very outset. During the lifetime of Shri Deshbandu, Subhas Bose acted as his second-in-command. Another leader of Bengal had been associated with him in the Swarajist work. His name was Jatinder Mohan Sen-Gupta. He was an able barrister before he entered politics. And like Subhas Chandra Bose he had had his education in England. At that time Bengal needed such patriotic men with broad outlook. They made Congress rather than Terrorism or Liberalism the anchor of their political creeds. J. M. Sen-Gupta's name sky-rocketed in Bengal. Just as Subhas Bose had won confidence of C. R. Dass, Sen-Gupta also became a trusted lieutenant of the great leader. He also became the Mayor of Calcutta. He was president of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in 1930. When Subhas Bose won the elections, Sen-Gupta was ousted.

Sen-Gupta had stabilised his position in the province while Bose had been in exile in Mandalay. It was in this period that Chitranjan Das died. This gave Sen-Gupta an opportunity to assume the mantle of leadership in Bengal. Perhaps, things would have moved on smoothly if the rift had not come among the Swarajists at the Calcutta Session in 1928. It was there that the tussle began between the Gandhites and the younger elements headed by Bose, Iyenger and Nehru. The younger elements wanted a programme of full indepen-

dence. Gandhites were satisfied with Dominion Status. Men like Moti Lal Nehru sided with Gandhi. It became obvious that there was a wide gulf separating Bose from Motilal.

With all respects to the patriotic spirit of Motilal Nehru, it may be pointed out that he had just then broken loose from the majority of Swarajists. He adopted an out-and-out reactionary programme. It was only in 1930, that he realised how wrong he had been. But the cause of Swarajists had been weakened. It was, therefore, for the rest of the Swarajists to get together. They knocked Gandhism out of the field as had been done in 1922. This time once and for ever.

That was what Bose wanted. In the months that ensued, the valuable colleagues of his left him. Nehru was one of these men. He deserted him at the eleventh hour. And Sen-Gupta revealed himself to be not a worthy successor of Das. He was an out-and-out supporter of Gandhism. He joined the elderly group in Congress.

Bose had thus to fight on two fronts: The All-India Front, and the Bengal Front. Sen-Gupta, and his men held all the key positions in the Provincial Congress. He won the first round in the battle when he defeated Sen-Gupta in 1930. He mounted the *Gaddi* of Provincial Congress Presidentship. Now he could rally the entire Bengal behind him in the assault on citadel of reaction inside Bengal. He pushed his invasion outside the borders of that province. But his opponents out of office did not carry on the fight in Bengal in a democratic way. They were out in revolt against Bose's leadership. They sought outside help. Bose-Gupta dispute was referred for arbitration to Motilal Nehru, at Lahore Congress. Sen-Gupta declared that Bose's election was *ultra vires*. He should be unseated in the Lahore Session. There was exchange of hot words between Motilal and Shri Subbas Bose. The dispute

dragged on for sometime. In the end Motilal had to set aside the complaints of Sen-Gupta. He confirmed Presidentship of Bose.

The Bengal recalcitrants were conscious of sympathy of elder leaders of Congress revealed at the Lahore Session. They became more and more intransigent. In the *Satyagraha* movement of 1930-32, they set up separate committees to carry on the Congress campaign. In Municipal elections separate candidates were set up. "Partition of Bengal," which the British had failed to achieve in 1905, was now introduced by the Sen-Gupta group. Their supporters outside the border limits of Bengal played havoc. One wonders why the Congress leaders, who have recently shown such a great tendency to knock out the followers of Subhas Bose from responsible posts in Congress Committees in Bengal and elsewhere, on the charge of indiscipline, did not at that time take stern action against Sen-Gupta group, for its revolt in Bengal against the rightful leadership of Bose. The motives which inspired these Congress leaders to desist from stern action against Bengal rebels are clear. Subhas Chandra Bose had in the years 1929-33, become a dominant figure in Bengal. Also he was one of the few great personalities in All-India politics. The youth of the country had rallied round him. He had declared an open fight against reactionaries. The Congress leaders connived at the Bengal revolt against Bose. They thought in this way alone the position of Bose could be weakened in All-India politics and in Bengal itself.

J. M. Sen-Gupta's death in course of the Civil Disobedience Movement was a national tragedy. He had indulged in a good deal of party-bickerings in Bengal. But he was an able man. He had rendered service to the country under leadership of Das. The fact that he died in the course of struggle attached a halo of martyrdom to his name. Bose paid

a generous tribute to the departed leader on this occasion. It showed that death had closed all differences between them.

With Sen-Gupta's death, the leadership of his group passed into the hands of less known men, who were, if anything more inclined to dance to the tune of Gandhites outside the province. But these men were unable to carry on with anything like previous intensity the factional fight against Bose. It seemed that with the death of "General Lee"—Sen Gupta—guts had been torn out of "the Army of the South"—Sen-Gupta's followers. Subhas Bose's party had overwhelming advantage on its side : both in men and in generals.

The scales in this "civil war" in Bengal were from that time onwards heavily tipped against the followers of Sen-Gupta. Even when Bose was in prison or exile Bengal Congressmen elected him as their chief. The rest of the province always acknowledged him as its leader. There was consequently less activity on the party front in Bengal in the years between 1933-37, than in the preceding four years. The Congress "elderly" leaders, whose patronising of Bengal insurgent was the main encouragement for the latter in their anti-national activities, had now too much work on their hands. The parliamentary programme occupied all their time. They could no longer take the same interest in party politics. They were also smarting under the pain and humiliation suffered as a result of the said debacle of Civil Disobedience. Bose put it the "Surrender" of 1933. The Gandhites were badly in need of regrouping their forces after the Civil Disobedience Movement, before they could establish their hold in the Congress. Subhas's increasing popularity in the year 1934-37 had also to be reckoned with. In 1938, Bose was elected President of the Congress. In Bengal his brother Sarat Bose was the Leader of the Parliamentary Party in Assembly.

The elderly leaders had consolidated their strength in the Congress. There was open conflict with Bose in the arena of All-India politics. In the provincial politics, the sleeping dogs were not allowed to lie as before. Subhas's opponents in Bengal took their cue from the dramatic events in All-India politics. They led to setting up of Sitaramya against Bose, in the Presidential election. They raised their banner of revolt in Bengal. While Bose fought the elderly leaders, these men were giving the stab-in-back.

The leaders of Bengal "Congress insurgents" were B. C. Roy and Kiran Shanker Roy, to mention only the two most prominent. As for early activities of these leaders Subhas Chandra Bose speaks favourably about B. C. Roy in his book "The Indian Struggle." Later we hear the name of B. C. Roy in connection with the illness of Bose. Roy was one of those physicians who attended the great leader, on his sick-bed and nourished him back to health. The doctor was, if anything, allied to the Bose Group. As for Kiran Shanker Roy, he was Vice-President of the Provincial Congress Committee in Bengal, when Bose was President. That was in the early days of Subhas's career as a provincial leader. Later on Roy became a Gandhite. Then all of a sudden he burst into headlines as one of Bose's opponents in Bengal. The latter had come into conflict with Congress leaders.

These two men thought of ending the leadership of Bose in Bengal. Before the presidential crisis in All-India politics were not unlikely. They were in the past friendly towards Bose. But these men had known as every body else in Bengal did, that it was mere foolhardiness to challenge the leadership of Bose in Bengal. Their past efforts to oust Bose from Bengal leadership were negligible.

How did it happen, that these gentlemen, and several others like them in Bengal awoke one fine winter morning in

1939, possessed with indomitable courage to remove Bose from Provincial and Congress leadership? It would be the task of the future historian to find out the details about this overnight change in the attitude of anti-Bose group in Bengal, from that of bleak pessimism to perfect optimism. But putting two and two together, it is not difficult to see that these men had been assured by reactionary leaders in Congress that if they only played their part well, in this nation-wide clear-up of Bose group, in the future politics of Bengal they would enjoy the power, which Sen-Gupta enjoyed only for a while.

As it always happened, Bose won the first round against the Congress leaders. He was elected President for Tripuri Congress. Then the devil's own broth was cooked up at the Congress in absence of Bose. He was on sick-bed. Plans were completed to present him with such conditions at the open session, that he should be compelled to resign. The machinations of these men were successful. The sick and worried Bose left the Congress Presidentship in utter disgust. Then charges of indiscipline were trumped up against him. He was deprived of leadership of Bengal Congress Committee. That Committee again elected him as leader and the minority headed by Kiran Shanker Roy ceded from the Committee. The Committee was suspended by the *Fatwa* (dictum) of Congress leaders.

The minority group of Kiran Shanker Roy declared themselves to be the true representative Congress Committee of Bengal, and were recognised as such by the Congress leaders. This "rump" Provincial Congress continues to function to-day side by side with the Congress Committee of Bose's followers. The majority of people of Bengal, of course, trust the suspended Congress Committee of Bose. The

power which Sen Gupta enjoyed in Bengal for some years, has not been achieved by Kiran Shanker Roy inspite of the best efforts of some Congress Leaders. But the chaotic conditions, much worse than those prevailing in days of Sen Gupta, have been introduced in Bengal politics. There were never two Congress Committees in Bengal in days of Sen Gupta. Now of course there are.

But if Kiran Shanker Roy's Congress Committee has not made much headway so far, it is not likely to do so in future. His figure lifted out of semi-obscurity was pitted against Subhas Chandra Bose, the unchallenged Leader of Bengal for over fourteen years. He has not a fraction of popularity of Bose. Indeed he has no claim to be in public life of Bengal, except that he has been put there by some Congress leaders. Also he is a devout follower of Gandhi. Gandhi wants him to remain there. But Bengal does not. Bengal is now Bose as Bose was once Bengal. Bengal is bound to remain a bee in the bonnet of Mahatma Gandhi.

CHAPTER III

THE YOUNG REVOLUTIONARY

And there's another country, I've heard of long ago. Most dear to them that love her ; most great to them that know. We may not count her armies ; we may not see her king—Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering.

—Sir Cecil Spring-Rice.

“Six months only !” said Subhas to the Magistrate.
“Have I then robbed a fowl ?”

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose felt that he deserved longer sentences. And the Government soon spotted the dangerous elements in the young revolutionary. His revolution was of course the revolt of dormant nationalism.

Having undegone his full term of first imprisonment, Subhas Bose was released in the autumn of 1922. Coming out of the iron gates, he directly plunged into the fight of floods. His beloved Bengal was overcast with a great calamity. Children were rendered motherless. Many mothers had become homeless. And homes were swept off the face of Beauteous Bengal. Jail experiences had not daunted the young hero. The horrible tales of the flooded people pained him beyond description. With a battalion of volunteers immediately he rushed to the flooded zones. At once he busied himself in organizing relief measures. A flood Relief Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Sir P. C. Ray. Large contributions in cloth and cash poured in. A maganificent fund of Rs. 4,00,000 was raised. The Government offered no active support. Later on the Bengal authori-

ties contributed Rs. 20,000. Lord Lytton was greatly impressed with this great humanitarian work. He personally complimented Subhas, and appreciated his efforts personally.

I

The Gaya Session of the Congress in 1922 let loose the forces of a political storm. There was a tussle on the question of entry into the Legislatures. C. R. Das was the President. And he was a "changer". That is to say, he was in favour of bidding good-bye to the political idols of Mahatma Gandhi. There were 'No-changes' also. They were not in favour of changing the political programme. They blindly accepted Gandhi and Gandhism. The Changers won the first round of the duel. Das was buttressed by Bose. The changers formed the Swarajist Party. The Swarajists started *Forward*, a daily in English. The chief editorship of the organ was entrusted to Subhas.

The Swarajists contested the elections. And they were returned in overwhelmingly large numbers. Their amazing results won an endearing place for Subhas. Das secured a solid majority in the Calcutta Corporation. Subhas assumed the post of the Chief Executive Officer, carrying a salary of Rs. 3,000 a month, and he reduced it to half. Bose was only twenty-seven. He was the youngest man to occupy that most responsible post. His ever-accumulating popularity excited a jealousy. The Government shilly-shallied over the appointment. "It was not without a great deal of hesitation that they decided to give their approval, as they were required to do under the Statute." Thus Bose found himself at the helm of affairs in British Empire's second city. He worked like a "Lady with the Lamp" and radiated the light of sanitation in dark, dull and dingy streets of Calcutta.

Das and Bose formed an excellent team. The shrewd politicians and creative administrators changed the very face of corporation. Bureaucracy yielded place to a popular administration. The Corporation officers were dressed in home-made *khadi*. Swadeshi, for the first time, became the official dress. Public places were re-named after national leaders. Civic receptions to the gods of bureaucracy were suspended. These honours were reserved for eminent patriots. Free primary education was made available to all. Free milk was supplied to poor children. Free dispensaries came into existence. The officers used to be public masters. For the first time they realized their true position. Now they became public servants. Subhas Chandra Bose was rather too strong for those Britishers who still suffered from "colour" superiority. Superiority complex was out of place in the new regime. Bose wrought a silent, glorious, bloodless revolution.

How could the Government tolerate this reversal of their paramount power and policy? They had worshipped false gods long enough to discard them at a single blow. The Congress administration was an eyesore to the British authorities. Subhas had hardly half a year to work out his programme. Even in those six months, like Irish patriots, he slept with his boots on. Early in the morning on October 25, 1924, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, roused him from his bed. He showed him the warrant. The warrant arrested him. It put a stop to his patriotic activities.

The Bengal Ordinance was in operation. It was promulgated by the Viceroy at midnight. It provided the Bengal Government to arrest and imprison persons without trial. Only an instrument of that type was supposed to arrest nationalism. The Ordinance was brought into force immediately. The freedom of the Indian leaders was getting on the nerves of John Bull. They had plagued the British rather hard. The

police rounded all the nationalists. A clear sweep was made of the revolutionary elements. The Swarajists had brought bureaucracy to a sad end. The reason for these wholesale arrests was not to be known. "The public notion at that time was," says Subhas Chandra Bose, "that the pressure of the Swarajists in the local bodies (especially the Calcutta Municipality) in the Legislatures and at Tarkeshwar had unnerved the Government." Consequently, the official circles came out with a schoolboy excuse. They stated lamely that a revolutionary conspiracy was afoot. Consequently the arrests had to be made before anything serious happened.

II

Subhas Chandra Bose was a popular hero. It was no easy job to keep him behind the bars without a sensation. The public raised a very strong clamour. The Anglo-Indian dailies upheld the cause of the Government. They called him "the brain of the revolutionary conspiracy." The *Statesman* and the *Englishman* caused a stir in the Congress circles. The Congress circles brought an action against the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*. It was found that the *Englishman* was not a statesman. The English dailies had no documentary evidence to uphold their allegations. They sought the support of the Intelligence Department to save their skins in the defamation case.

Charges were levelled against Subhas Chandra Bose straightaway. And the Bengal Police set about to substantiate the charges. Assistance was secured of the India office in London. The object was not to find the truth. The purpose was to convict Subhas somehow. The proceedings dragged on for several months. The defence was highly influential. No legal action could be taken. Yet the glorious rebel was not released.

It was forgotten that Subhas was the Chief Executive Officer. His imprisonment naturally dislocated the entire work of the corporation. The authorities could find no alternative. They requested him to carry on the work from within the prison walls. No substitute arrangement could be made immediately. For two months the flaps and files were carried to the cell. And there the pending cases were disposed of under the shadows of police guard.

Deshbandu C. R. Das was the real loser. In the absence of Subhas he lost his right hand. As the Mayor of Calcutta, he made a stirring speech. He accepted full responsibility for doings of the Chief Executive Officer. And thereby he hurled challenge to the British Government. The public agitation was strong. The authorities felt tremendously embarrassed. The release of Subhas was seriously considered. But in his release lay a strong hit to the prestige of the police. And the police was not going to take it lying down. So the consideration of release was dropped. And the glorious patriot was transferred to Alipore Jail.

After three months' detention, orders were issued overnight for his deportation to Mandalay. Under the cover of darkness he was driven out of Calcutta. He was accompanied by seven comrades. And seven policemen formed the special escort. The Assistant Inspector-General of Police accompanied the prison van.

The patriots welcomed their deportation. Mandalay Jails were built to terrify the offenders. But these patriots were not offenders. And the Mandalay Jails failed to terrify them. They rather glorified in the idea. They deemed it a pride to live in them. "I remembered distinctly," wrote Subhas Chandra Bose, "that it was the place where Lokmanya Tilak had been imprisoned for nearly six years and later on Lala

Lajpat Rai for about a year. It gave us, therefore, some consolation and pride to feel that we were following in their footsteps."

Nobody was dismayed. Terrification cannot horrify the patriots. "We are proud of Subhas," said his parents. The eight Bengali prisoners were characterized as "eight of the most dangerous men in India" by M. Patterson, a Prison Commissioner from England.

Major Fridlay, the Mandalay Superintendent, was an excellent English gentleman. He was willing to offer every kind of comfort and consideration to the political prisoners. He offered them necessary funds and facilities to celebrate *Durga Puja* holiday in October 1925. But the Government would not accord permission. The Secretary of State for India has been rightly called the Chief Jailor. As a consequence of higher authorities' high-handedness, the entire glorious group resorted to hunger-strike.

The news was carefully guarded. But the news somehow leaked out. It caused a terrible storm of public indignation. Within less than a fortnight the authorities came down. Public opinion brought them to their knees. Orders were issued to sanction necessary funds and facilities for religious celebrations in future. But there was no question of release. Release was out of question for Bose and Co.

For two years the goody-goody Government of Gloriotan kept mum. In vain the downtrodden masses demanded release of the patriots. The matter was moved in an open court. But the court failed to move in the matter. Law is a slave of the long purse. And the Government has the longest one. The arm of law cannot reach her. The arm of law simply over-reaches the British bureaucracy.

Then there came elections in the month of November 1926. The Bengal Congress adopted another course. Subhas Chandra Bose was offered a constituency for the Bengal Legislature. And he accepted the ticket. The same honour was done to another fellow-prisoner, Mr. S. C. Mitra. In spite of very strong opponents, both were returned with thumping majorities. Heavy pressure was brought to bear upon the authorities. Pressure was put inside the Legislature. And public opinion was exerted outside. But all in vain. The authorities underwent universal censure with the skin of a hippopotamus. The state prisoners were not released. Nor were they sent for trial. Their incarceration continued unchecked.

Mandalay confinement told badly on the health of Subhas. It was a living hell on earth. Subhas was unacquainted with such a hellish political purgatory. Therefore, he fell dangerously ill. His lungs were affected. Broncho-pneumonia overtook him. His weight fell down by 40 lbs. By April 1927, he was unable to move. He was absolutely pale and bloodless. His health was in positive danger. The people of Bengal were moved to the marrow of their bones.

The people demanded an unconditional release. But the Government was not prepared to consider even a conditional one. They pushed him instead to Rangoon. A medical board was deputed. It consisted of Lieut.-Col. Kelsall and the brother of Subhas—Dr. Sunil Chandra Bose. They made a joint recommendation to the Government. And the Government made an offer in the Bengal Legislative Assembly. Mr. Bose was allowed to proceed to Switzerland for medical treatment. He must travel at his own expense. And he must promise not to stay at any Indian port. He must proceed directly to Rangoon. Subhas suffered from serious physical

deterioration. But he was not the least tempted by the offer. He preferred to risk death. He did not want to get a conditional release.

The authorities failed in their enterprise. They failed to receive any assurance from Subhas. They found no alternative. They had to order his unconditional release. Subhas was the young hope of Bengal. And the authorities were afraid of shouldering the risk of his death. They were anxious to escape the heavy responsibility. And their anxiety was real.

Early in the morning of mid-May 1927, sailing from Rangoon, the patriot anchored in the Diamond Harbour. He alighted on to the launch of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. John Bull is rather sharp in making friendship with the rebels. He was examined by Major Hungston I.M.S., Special Physician to His Excellency. Doctors Hungston, Roy, Sircar and Sands formed the medical board. That day he spent in the launch. Early next morning the Chief of the Intelligence Branch showed him the telegraphic order for his unconditional release.

The very personage three years before had shown him the warrant for his arrest. And these three years had made a difference of life and death to Subhas. The imprisonment had robbed Chief Executive Officer of health, vigour and youthfulness. He was now a done-up and broken-down wrecked and ruined consumptive patient, lingering between life and death.

But Subhas had suffered a greater loss than this. The icy hand of destiny had fallen on the greatest son of Bengal—Deshbandhu C. R. Das. The hero of independence was no more. In C. R. Das, Subhas lost his political *guru*.

III

The Beautiful Beloved Bengal looked up to Brave Bold Bose. After C. R. Das, the leadership of dynamic elements fell heavily on his shoulders. For sometime he was confined to his bed. But for long he would not be confined to his room. Soon he walked forth into the political cricket-field.

The people of Bengal had a remarkable respect for his remarkable genius. Immediately they elected him President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. He led the contingent of Bengal delegates to the Madras Congress presided over by Doctor Ansari. Subhas was appointed General Secretary of the Congress along with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Then there came off the Nehru Committee to thrash out the principles of new constitution. The goal was Dominion Status. Subhas was not interested in the Dominion Status. He was disgusted with political quibbles. His eyes were fixed on complete independence. The Leftists were not satisfied with the All-Parties Conference. They called a private meeting at Lucknow. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose were the authors of the move. Rebel Bose was the first to raise the banner of revolt against elder group. Thus a new group was formed under the name of Independence League. Might well it remind us of the Independence League which closes the last chapter of his comet-like career in South-East Asia.

Next year the Simon Commission⁶ was welcomed even with blacker flags than the Prince of Wales. Even the jackals in New Delhi (so Jawaharlal has it) shouted, "Go back, Simon!" The country boycotted all functions. And Subhas led the boycott. All his life he stood for a decisive struggle with British imperialism. He stressed upon Gandhi to give a positive lead to the country.

Bose visited Gandhiji at his Ashram at Sabarmati in May 1928. He reported to him the enthusiasm of the masses. He begged the Mahatma to come out of retirement. He requested Gandhi to give lead to the country. The reply of the Mahatma was that he did not see any light. Before his very eyes the peasantry of Bardoli were demonstrating through a No-tax Campaign that they were ready for the struggle!

“There is absolutely no doubt,” wrote Subhas Chandra Bose, “that if the Congress Working Committee had taken courage in both hands, they could have anticipated the movement of 1930 by two years and appointment of the Simon Commission could have made the starting point of such movement.”

Subhas advocated activism. He was opposed to passivism. And it was passivism that was being preached by the Saint of Sabarmati. Mahatma Gandhi was going the way of Shri Aurobindo Ghose. And this filled Subhas with disgust. He was a pleader of modernization while Gandhiji hugged mediaevalism to his breast.

The gulf widened between the Right and the Left. Pandit Motilal Nehru stood for the all-in-all acceptance of the Nehru Report of which he himself was the author. Subhas Bose stood for its all-in-all rejection. Mahatma Gandhi came forward with his compromise formula.

“Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, the Congress will adopt the Nehru Constitution in its entirety if it is accepted by the British Parliament on or before December 31, 1929; but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date, or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.”

The Leftists were not satisfied. Mr. Bose brought forward an amendment. He spoke in a fighting speech. He declared that the Congress would be content with nothing short of complete Independence. Jawaharlal made a brilliant speech in support of the amendment. On the merits of its object it evoked universal support. Gandhiji's resolution was in danger of being rejected. There was a heavy majority against him. There was a thumping victory for the Leftists. Gandhiji came forward with a threat. If the motion was defeated, Gandhiji decided to retire. This menace was enough to turn the tables. Mass psychology could easily be exploited in the halo of saintliness. So the amendment was lost. Bose was not satisfied with the resolution.

“The maximum concession which they could make,” said Subhas, “fell short of the minimum of the left-wingers.”

IV

The Lahore Congress approached in a tense atmosphere. Mahatmaji was conscious of the strength of the opposition. A great struggle lay ahead. A diplomat president with a strong hand was required. Gandhiji's name was proposed. Gandhiji refused to accept the responsibility. Next probability was Sardar Patel. He had displayed outstanding courage in the Bardoli campaign. Gandhiji was shrewd enough to forecast the strength of the opposition. Lahore was the citadel of the coming session. And Mahatma Gandhi proposed the name of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for the presidentship. And Pandit Nehru was voted to the chair.

“For the Mahatma,” writes Subhas, “it was essential that he should win over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, if he wanted to beat down the left-wing opposition and regain his former undisputed supremacy over the Congress.....For the Mahatma the choice was a prudent one, but for the Congress left-wing it proved to be unfortunate, because that event marked the

beginning of a political *rapprochement* between the Mahatma and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and a consequent alienation between the latter and the Congress left-wingand his election as President opened a new chapter in his public career. Since then Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been a consistent and unfailing supporter of Mahatma. ”

Lord Irwin issued a statement promising the Round Table Conference. A manifesto was issued by Congress leaders appreciating sincerity underlying the Viceroy's pronouncement and making an offer of co-operation to His Majesty's Government. The manifesto was signed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other distinguished personages but Subhas Chandra Bose unfurled the banner of Complete Independence. He refused to sign the manifesto. He was opposed to the acceptance of the Dominion Status. And he condemned the idea of participation in the Round Table Conference.

The resolution of Complete Independence was brought forward at the Lahore Congress. It was passed unanimously. Mahatma Gandhi included a clause congratulating Lord Irwin on his providential escape from the bombed train. This clause caused considerable excitement.. Subhas opposed its inclusion. And he was backed by patriotic youth. But Mahatma Gandhi, as usual, carried the day.

Lahore Congress accepted what the Calcutta Congress had rejected. Complete Independence became the goal of the Congress. Subhas moved an amendment to the main resolution. He urged complete boycott. He insisted on the establishment of a parallel government on Sinn Fein model in India. He urged that the Congress should take in hand the work of organization. The workers, peasants and youth should be brought together. The Congress rejected his amendment. Thereupon he made a flaming speech. “The country will

have another twelve months to consider my amendment on its merits," he said. "I have no shadow of doubt that my proposition or something very much like it will be adopted by the next Congress. My only regret, however, is that meanwhile much valuable time will be lost. But this cannot be helped for political education is sometimes a slow process, particularly when the influence of practically all prominent leaders is on the opposite side."

The personality of Subhas towered over all others at Lahore Session. Even though the amendment was rejected, its effect was not lost.

"I believe in encouraging and serving the young men," said Subhas. "If they have any virtues, we must encourage their virtues. I do not believe in surrendering our judgment to older politicians."

Subhas was dead against the Round Table Conference.

"Even if Dominion Status is offered to-morrow", said Bose, "our duty will be to organize the younger section into a republican party as was the case in Ireland and to keep up the agitation for independence."

Subhas Bose also moved another very significant resolution. He put before the Congress that the members of the Working Committee should henceforth be elected from the A. I. C. G. They would not be nominated by the President. The motion received severe opposition from the Gandhi Group, and therefore it was lost. Subhas and his companions regarded the behaviour of Rightists as most undemocratic. Consequently they staged a walk-out from the session. Within less than two minutes a new group was formed. It was known as the Congress Democratic Party. Lahore split was compared to Gaya split. Mr. Bose sent the following telegram to Mrs. C. R. Dass :

“Circumstances and tyranny of majority force us to form separate party, as at Gaya, named Congress Democratic Party, Pray spirit of Deshbandhu may guide us and your blessings may inspire us.”

Thus Mr. Bose played a brilliant role in the Lahore Congress. A contributor to the “Tribune” nutshelled the part played by the Radiant Rebel.

“Mr. Bose,” he said, “was an embodiment of C. R. Das’s spirit, fighting against everything that smacked of oppression and for everything that led to the national glory.”

Then there came the Civil Disobedience. There came the stirring national call. And Bengal made a fitting response to the call. Calcutta offered valuable sacrifices. Subhas Chandra Bose was accused, arrested, convicted and sentenced to nine months’ imprisonment. He was sent to Alipur Jail along with other prominent figures from Bengal.

The Mechuabazar Bomb Case prisoners were summoned to court on April 21, 1930. They had mighty complaints against the Government. So they refused to enter the prison van. An alarm was sounded. There came the warders. The Pathan convicts also arrived. Subhas Bose and Sen-Gupta also ran to the spot.

The Superintendent ordered forcible removal of the prisoners. He commanded Subhas to go away. But Subhas refused to budge an inch. He protested strongly against the use of force. The Superintendent ordered forcible dispersal of political prisoners. The Pathans rushed at Bose and his companions. He was pulled down under a severe *lathi* attack. He remained unconscious for about one hour and a half. Several others were injured. The warders removed them to their cells.

The incident sent a wave of horror throughout the country. The Government issued a *communiqué*. It was a soap to whitewash the whole affair. Dr. B. C. Roy called it a scrap of paper. Leaders all over the country denounced this disgraceful act. The position of the Superintendent became untenable. The Government safely transferred him to another place and saved his skin from the angry mob.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, still His Majesty's prisoner, was elected as Mayor by the people of Calcutta. After his release, he was also elected President of the All-India Trade Union Congress. He had sometime to work till the end of the year 1930.

VI.

Released in September, Bose was re-arrested in January. He was sentenced to short term in Maldah District. It happened on Independence Day. Public meetings were being held at Calcutta. The Independence pledge was being read. Processions were being taken out. Subhas Chandra Bose, the Mayor of Calcutta, headed the procession. The procession was declared unlawful by the Government. But the nationalists did not care much for the Government, much less for its law. There was a lathi charge by the mounted police. The leader of the procession suffered serious injuries.

Subhas Bose was arrested. He was convicted. Conviction is easy when the Government is the complainant. Bose was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. But soon there came the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. So Bose was released before he had served the full sentence.

The First Round Table Conference failed utterly. The greatest political body was not represented. Also the Government fared badly in the Civil Disobedience Movement. So Lord Irwin offered a dish of soup to Lord Gandhi. The soup

was accepted. And the soup was an insignificant pact. But the Congress paid the price of soup. And off set Mahatma Gandhi alone, all alone, like the Ancient Mariner, to partake of the delicious dish in the second Round Table Conference. But the soup left a bitter taste in the mouth of Gandhiji and the whole of India. So he came, tumbling back to India. He found that the pleasures of the Pact were over. The policy of repression was already in operation. So Mahatma Gandhi sought an interview with Manatma Irwin, but it was useless. Gandhi was badly deceived by the mirage of independence.

Subhas Bose had requested Gandhiji not to accept any agreement with Lord Irwin without the unconditional release of Sardar Bhagat Singh, the well-known convict of the Punjab Assembly Bomb case. Mahatmaji gave the strongest assurances to the leaders of Naujwan Bharat Sabha. But his earnest promises were earnestly forgotten. They were not intended to be kept. Gandhiji was playing for time. And unluckily he was playing in the hands of Mahatma Irwin. Irwin told Gandhi that he was helpless. The release of Bhagat Singh was a matter that concerned the Punjab Government. Mahatma Gandhi trusted "Mahatma" Irwin as a child trusts the aunt. And he signed that toy-like pact as between a child and her governess.

The youth of the country were greatly agitated. The Naujwan Bharat Sabha decided to hold an All-India Naujwan Conference. The Conference was held at Karachi on the occasion of the Karachi Congress. A strong protest was lodged against Mahatma Gandhi. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was torn to pieces. Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose presided over the Conference.

Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Raj Guru were executed at Lahore and cremated on the banks of the Ravi, on March 23, just as the Karachi Congress was in session at Karachi.

Gandhiji was received at Karachi with black flags by youngmen. Even brickbats were thrown at him. A black flower was presented to Gandhiji in honour of Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

Subhas Bose severely criticized Gandhiji. Suspension of Civil Disobedience, he declared, was an unwise step. The masses were fully prepared for the struggle. And the pact was nothing short of a betrayal of the masses.

VII

Mahatma Gandhi, as everybody expected, except Mahatma Gandhi himself, returned dolefully disappointed from the Second Round Table. Not only was he empty-handed. More than that, he was broken-hearted. A meeting of the Congress Working Committee was called in Bombay.

Subhas Chandra Bose, who was unseated at Lahore, was called to Bombay by special invitation. He was asked to place his views before the Congress Cabinet. Clarification was necessary. The Congress High Command desired an exchange of ideas.

This was exactly what the Government was out to prevent. Subhas was arrested under Regulation III of 1918. Consumptive as he was, Subhas received a severe attack in the jail. Early in 1933, the authorities released him from detention. They allowed him to proceed to Europe for medical treatment. But they did not allow him to see even his parents in India. Even in Europe he was not given unrestricted freedom. He could not visit Germany.

Bose went to Vienna. He remained there for sometime. Austria was a republic. The socialist experiments interested Subhas. He met Karl Sietz, the Mayor of Vienna. The Mayor showed him the achievements of Socialist Municipal regime. He saw the parade of Heimwehr troops at Schonbrunn. It was a celebration of the Victory Day against the Turks. It impressed Subhas. He admired disciplined organisations.

Mr. Bose met Mr. V. J. Patel, the ex-President of the Central Assembly, who was also undergoing treatment. They remained constant companions until the death of Patel separated them. Both were relentless enemies of the reactionary elements in the Congress. They wanted to purge the Congress of compromising ideas. And they wanted to put the case of India before the world. Therefore, they joined their heads together. Patel was very keen about it. He left one lakh of rupees for purposes of foreign propaganda. And he made Subhas Bose the trustee of his money. These ideas of foreign propaganda were later stressed by Jawaharlal Nehru. But these Vienna invalids were the fathers of the move.

Subhas was invited by the Indian residents in England to preside over the All-Parties London Conference of Indians. The British Government refused to grant him the passport. So he sent a written address. It was read by Dr. Bhatt in his absence. He appealed to Indians to view the situation in India in the background of world politics. He criticized the short-sightedness of Mahatma Gandhi. "If the Delhi Pact of 1931 was a blunder," he said, "the Surrender of 1933 was a calamity of the first magnitude." The Movement was suspended at a critical hour. Consequently the sacrifices of India for the last thirteen years were practically undone.

Subhas took a flight to Prague in July 1933 and stayed there for ten days. It was the "Middle-class Republic of Europe." And Bose was received there enthusiastically. The Mayor of Prague showed him round the city. He also met Dr. Benes the Foreign Minister.

VIII.

The father of Subhas Bose fell seriously ill. And so he flew to India. On landing he was served with an order under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act. Bose was told "to

proceed at-once to 38/2 Elgin Road and reside there till further order." He was not to absent himself from the precincts of the said house. Bose was not to interview any visitor at any time. He was "not to correspond, converse, or communicate or associate in any manner with anybody." Only the members of his family were excepted. There were many restrictions and the punishment for disobedience was seven years' imprisonment.

The father died as soon as the son arrived. He wanted to stay for sometime in the country. The Government served him with an order to return to Europe within one week.

"Even carceration in my country," wrote Bose to the Bengal authorities, "is better than freedom abroad."

Bose wanted to stay at least for one month. But the Government would not agree to that. Moreover, his health had deteriorated. His physicians wanted him back to Vienna. So off he sailed on January 10, 1934. He gave an interview to the press before his departure.

"We are passing through a political slump," he said, "and the problem before us is to keep up the enthusiasm of the people."

European visit brought about a great orientation in the outlook of Subhas. In spite of his poor health, he led a hectic life. His book, *The Indian Struggle*, created a great sensation. The book was printed in England but banned in India. Sir Samuel Hoare declared that it encouraged terrorism.

Bose met Amanullah the Ex-Emperor of Afghanistan, in Rome. Bose unveiled Patel's statue in Geneva. Bose defended India against films that insulted the dignity of India. Bose vehemently denounced the speech of Hitler in which he declared that it was the destiny of white people to rule over the black races. Bose met De Valera in Dublin. He was given a state

reception. It strengthened the bonds between India and Ireland.

The Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress was approaching near. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the President-elect. The presence of Mr. Bose was widely desired. So Pandit Nehru conveyed the sentiments of the nation to Mr. Bose in Vienna. An invitation was extended to him to attend the Session. But the Government was dead against his entry. Forthwith he was served with a notice. But Bose was not the man to respect notices. The call of the country was dear to his heart. So off he set for India in an Italian steamer.

Subhas Chandra Bose landed on the soil of Hindustan on April, 1936. Thousands of men and women had collected to accord a royal reception to the unique patriot. To their great dismay, Bose was arrested as soon as he disembarked. An order under section 3 of Regulation III of 1818 was served on him. He was sent to the Yervada jail, but he left an inspiring message behind.

“Keep the flag of freedom flying,” he said.

IX

The whole country raised hue and cry. Questions were raised in England. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that “it was one of the latest and the most significant instances of widespread intensive suppression of Civil liberties in India.” An adjournment motion was tabled in the Central Assembly. Resolutions were passed every where in the country. The Government was unnerved a little. The Secretary of State said that Bose was associated with terrorist gangs. But the public did not believe this. And the public pressure continued. So Subhas Chandra Bose was released in March 1937 on the eve of the introduction of the Provincial Autonomy.

Subhas proceeded again to Europe on account of an unsatisfactory health. But this time he went as a free man. A grand reception was accorded to him in London. He delivered half a dozen speeches and criticized the Government of India Act bitterly.

Bose was elected President of the Indian National Congress for 1938. So he flew back to India. A royal reception was accorded to him at the Karachi aerodrome. The Congress was to be held at Haripura on the banks of the river Tapti. The Congress Nagar presented a view of enchantment. It was the 51st Session of the Congress.

Fifty-one gates were constructed.

Fifty-one national flags were hoisted.

Fifty-one bullocks drew the chariot.

Fifty-one national songs were sung.

“We are blessed with the Presidentship of one whose life is one of unbroken records of sacrifice and service and suffering,” said the Chairman of the Reception Committee. I hope and pray that under the wise guidance of our President we may march further forward to our goal and add more glorious chapters to our history.”

Time proved that there were acute differences between the Congress President and the Congress Cabinet. Subhas was an uncompromising fighter of freedom. At any rate, he was not going to have a compromise with the reactionaries. Consequently Subhas Bose was re-elected in spite of all the opposition from the Gandhi Group. The country gave its verdict in favour of Subhas Bose. Gandhi was cut to the quick.

“I must confess,” said Mahatma Gandhi dejectedly, “that from the beginning I was decidedly against his re-election for reasons into which I need not go. Since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as

a candidate, the defeat is more mine than his. And I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand. I rejoice in the defeat. The minority can only wish the majority all success. If they cannot keep pace with it, they must come out of the Congress."

This was an undemocratic call. But those who cared for Gandhi, they did not care a fig for democracy. So the Gandhi Group threatened to resign. And Subhas Bose was left alone in the desert. So he was disqualified and the coast was kept clear for Gandhi and his God. The followers of the Mahatma were left saddled in their cosy corners in the Congress Cabinet. Bose and his followers formed the Forward Bloc."

X

Broken-down and bed ridden Mr. Subhas Bose ceased to be even a four-anna member of the Congress. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee elected him as President. So the Congress High Command suspended the Bengal Congress also.

But the spirit of Subhas was not broken. Soon he plunged himself in patriotic fire. The Holwel Monument at Calcutta was a standing disgrace to nationalism. Several attempts were previously made for its removal. But these attempts did not fructify. Now Mr. Bose led a peaceful agitation. The people of Bengal followed him gladly. The Bengal Government got perturbed. And they promptly arrested Bose under the new-fangled Defence of India Rules. Bose was arrested. But the movement could not be arrested. So the Government removed the monument to some safe place.

Subhas Bose, still a prisoner, was returned unopposed to the Central Assembly in a by-election. Although

the monument was removed, the hero was not released. The Government considered it necessary to keep him behind the bars. The Defence of India Rules were an easy handle in the hands of the Government. He was to be tried for a speech at Mohammad Ali Fark and an article in the *Forward Block*. The article was entitled the "Day of Reckoning."

Mr. Bose regarded his detention to be most unjust. There was nothing against him. His health seriously deteriorated in jail. He resorted to hunger-strike as a protest. He wrote a letter to the Governor of Bengal on November 26, 1940. This letter may be looked upon as the political testament of Subhas Chandra Bose.

"There has been manifest illegality and injustice. Only one explanation can, to my mind, account for such strange conduct, viz., that Government have been pursuing a frankly vindictive policy towards me for reasons that are quite inexplicable....."

"In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish—but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea,—but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas and the dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has even filled itself in the world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

"What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains to every corner of his land and across the seas to dis-

tant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause?

“Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth, he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life immortal.

“This is the technique of the Soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. To-day I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory.”

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL PROMETHEUS

*Sail on ! Sail on ! ye stately ships,
And with your floating bridge the ocean span ;
Be mine to keep aloft this burning light,
Be thine to bring man nearer to man.*

— *Longfellow.*

Bose is the political Prometheus of India. Bose is the lighthouse of Indian political struggle. Bose embodies within himself the spirit of Indian revolution. Like Prometheus he stole fire from the British Jove so that he might benefit his Indian people. Like Jove British kept him bound under the rock of suppression, retention, restriction and imprisonment. Like Prometheus, Bose fled to Singapore and there he established himself as a beacon for guiding ships of freedom to all enslaved territories. He has lit fire in South East Asia which cannot be extinguished by British and French fire-brigades. The very oceans have caught fire like witches' Cauldron under the magical influence of Subhas Chandra Bose.

I

Early in life Bose came into conflict with the dictatorship of Mahatma Gandhi. He refused to be a puppet in the Congress. Mahatmaji failed to pull the strings of the westernized patriot. He was not favourably impressed by the leadership of Gandhi. Being himself profoundly spiritual, spiritualized politics did not dazzle him. Unlike Jawaharlal, Subhas was

not overawed. Motilal tried in vain to shield Gandhiji from the attacks of Bose. The blows of Bose always went home. The onslaughts of the young giant fell on the Gandhite citadel with a deadly effect.

As soon as Subhas returned from England, he met Gandhiji. But we know that he did not carry very good impression of him. Gandhiji was quite a hero, but he was not the idol whom Subhas Chandra Bose would worship. "My reason told me clearly, again and again," wrote Bose, "that there was a deplorable lack of clarity in the plan which the Mahatma had formulated and that he himself did not have a clear idea of the successive stages of the campaign which would bring India to her cherished goal of freedom."

That impression Mr. Bose carried throughout his career. Mahatma Gandhi moved between two body-guards in the presence of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Mr. Sen Gupta shielded him on one hand. Pandit Motilal Nehru protected him on the other. Failure of Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932 brought the matters to a head. Bose had fought valiantly and non-violently under Gandhi. Therefore he was the most disappointed. Badly broken, he proceeded to Europe for health. He was in Vienna when Gandhi called off the heroic struggle for freedom. But there came a thunderbolt from Vienna under the signature of Subhas Chandra Bose and Vithalbhai Patel, the ex-president of the Central Legislative Assembly :—

"The latest action of Mr. Gandhi in suspending Civil Disobedience is a confession of failure. We are clearly of the opinion that Mr. Gandhi as a political leader has failed. The time has therefore come for a radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle; as it is unfair to expect Mr. Gandhi to work the programme not consistent with his lifelong principles.

“ If the Congress as a whole can undergo this transformation, it will be the best course. Failing that a new party will have to be formed within the Congress composed of radical elements.”

This was as frank a warning to Gandhi as could be expected under the circumstances to clear out of the political field and make room for younger and abler men. After all, when a man brings a nation on the verge of crisis by his policy, he must either vindicate himself by a popular referendum or go down, and let others assume the helm of affairs. Chamberlain went down before Churchill. The warring chiefs of China went down before Chiang Kai-Shek. Trotsky fell before Stalin. In all cases the world was better for the exit of unpopular leaders. Why did not Gandhi do likewise? Why was a trumped-up vote of confidence called for when Gandhi's opponents were either in prison or in exile? The Bombay Congress was a Rightist coup. Nothing more, nothing less.

The official reply to Bose and Patel charges came from Sittaramaya, a South Indian henchman of Gandhi. He is well-known as a local leader. To the rest of India he is not known but for that strange and unexpected break in 1939—his standing for Congress Presidentship in opposition to Bose. Wrote Sittaramaya, in his extremely biased and one-sided survey of Indian Struggle. “ The History of the Congress” :—

“ This is not however the first time that Gandhi met with adverse criticism from either of the distinguished signatories whose ill-health compelled their stay in a distant land during the campaign. Gandhi bore the world's criticism, even as he bore his own sufferings with patience, faith and fortitude.”

This is a brief, sentimental, but not very logical defence of Gandhi. It is no reply to the pungent, and extremely sensible criticism of Bose and Patel. Gandhi could bear

sufferings at all times. He was like other public men of India, answerable at the bar of public opinion. He should have cheerfully taken the rightful and legal course of a country-wide referendum as soon as the Leftists could amass their forces. That would have resulted in a crushing defeat to the Mahatma. If he could bear that suffering without disrupting the Congress, Sittaramaya's estimate about him would have been correct. As it is, the country would no doubt look with suspicion at the rump vote at Bombay Sessions in 1934. It was in no sense a vote of confidence in leadership of Gandhi. The indication of a change in public opinion was provided by Bose's election in 1937. But the Mahatma, a wise man, allowed Bose to be elected with approval and support of Gandhites. He thought it best to meet the popular demand. He wanted agreement with Bose in 1937. He knew that his past failures could remain in oblivion. Also his own men occupied the key positions in Congress, Bose would be a figurehead. Bose did not want to create schism in the country. Gandhites were prepared to co-operate with him. He thought that it might be possible to carry out his reform of Congress from the seat of Presidentship.

This happy state of affairs did not last long. Gandhites were elated with their success in parliamentary elections. They thought that the moment had arrived to assume full command of the Congress. Therefore, partnership with Bose should be dropped. Past debacles of Mahatma should be forgotten. He should again reign supreme in the Congress, Future historians would no doubt look askance at this strange somersault of Mahatma. They will ask why after effecting an agreement with Bose in 1937, he turned away in 1939. Why did he allow his followers, to set up a rival candidate? Why was Bose not allowed to function as President? Had not Nehru been elected twice? And has not Abul-Kalam Azad

remained Congress President without a break since 1940? Then why this zeal to push Bose out? If Nehru and Azad could have Gandhi's blessings why not Bose? Why was Sittaramaya pitched against him? All Congress leaders knew that he had not a ghost of chance of success against Bose. There could be only one answer to all these questions. Gandhi tended to become dictatorial in Congress.

While commenting on the Gandhi-Bose correspondence the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore very neatly summed up the position of both the correspondents in the following words :—

“ Many who read the correspondence with knowledge of the background will conclude whatever may be their view of the respective personalities and programmes of the two principals, that Mr. Bose emerges from the wordy exchange with most of the honours. Mr. Gandhi always refuses attempts to ‘corner’ him; seldom does he counter argument; with argument and his usual reply to a concrete suggestion is a *non possumus* on grounds which Mr. Bose has previously refused to accept as well-founded. ”

It was only the pique of an old man. The wounded dignity actuated the decision to bless candidature of Sittarmaya. There were no major problems facing the country then about which Gandhi and Bose differed. It was not that Mahatma wished to launch a struggle and asked the people to give him full powers. If that were the case, Bose would have with pleasure stood aside. He would let Gandhi assume leadership of the Nation. The country had a none too happy experience of Gandhi's leadership in 1930-32. Bose had scrupulously avoided any open challenging of Mahatma's leadership in the Congress. He wanted to reform the Congress by legal means. That task he should have been allowed to do.

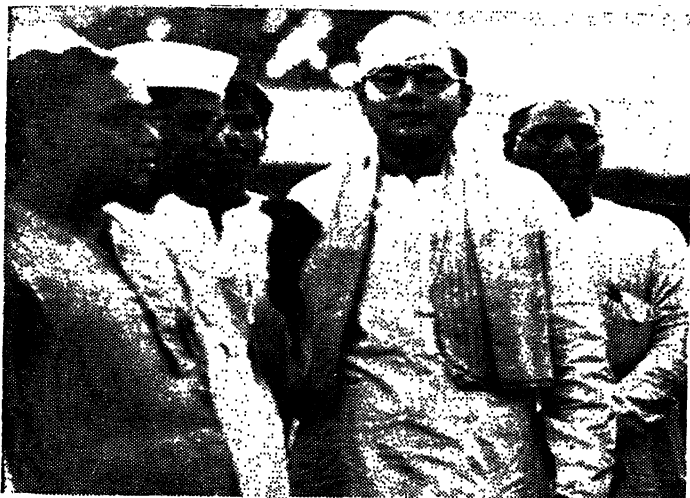
undeterred. If the Congress were reformed, it would certainly have given up the methods of rump vote employed by Mahatma, when it suited his purpose.

This future state of affairs Gandhi could not face with equanimity. It would mean the end of his leadership. He made great technical mistakes. He retained his leadership. He avoided reform of Congress. The future still holds a nightmare for him. The Congress may be at long last reformed. Then it may not be possible for men like him to ride rough-shod over the wishes of the people. He has not thus gained any success as a result of ousting Bose from Congress. The basis of his leadership after the two coups of 1938-1939, is not democratic. The seeds of discord have been sown. He may reap the harvest of Dead Sea Apples, and Grapes of Wrath.

II

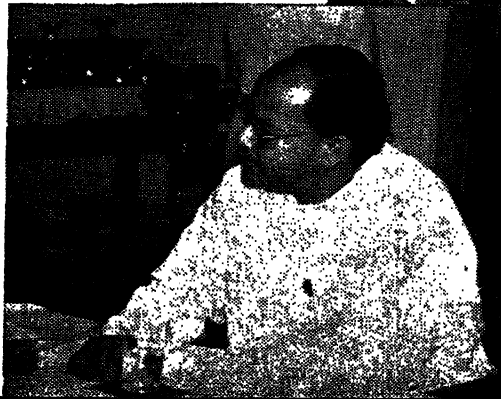
In most countries, the members of a country stand by their chief, if it ever comes to a show-down against external opponents. But Bose had around him in his cabinet a most unsympathetic crew of men. Instead of aiding their chief, they openly rejoiced at the conflict between him and the Mahatma. They aided the rival candidate Sittaramaya. They said that they could not function as Working Committee Members under presidentship of Bose. They had accute differences with him. One might ask, was that the case? Why did they agree to work on his Committee, when he was first elected President? Why did they not part company with him then and there? Why did they scream anathemas against him later on? If they could co-operate with him for so long, it is idle to pretend they could not do that, if he was elected for a second term,

Fact is that they were reluctant to work under Bose in the beginning. They did not think aloud in these terms. They felt the force of expediency. The Mahatma had not



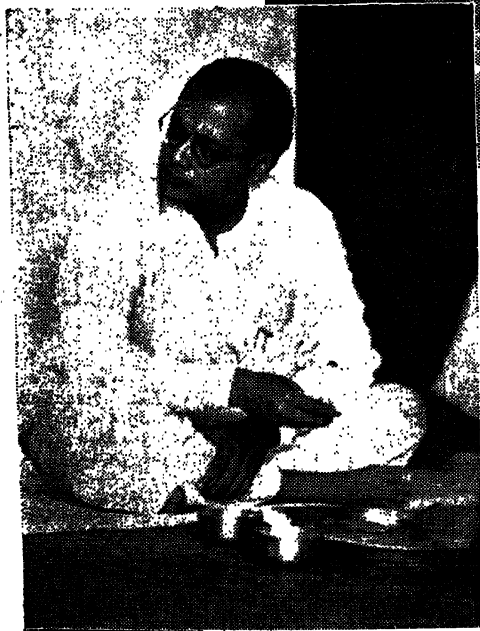
The King of Journalism stand here among his kinsmen of the scribbling democracy. Bose will always stand high as a writer over and above his reputation as a patriot.

Whether at Karachi or at Calcutta, young and old followed Bose as if attracted by a powerful magnet.



An Excellent Study. of Subhas Bose at the dining table with only a cup of water. Drinking is not his habit, and marriage is not on the milestones of his life.

The Budding Politician—Subhas Bose, as a student, dreams of the national struggle ahead. Out-and-out a man of action, Bose, is also deeply meditative. Mark the tranquility of his face.



Man and his Meals
Subhas eats little but thinks much. Thought is his real food for soul. His mind is busy so far away that his hands have forgotten even to nurse his stomach.

given them orders to sabotage from within. And thus they did not end Presidentship of Bose. Things had now gone far. Bose was right, when having been re-elected, he insisted on selecting his own crew of men to function as Working Committee. Why should he allow the Mahatma to do this job for him ?

Why should Gandhi select men, with whom Bose could not co-op-erate for a single day ?

The Pant resolution at Tripuri which aimed at foisting a Working Committee on Bose, was palpably an absurd move. If Bose bowed before it, he had to accept the same "Nominated" Working Committee. And this would have openly raised the standard of revolt against him. One wonders how the Working Committee Members agreed to stage such a *volte face* ? They had previously expressed their inability to work with Bose in one team. Or was it that the Mahatma had moved a magic wand round their heads ? and they were prepared to go along with him to any extent, even if it meant swallowing hook, line and sinker ? They ate all they had said about Bose in the past ?

Immediately after the election of Subhas Chandra Bose as President of the Indian National Congress at Tripuri, Mahatma Gandhi openly declared, "I must confess that from the very beginning I was decidedly against his re-election for reasons into which I need not go. Since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as a candidate, the defeat is more mine than his. And I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand. I rejoice in this defeat. The minority can only wish the policy and programme of the majority all success. If they cannot keep

pace with it they must come out of the Congress. If they can, they will and strength to the majority. The minority may not obstruct on any account. They must abstain when they cannot co-operate. I must remind all Congressmen that those, who being Congress-minded remain outside the Congress by design, represent it most. Those, therefore, who feel uncomfortable in being in the Congress may come out, not in a spirit of ill-will, but with the deliberate purpose of rendering more effective service."

These historic words have been most misunderstood by all Indians except a few of the leading Right-Wingers, who claim to be the first lieutenants of Mahatma Gandhi. Everybody knows that Bose visited Mahatmaji at Wardha soon after the election, and that they had also three hours' conversation at the end of which Bose declared that the meeting had been quite cordial, and though they had not arrived at any final decision over the problems yet, they had reached certain tentative conclusions. But to the surprise of Bose as well as of all his countrymen, immediately after the interview, twelve Rightist members of the Working Committee tendered their joint resignation. Then again, when Mahatma Gandhi was staying at Rajkot and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru informed him of Bose's serious illness as well as of the stormy scenes at Tripuri, Mahatmaji kept quiet like a rock. One of the Anglo-Indian papers, while reviewing a book on Bose, said the other day, "The Mahatma's methods of warfare are relentless. He knows no compromise. Responsibility for the political murder of Mr. Bose lies on his shoulders, and his alone." Bose has been missing from India for a long time and whether he is now declared to be found in Berlin or Rome, everybody seems to feel that the rebel President of the Indian National Congress is lost for ever to his motherland, and the responsibility, though not the blame, has been unfortunately shifted to Mahatma

Gandhi, because the guardians of discipline at Wardha once declared their verdict. "The Working Committee has come to the painful conclusion that it will fail in its duty if it condones the deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline by Subhas Chandra Bose. The Working Committee resolves that for his grave act of indiscipline, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is declared disqualified as the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and to be a member of any elective Congress Committee for three years as from August 1939."

Bose, however, could not indulge in any logic-chopping. His plans about formation of Working Committee were cut and dry. He wanted to deal with rebels as any other President in his place would have done. He had wanted to become a President *de facto* instead of remaining a mere head *de jure* of the Congress. He had learned this lesson from the Gandhites. They had at Lahore Congress unceremoniously pushed out the younger group of Working Committee members like Bose and Sri Nivas Aiyanger. They had every right then to be included in the Working Committee. But their claims were ignored. Those who objected to Bose's way of forming a Working Committee in 1939, might have as well remembered 1930. But it is idle to expect them to do so. They could not remember what they had said in the election controversy between Bose and Sittaramaya. They feigned ignorance of it all. By doing so, they could succeed in foisting Working Committee on Bose. So they passed the following resolution :—

"This Committee declares its firm adherence to the fundamental policies of the Congress which have governed its programme in the past years under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and is definitely of the opinion that there should be no break in these policies and that they continue to govern the Congress programme in the future. The Committee expresses

its confidence in the work of the Working Committee which functioned during the last year and regrets that any aspersions should have been cast against any of its members. In view of the critical situation that may develop during the coming year and in view of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress and the country to victory during such a crisis, the Committee regards it imperative that the executive authority of the Congress should command his implicit confidence and requests the President to nominate the Working Committee for the ensuing year in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji. ”

Bose was very ill, but he was adamant. He declared defiantly :—

“ I have not come here to go to hospital in Jubbulpore. I would much rather die here than be removed elsewhere before the session is over. ”

On the 17th of February Dr. Sir Nilratan Sircar, who examined Mr. Bose, issued a bulletin regarding his condition stating that—

“ He had had a serious attack of broncho-pneumonia and intestinal infection.....and it is highly advisable for him to remain undisturbed in bed for at least another fortnight. I am afraid any attempt to undertake active work within the next fortnight may be fraught with positive danger. There may be either physical collapse or fresh and aggravated attack of acute infection. ”

Bose was reluctant to act as a figurehead. So, he had to go. But the constitutional issue was thus raised in 1939, As a result of the Working Committee's defiance of the legally constituted President, it still remains. If and when a similar election contest takes place for Congress Presidentship, the

intransigence of Working Committee against a President who happens to have different views on certain subjects would create a national crisis on even greater scale. Bose's removal may have been a good patrisan move by the members of Working Committee but it did not end the crisis. It only ignored it for sometime. By so doing the Working Committee had only a temporary relief. It may be ended by a determined President and differently-constituted A. I. C. C. The members of the Working Committee should adopt the truly Nationalist course of effecting a compromise with Bose. This has been always desired by Nehru and the Socialists. They resent dictatorship of either Bose or elderly Congress leaders.

III

What was Bose's attitude to the burning problems of our times such as Hindu-Muslim problem? This confused question of Hindu-Muslim differences has been once again brought to the forefront. Speculation is rife about the possible solution. It is well to examine the attitude Bose has persistently adopted in this matter. He is against domination of any one group inside the Congress. He has defied all efforts of the Working Committee. The old guard and the Mahatma failed to enslave his spirit and make him an abject camp-follower of theirs. He is similarly against domination of any one community by the other.

This was the key-note of Swarajist policy. This was the reason of C.R. Das's popularity among Mussalmans. No Muslim ever thought that his interests were not safe in the hands of Das and Bose. The Swarajists ruled the Greater Calcutta area. And C. R. Das, Bose and Sen Gupta had been Mayors. The Muslims were satisfied with all that they did. A separate communalist Muslim Party would have been unthinkable in Ben gal.

Not that the Communalists did not make any effort with this end in view. They did try, but in vain. They beat their heads against a steel wall. The Swarajist rule was impartial and incorruptible.

The Muslim League Party is a recent creation in Bengal. Hindu Subha's war cries were also not heard much of in those days. The Praja Party of Bengal, which put up its candidates in opposition to Congress, never claimed to be a communal body. On the other hand, it was fighting for the problem of *Dal bhat* of Bengalis. It won considerable number of seats. And it was long after that it went over to the League. Similarly Provincial Hindu Sabha, fought shy of calling itself Communal Party, which indeed it was. Instead it adopted Nationalist slogans. And that was the reason of its partial success.

Even to-day there has been a swing over to the Left. The Muslim League has broken down in Bengal. Fazalul-Haq has left it, and proved a true son of Bengal by fighting for United India Nationalism. The new faction of League functions. This League popularity is in any case a transitory phase. The Hindu Sabha Party has also come out of its political oblivion of semi-obscurity. And now it parrots about unchecked its communal slogans as a counter-weight to Muslim League. It has also feet of clay. And like Muslim League, it does not possess ghost of a mandate from the people of Bengal to carry on its anti-national activities. It must also vanish one day.

Bose was against the policy of appeasement of the communalists. The earliest indication of this was provided by his attitude towards the unity talks which Gandhi carried on with Communalists prior to his departure for Round Table Conference. At the Conference itself Gandhi summoned communal leaders to meet him. And he told them that he would go to any length to meet their demands. Bose criticised

the Mahatma. He said that it was a disastrous policy. Gandhi should have carried on talks with Nationalist Muslims only. He should have accepted what they said as the verdict of Mussalmans of India. By his parleys with Communalist Mussalmans he played into the hands of reactionaries. The Communalists were puppets of Britain. And they would try by all means possible to delay and frustrate the plans of Hindu-Muslim Unity envisaged by the Mahatma. Bose believed that Hindu-Muslim differences were creations of a third party. And Gandhi should have first insisted on granting freedom to India. This should have been a prelude to solution of communal and allied problems. By not so doing he gave an opportunity to the British Government to point out those communal differences existing in India. And till these were ended, granting of complete freedom to this country was unthinkable. Mahatma Gandhi proved to be true what was so far only a disputed point in political polemics between the Nationalists on one hand and the British Government on the other. Bose condemned his action in unmistakable terms. He said that Gandhi had gone alone without taking any Nationalist Muslim with him. While in England, he had entered into parleys with Communalists. They raised their demands higher every day and were in fact insatiable. Gandhi's attention was thus averted from the real purpose of his visit to England. Forgotten was the liberation of his country. He entangled himself in the intricate web woven by the Communalists then in Britain. Bose said that Gandhi would get no political freedom that way. Nor would he achieve unity in the country. Time justified his utterances.

No communal settlement emerged out of London discussion. The country was presented with Ramsay Macdonald's Communal Award. It perpetuated the evils of disunity instead of removing them. Bose was against Communal decision.

He did not denounce it from the Hindu Sabha point of view. That body thought that it was a pernicious move. It harmed the Hindu interests. Subhas Bose said that it was anti-national. It prevented formation of a United India. He wanted the Congress to condemn the Communal Decision along with the New Constitution.

The Congress was not consistent in condemning the New Constitution. It spared the Communal Decision. What was their object in adopting this shilly-shally attitude? Was it because they thought it would be interpreted in certain circles as an attempt to take sides in communal issues? If that was the case, they had the attitude of Bose to guide them. The communal decision was to be condemned as part of a pernicious constitution. It deserved no isolation from the later reforms scheme. Jawaharlal was in one of his better moods. He was not inclined to be a wholehog supporter of Gandhism. He did say that it was foolish to spare the communal decisions, and attack the New Constitution. He could not subscribe to the wooden neutrality of Congressmen on this subject. What would have been countrywide reaction to the Congress move of an unequivocal condemnation of communal decision? It would have taken the wind out of sails of Communalists. The Hindu Sabhaites could not in that case pose as champions of Hindu rights. They were engaged in a single-handed struggle against the decision. Hindu Sabha would have ceased to be a political force as early as 1935. The Muslim Communalists might have been disturbed also. But then according to Bose, it was best to steer clear of them. And it was useless to placate them. The Congress should not have left any party of communalists in doubt about its attitude of implacable hostility towards all that they stood for.

About this time Bose took eminently sensible stand about communal decision and the New Constitution. Another Congress leader? started parleys with Communalists which

Gandhi had abandoned in 1932 ; having then despaired of finding a hopeful solution of the tangle by such methods. The name of this leader was Rajinder Parshad. He carried on negotiations with Jinnah, but without any result. When Bose became President of Congress, he did not open up negotiations with Jinnah. This would have been contrary to his past policy. He had better things to do. He maintained opposition to New Constitution while work of Congress Ministries continued as before. He explained to people abroad, the state of affairs in the Northern State of the Indian Denmark.

This brings us to the next phase of communal problem in India. Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah was foiled in his efforts to have peace with Congress on his own terms. He announced with the blare of trumpets that Hindus and Muslims were two nations. Only a two-nation theory could be acceptable to him, and his Muslim League. Bose was in prison when Qaid-i-Azam started prattling about Pakistan. In the earlier stages of his campaign of atrocity-mongering, Bose was still a free man. But he did not make any public pronouncement in India about Pakistan. It is, however, not difficult to guess his attitude on this subject. In the preface to his book "Indian Struggle" he has explained his views on Indian unity. He says that Nehru also wrote in American papers, and has since 1938 repeated through a dozen Press articles. Nehru said at hundreds of public platforms that India was one and indivisible from the very beginning. It is a remarkable co-incidence that both these men stress the same matter in their writings.

Bose could not, therefore, be any party to a scheme of partitioning of India. He could not hand over certain areas to communal factions. But at the same time he is not a believer in a rigid scheme of centralisation. He believes in wide powers for Provinces. His experience of Bengal politics is a grim reminder to him. He feared the danger for an.

outside dictatorship on his province. He would have been happier if the Central Body of Congress had not too much meddled in Bengal affairs, and let it alone. In other provinces too, whenever the Congress leaders interfered and curbed the rights of local leaders he was up in arms against them.

It was because he believed in healthy independent working of provincial autonomy. He backed up the case of Dr. Khare, though the latest performance of that man is such as to forfeit whatever sympathy Bose may have had for him. Even Gandhites are opposed to acceptance of offices in Viceroy's Council till the main demand of India is conceded. But the fact remains that Bose did raise his voice against the injustice done to Khare. It may have been a mere cry in the wilderness. Risking unpopularity, he defended Khare. Bose was not a narrow-minded Nationalist centered over the problems of India. He could not suffer exclusion of events happening in Europe and elsewhere. His interest in world events dated back from the days of his student life in England. The world was passing through a critical phase of its history. When he returned home he accepted the leadership under C. R. Das. He was in the crew of men, who had always stressed the necessity of Indians taking interest in world events. Das had developed some hasty notions about Russia. If he had lived, they would have been modified by the events.

Later on whenever Bose spoke, he held up the example of other countries before the eyes of his audiences. Radicalism, in that decade following the war, meant following the internationalist ideas. Bose, an avowed radical, followed this tradition. In the period between 1930-37, more revolutions had broken out in Europe. And Bose believed in keeping a stern watch on the European situation. He observed these changes from close quarters.

As a result of his visits, he evolved the doctrine of synthesis of various European ideologies. But he was also, like C. R. Das, opposed to certain features of Communism, though he admired the Soviet regime. Similarly he was opposed to certain features of Hitlerism such as policy of aggrandisement. He persistently protested against the aggressive policy of Germany when he was in England in the winter of 1937-38. He made this attitude perfectly clear. On this subject, there were no differences between him and the Congress Working Committee. He hated the methods employed by Hitlerite Germany as much as they did. So much was said by him in numerous speeches before his arrest.

IV

Subhas Bose was playing the leading role of a Swarajist. He was C. R. Das's Second-in-Command in the political field. The working class of India was being shaken by huge convulsions. As a result of the Russian Revolution the economic crisis let loose greater than the First World War. The workers had become increasingly conscious of their important role in the new world. There was a great swing towards Communism. The Communists were singularly unfortunate in having some disreputable men as their leaders. Strikes were widespread all over the country. Bombay and Bengal were the storm centres. There was a strike among Tata workers in which Subhas Bose also took a prominent part. Strikes were quite numerous. And this was not the only prominent feature of working class politics of the time. The crying need for the workers was to organise themselves into Unions. It was in this work that Bose, the organiser, lent a helping hand. The workers reposed much confidence in him. They made him President of T.U.C. As the T. U. C. Chief, it was the risk for Bose to hold together divergent elements inside the great

working classes. There were the Rightists and there were Communists. There were also followers of M. N. Roy. And finally there were those Socialists of the type of Bose who wanted the Trade Union Congress to follow the middle way. They wanted them to take an increasing part in the struggle for freedom.

The result of those conflicts was clear. In spite of the best efforts of Bose, the organisational strength of the T. U. C. deteriorated. There were doctrinal differences. There were conflicts over the nomination of men like Dewan Chaman Lal as T. U. C. representative to International Labour Office. The latter even brought the matters to a head. The Rightists left the T. U. C. And they formed a separate union body of their own. A little after that the Communists also parted company with the Trade Union Congress.

Subhas Babu was undeterred by these splits. He continued to take interest in the T. U. C. work. The increased tempo of Civil Disobedience in 1930-33 made it impossible for him to devote much attention to Trade Union matters. Of course, inside the Congress he kept the flag of Socialism flying. And he continued to rally people for the Socialist cause.

For this purpose he actively associated himself with the work of such parties as Naujwan Bharat Sabha, in 1931. The Sabha was actively connected with Working Class Movement and also the Peasant Struggle. In that sense Subhas Babu's interest in the working class politics never flagged. He was a friend of workers, and one of the earliest exponents of the doctrine of Socialism in this country. Also he was never afraid of giving a free vent to his views on the doctrinal differences between Socialism, Communism and Fascism.

Subhas Bose's attitude in the T.U.C. was a sufficient proof of his desire to steer clear of all party colours. He was not a Communist. Nor was he a constitutional trade-unionist of Walter Citrine type. He was a Socialist. And yet he did not try to form a Socialist Party in India. Nor did he become member of it when it was formed in 1934. He gave it his active support, nevertheless.

He was then an independent Socialist. He did not believe that Russia was the only country which could teach Socialism to the world. He believed that there were certain objectionable features in Communism, such as "materialistic interpretation" of history, lack of faith in God, dictatorship of the proletariat, etc. The same was true of Fascism. It had also some undesirable features. And the solution of the ills of world lay in a synthesis of Fascism and Communism. The synthesis has not taken place. Communism and Fascism are irreconcilably opposed to each other. In this matter Subhas has been disillusioned much as many social democrats in England and America have been. Whether he modifies his opinion remains to be seen. But one thing emerged out of the writings of Bose. In spite of differences with Russia, Bose did not join the campaign launched by anti-Soviet elements in India.

These people have frequently attacked Russia. They have protested against what they thought to be illegal trials. But Bose has not indulged in such cheap jibs. If he did not join the Socialists formally, he was also not opposed to the Communists. Never did he make them targets of ridicule. In fact, so far as Left Unity in India was concerned, he tried to rally together Radicals, Socialists and Communists. And he may be described as one of the greatest exponents of Indian Front popular. He gave his support to the Left Consolidation

Committee in 1939, with this end in view. That Committee, due to intransigent attitude of such men as Roy, could not function for long. There was another reason for breakdown of the Left Consolidation Committee. And that was the lack of an agreed economic programme for the country.

Subhas Babu has enunciated his economic programme in his book, "The Indian Struggle." It recognises the need of Socialisation of Key Industries, and large scale reform of landed estates. But it does not envisage total abolition of either capitalism or landlordism.

There was a workable programme. It could benefit the workers of this country. The Communists and Socialists in other countries, joined the radicals in Front populair. There is an agreed programme of work to guide their activities. They might have done the same in India. But the alliance did not take place. There were threats of reprisals held out by opponents of Bose inside the Congress. All those who might have strengthened such an alliance were separate from him. This was a great set-back to the working class politics of India. There were defections of Rightists and Communists from "Trade Union Congress" when Bose was one of the leading lights of that organisation. Bose tried to avert that disaster to the working class. But there was crisis on the freedom Front. The consequent outbreak of Civil Disobedience prevented him doing so. In 1939 again the crisis loomed ahead. The war came, and because of a harvest of arrests in India, Left Consolidation and Left Programmes were left in the lurch.

V

The broad humanitarian outlook of Bose conditioned his attitude towards the working class. Socialism had become an article of faith with him. It taught him to view the National

question, as one deeply inter-related with the economic issues facing the country. He, therefore, did not consider Englishmen as his enemies. He only wanted to change the system of Government, which they had imposed upon India. This view about Bose's attitude runs counter to the Tory conception of an Indian extreme Nationalist. The Tories have represented such a Nationalist to be racially antagonistic to the British. Subhas Chandra Bose, as a matter of fact, was far from that.

Bose's early English education had of course moulded his attitude towards the British. He was converted to Socialism later on. Before that he considered Englishmen as his friends. He saw a good deal of English life in England. He was convinced that while there was no dearth of die-hard Tories among the British, there were also men, who could be described as the finest specimens of humanity. His chief, Das, was also an admirer of great Englishmen. He was blessedly free from all taint of racial prejudices. Bose was of course a true disciple of the great leader.

An occasion was provided to Bose to display his broad-minded attitude in racial matters. He was sent to Burma prisons in 1927. He remained confined there for some time. While in Burma prisons he had to deal with many English Superintendents of Jails. Some of them were not well-disposed towards Bose, and other political prisoners. There were one or two good English Superintendents. They treated them with generosity. And did not give them any occasion for complaint. Towards such people Bose was also extremely friendly. And later on, he had occasion to write about Mandalay confinement. He lavished generous praise on such English Superintendents. Only the British had sent more such men to India! Then the quarrel between Britain and India would have ended long ago. The relations between the two

countries, would have been established on a saner footing. Lord Irwin, during his stay in India, got a well-deserved reputation. He was one of the most liberal and good-natured Viceroys that ever came to India. But he signed a pact with Gandhi. It was from English point of view a feat of great statesmanship. But it was an act of betrayal on the part of Gandhi. Bose did some plain-speaking about Gandhi in this matter. But he insisted that it was no fault of Irwin's. He praised Irwin for his Liberalism. And he thought that Gandhi could have signed a better pact, if he had only played his cards well. Irwin did prove to be a shrewd diplomat. And Gandhi was no match for Irwin.

The Civil Disobedience Movement ensued in thirties. Bose met several English journalists. They had come to India to report the situation to their papers. Some of them, particularly, Hon'ble Brailsford, struck him as extremely sympathetic to Indian cause. Brailsford understood the Indian viewpoint. Few Englishmen at that time did. Bose praised his activities in India. He thought such men could bring the two countries nearer to each other.

There is another example of his trust in those Englishmen, who were well-disposed towards this country. There were his letters addressed to the 'Manchester Guardian' when he was in Vienna. That was after his release from imprisonment courted as a result of Civil Disobedience Movement. He wrote to the 'Manchester Guardian' protesting against restrictions imposed on him in India. He wanted to come back to this country in 1936. He wanted to participate in the annual session of the Congress. Nehru sent this message to him on behalf of his countrymen. But he was served with the following notice by the British Consul in Vienna :—

“ I have to-day received instructions from the Secretary of State Foreign Affairs to communicate to you a warning

that the Government of India have seen in the press statements that you propose to return to India this month, and the Government of India desire to make it clear to you that should you do so, you cannot expect to remain at liberty."

This formed the subject of his protest to 'Manchester Guardian,' in the course of which he wrote :—

"I now want to go home and I am served with this official threat. My last imprisonment was bad enough, legally and ethically. But the proposed imprisonment, in the event of my returning to India now, beats all records. May I ask if this is a forecast of the extended liberty which the new constitution will usher in?"

Needless to say this protest was unheeded by the British administrators in India. They had decided in the event of Bose returning to India, to arrest him and keep him in jail. But Bose believed that it was worth while to awaken the liberal opinion in England. He had faith in 'Manchester Guardian' and the small but efficient group of India's sympathisers in England. These people at least viewed things judiciously. They could weigh the pros and cons of the decision of the Government of India. A man with racial hatred towards the English, could not appeal to their better sense. Only their friend could reason with them in a friendly way.

Later on in 1937-38, he visited England again for reasons of health. He addressed numerous meetings. He issued several statements to the Press. All of which aimed at winning over the public opinion in England for the cause of Indian freedom. Of course, he aired his views freely. He gave the English people to understand that the new constitution was a fraud. While the Indians had accepted offices, things were not working smoothly. Enough power had not been delegated to the representatives of the people. He also said that they would have nothing short of Complete Independence. But he

spoke in friendly terms to the audience. And the audience were mostly friendly. Their good-will was as important to him as the good-will of his own people.

That was the time for Britain to seize the advantage and thrash out Indian problem with the Indian representative. He spoke as the President of a great organisation. His visit might have been profitably used by the British statesmen to end the Indian deadlock. But they did not do that. Quezon, the Filipino leader, had visited U.S.A. He spoke to the people of United States about the freedom of his country. They not only lustily cheered him ; but the White House took the opportunity to find out a solution of the vexed problem of Philippines. And ultimately they did find a solution. The British could equally honour their friend. But they did not meet him half-way. Subhas Bose was well-received in England. What he said was heard by many but the British Parliament did not act and did not give India the right of self-determination.

VI

Subhas Bose had entered politics, while still a youngman. He knew what great part the youth of the country had to play in the freedom movement. While a youngman, he had also been saved from the temptation of joining the violent group of the terrorists. He was able to spurn the job of I.C.S. Both these temptations came to him at different periods of his life. The first came when he was frustrated and wandering, having run away from home. The second came when in the full flood of his successful University career, he was asked by his parents to take I.C.S. Examination held in England.

Many a youth similarly situated had been swept off their feet. Bose held his ground. He also saw to it, that other youngmen of the country should devote themselves to the task of serving the country. As a Swarajist leader he was

responsible for winning over the young prospective terrorists to serve the cause of the Congress. Many of the middle class youth formerly sought education for the sole purpose of securing 'cushy' jobs in the administration. Now came they over to his side and joined the freedom movement. The greatest achievement of Subhas Bose to curb the terrorist tendencies in Bengal was the Gopi Nath Saha resolution. This resolution was about a terrorist Gopi Nath Saha. At a Provincial Conference presided over by C. R. Das, it declared that the Conference condemned such Terrorist outrages. But it appreciated the spirit of sacrifice of Gopi Nath Saha.

The Swarajists thus dealt with Terrorism. The Government repression was in full swing. Subhas Bose was of the opinion that often Government repression was responsible for irresponsible terrorist acts. The best way in which the Government could therefore strengthen the hands of Swarajists like Bose in their drive to reclaim the youth of the country from the clutches of the terrorists, was to call off the campaign of repression.

Subhas Bose's efforts at organisation of the youth were not limited to Bengal only. Youth Conferences were held all over the country in the years 1927—30 and Subhas Bose presided over many of these Youth gatherings in freedom's struggle. But he exhorted them to remain non-violent in word and in deed.

Naujawan Bharat Sabha contributed a good deal to the awakening of the youth. It was responsible for the spread of Socialist ideals in the country. Bose had these causes dear to his heart. He associated himself with the activities of Naujawan Bharat Sabha. It is difficult to see how the youth of the country could be organised without the backing of Naujawan Bharat Sabha or the help given to this organisation by Bose. Swarajists were strong in Bengal. Also they took interest in

welfare of the youth. But that was not true of other provinces of India. In some provinces Swarajists were strong, but not so much interested in the welfare of the youth. In others, they were simply back-numbers in politics. And other parties, such as Ultra-Gandhites, dominated the field.

There were some places like Madras and U. P. where youthful leaders like Srinivas Iyenger and Nehru the Junior enjoyed unrivalled popularity among the youth. And due to this Subhas Bose could join hands with them and carry on the work of organising the youth. In fact one of the Youth Conferences over which he presided was held in Madras.

Everything considered, Naujawan Bharat Sabha was the only effective liaison between such men as Bose and the youth of the country, outside the borders of Bengal. In this sense his association with the activities of the Sabha was a wise move. From this the youth of the country also benefitted. While an exclusive Swarajist move to organise youth of the country could be described as a partisan action, no such label could be attached to activities directed by the Sabha. It was a Socialist organisation of the youth of the country.

This is important to bear in mind. Since the breach between Bose and other Congress leaders has widened, several accusations have been hurled against Bose, including the charge that he had been inculcating in the youth of the country the spirit of hatred against certain Congress leaders. This has been proved baseless by the very nature of the growth of youth movement in India. The organisation of youth began on a non-party line. Swarajist independents, Socialists like Nehru, Nationalists like Srinivas Iyenger, and parties like Naujawan Bharat Sabha and Students Federations participated. The aim was not to range the youth of the country against certain Congress leaders. They wanted to purge them of their weaknesses and rally them for the cause of progress.

CHAPTER V

BOSE AND JINNAH ARGUE

Bose-Jinnah correspondence is a magnificent document. Each of them is a worshipper of cold logic. Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, neither of them believes in an appeal to sentiments. Consequently, there is an Himalayan difference between Bose-Jinnah and Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence. Gandhi has tried to meet Jinnah by an appeal to the heart, but Mr. Jinnah can comprehend only an appeal to the head. But in Bose-Jinnah correspondence, a rationalist meets a rationalist, and there is a good deal of brain-cudgelling.

It will help clarification if we open the correspondence with a statement by Mr. M. A. Jinnah :—

“To say that the Congress is ready and willing to negotiate a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question with the Muslim League in one breath and in another to say that the Muslim League is not a representative organisation of the Muslims is so transparently ridiculous, and yet the Congress President, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, arrogates to himself, on behalf of the Congress, the right to say that Congress is the one organisation not only able to deliver goods but also to discuss with the British Government a final solution of the Indian problem.

“Mr. Bose has magnanimously assured the minorities that while refusing to acknowledge the Muslim League as the one representative political organisation of the Muslims, the Congress would do what was fair and just towards all minorities. Mr. Bose

clearly, consciously or unconsciously, identified himself with the majority community by making such a declaration. I congratulate Mr. Bose for having said that, because that is the honest and true position."

As far as the Muslim League was concerned its policy was laid down by the Executive Council at Karachi and he did not wish to enter into any wordy warfare with the executives of both organisations. But he must say this much that the absurdities of the position as explained by Mr. Bose on behalf of the Congress are manifest to any man who possesses any intelligence. Mr. Jinnah characterised the interview attributed to Sikander Hyat Khan, suggesting that Sir Sikander held a different view from that of the reply sent by the League's Executive Council to Mr. Bose as absolutely untrue, adding that the League's reply to the Congress was adopted unanimously by the Executive Council, Sir Sikander taking a very prominent part in the wording of the reply.

Mr. Jinnah could not believe that between Karachi and Lahore, Sir Sikander should have changed his mind as was attributed to him.

In the course of the talks between the Congress President and Mr. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, Mr. Jinnah suggested, any agreement that might be arrived at, should be based on a clear understanding of the position of the Congress and of the Muslim League. He proposed that the conversations should proceed on the following lines :—

"The All-India Muslim League, as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Indian Muslims and the Congress, as the authoritative and representative organisation of the solid body of Hindu opinion, have hereby agreed to the following terms by way of a pact between the two major

communities and as a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question."

After further consideration a somewhat different wording was suggested by him as follows :—

"The Congress and the All-India Muslim League, as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India, have hereby agreed to the following terms of a Hindu-Muslim settlement by way of a pact."

This second statement, though shorter, apparently embodies the same idea which is given in the first, that is, that the Congress should represent the Hindus and the Muslim League, the Mussalmans.

The Congress cannot possibly consider itself or function as if it represented one community only even though that might be the majority community in India. Its doors must inevitably be open to all communities and it must welcome Indians who agree with its general policy and methods. It cannot accept the position of representing one community and thus itself becoming a communal organisation. At the same time the Congress is perfectly willing to confer and co-operate with other organisations which represent minority interests.

It is obvious that the Mussalmans of India, although a minority in the whole country, form a considerable part of the population and their desires must be considered in any scheme affecting India. It is also true that the All-India Muslim League is an organisation representing a large body of Muslim opinion which must carry weight. It is for this reason the Congress has endeavoured to understand the viewpoint of the League and to come to an understanding with it. The Congress however, would be bound to consult other existing Muslim organisations which have co-operated with the Congress in the past. Further in the event of other groups or minority

interests being involved, it will be necessary to consult the representatives of such interests.

On May, 15, Mr. Bose addressed the following letter to Mr. Jinnah:—

26, Marine Drive, Bombay.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Last night I gave you a note explaining our position. You asked me what constructive proposals we had to make. I think the note is self-explanatory. Having made known the Congress reaction to your suggestion, according to us it remains now to proceed to the next stage, namely, appointment of respective committees which will jointly settle the terms of understanding.

Yours sincerely,
Subhas C. Bose.

On May 16, Mr. Jinnah wrote to Mr. Bose as follows :—

Little Gibbs Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Dear Mr. Bose,

I acknowledge the receipt of a note you handed over to me on behalf of the Congress on the 14th and also I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 15th of May 1938. The matter will be placed before the Executive Council and the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League at a meeting to be called in the first week of June and I will communicate to you the decision as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. Jinnah.

On June 6, Mr. Jinnah wrote to Mr. Bose :—

Dear Mr. Bose,

I am enclosing herewith the unanimous opinion of the Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League as promised

By the note given to me by you on behalf of the Congress on the 15th May 1938.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH.

RESOLUTION No. 1.

The Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League has considered the note handed by the President, Mr. Subhas C. Bose, on behalf of the Congress to Mr. Jinnah, the President of the All-India Muslim League, on the 14th May and his letter of the 15th May, 1938, and find that it is not possible for the All-India Muslim League to treat or negotiate with the Congress, the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement except on the basis that the Muslim League is the authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India.

RESOLUTION No. 2.

The Council have also considered the letter of Mr. Gandhi, dated the 22nd May 1938, and are of opinion that it is not desirable to include any Muslim in the personnel of the proposed committee that may be appointed by the Congress.

RESOLUTION No. 3.

The Executive Council wish to make it clear that it is the declared policy of the All-India Muslim League that all other minorities should have their rights and interests safeguarded so as to create a sense of security amongst them and win their confidence and the All-India Muslim League will consult the representative of such minorities and any other interest as may be involved when necessary.

The following telegram was sent by the President to Mr. Jinnah on June 21 :—

“Returned yesterday, Received letter. Thanks. Regret delay acknowledgement.—Subhas Bose.”

On June 27, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose addressed the following letter to Mr. Jinnah :—

38/2 Elgin Road, Calcutta.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of the 6th instant forwarding the resolutions of Executive Council of the Muslim League reached Calcutta duly, but as I was on tour, I did not get them till my return on the 20th instant. I telegraphed to you the next day, acknowledging the receipt of your letter.

The Working Committee of the Congress will meet at Wardha on the 9th July. Your letter and the resolutions of the Muslim League will be placed before the Committee and I shall acquaint you with its decision as soon as possible thereafter. I had been to Wardha and have just returned from there.

With best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Subhas C. Bose.

The following telegram was sent by the President to Mr. Jinnah on June 24 :—

“Papers report you intend publishing notes of your conversation with Gandhiji and myself. Hope you will not publish without obtaining approval first. Subhas Chandra Bose.”

Mr. Jinnah replied to the above telegram on June 25, as follows :—

To Subhas Bose, Wardha.

Your telegram. Newspapers referred absolutely untrue.
Jinnah.

WORKING COMMITTEE'S DECISION

Mr. Bose addressed the following letter to Mr. Jinnah from Wardha :—

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

The Working Committee has given all the attention it was possible for it to give to the resolution of the Council of the Muslim League which you were good enough to enclose with your letter of the 6th June 1938. The first resolution of the League Council defines the status of the League. If it means that before we proceed to set up a machinery for considering the terms of settlement of the communal question, the Congress should recognise the status as defined in that resolution, there is an obvious difficulty. Though the resolution, does not use the adjective "only" the language of the resolution means that the adjective is understood. Already the Working Committee has received warnings against recognising the exclusive status of the League. There are Muslim organisations which have been functioning independently of the Muslim League. Some of them are staunch supporters of the Congress. Moreover, there are individual Muslims who are Congressmen, some of whom exercise no inconsiderable influence in the country. Then there is the Frontier Province which is overwhelmingly Muslim and is solidly with the Congress. You will see that in the face of these known facts, it is not only impossible but improper for the Congress to make the admission, which the first resolution of the League Council apparently desires the Congress to make. It is suggested that status of organisations does not accrue to them by any defining of it. It comes through the service to which a particular organisation has dedicated itself. The Working Committee, therefore, hopes that the League Council will not ask the

Congress to do the impossible. Is it not enough that the Congress is not only willing but eager to establish the friendliest relation with the League and come to an honourable understanding over the much-vexed Hindu-Muslim question? At this stage it may perhaps be as well to state the Congress claim. Though it is admitted that the largest number of persons to be found on the numerous Congress registers are Hindus, the Congress has a fairly large number of Muslims and members of other communities professing different faiths. It has been an unbroken tradition with the Congress to represent all communities, all races and all classes to whom India is their home. From its inception it has often had distinguished Muslims as presidents and as general secretaries who enjoyed the confidence of the Congress and of the country. The Congress tradition is that although a Congressman does not cease to belong to faith in which he is born and bred up, no one comes to the Congress by virtue of his faith. He is in-and-out of the Congress by virtue of his endorsement of the political principles and policy of the Congress. The Congress therefore, is in no sense a communal organisation. In fact, it has always fought the communal spirit because it is detrimental to the growth of pure and undefiled nationalism.

But whilst the Congress makes this claim, and has sought with more or less success, to live up to the claim, the Working Committee would be glad if your Council would come to an understanding with the Congress in order that we might achieve national solidarity and whole-heartedly work for realising our common destiny.

As to the second resolution of the Council, I am afraid that it is not possible for Working Committee to conform to the desire expressed therein.

The third resolution, the Working Committee is unable to understand. So far as the Working Committee is concerned,

the Muslim League is a purely communal organisation, in the sense that it seems to serve Muslim interests only and its membership too is open only to Muslims. The Working Committee also has all along understood that so far as the League is concerned, it desires and rightly, a settlement with the Congress on the Hindu-Muslim question and not on questions affecting all minorities. So far as the Congress is concerned, if the other minorities have a grievance against the Congress, it is always ready to deal with them as it is its bounden duty to do so, being by its very constitution an organisation representative of All-India without distinction of caste or creed.

In view of the foregoing I hope that it will be possible for us to take up the next stage in our negotiation for reaching a settlement.

It is suggested that as the previous correspondence has already been published, it would be wise to take the public into confidence and publish the subsequent correspondence between us. If you are agreeable, these documents will be immediately released for publication.

Yours sincerely,

S. C. Bose.

On August 2, Mr. Jinnah addressed the following letter to Mr. Bose :—

“Malabar Hill, Bombay Aug. 2.

Dear Mr. Bose,

I placed your letter, dated the 25th of July 1938, before the meeting of the Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League.

The Executive Council gave its earnest attention and careful consideration to the arguments which were urged in your letter for persuading it not to claim the status it has done in its resolution No. 1 already communicated to you.

I am desired to state that in defining the status the Council was not actuated by any motive of securing an admission, but had merely stated an accepted fact.

The Council is fully convinced that the Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative political organisation of the Mussalmans of India. This position was accepted when the Congress-League Pact was arrived at in 1916 at Lucknow and ever since till 1935 when Jinnah-Rajendra Prasad conversation took place, it has not been questioned. The All-India Muslim League, therefore, does not require any admission or recognition from the Congress, nor did the resolution of the Executive Council at Bombay. But in view of the fact that the position—in fact the very existence—of the League had been questioned by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the then President of the Congress, in one of his statements, wherein he asserted that there were only two parties in the country, *viz.*, the British Government and the Congress, it was considered necessary by the Executive Council to inform the Congress of the basis on which the negotiations between the two organisations could proceed.

Besides the very fact that the Congress approached the Muslim League to enter into negotiations for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question, it presupposed the authoritative and representative character of the League and as such its right to come to an agreement on behalf of the Mussalmans of India.

The Council are aware of the fact that there is a Congress Coalition Government in N - W. F. P. and also that there are some Muslims in the Congress organisations, in other provinces. But Council is of opinion that these Muslims in the Congress do not and cannot represent the Mussalmans of India, for the simple reason that their number is very insignificant and that as members of the Congress, they have disabl-

ed themselves from representing or speaking on behalf of the Muslim community. Were it not so, the whole claim of the Congress alleged in your letter regarding its national character would fall to the ground.

As regards "the other Muslim organisations" to which reference has been made in your letter, but whom you have not even named, the council considers that it would have been more proper if no reference had been made to them. If they collectively or individually had been in a position to speak on behalf of the Mussalmans of India, the negotiations with the Muslim League, for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question would not have been initiated by the President of the Congress and Mr. Gandhi.

So far as the Muslim League is concerned, it is not aware that any Muslim political organisation has ever made a claim that it can speak or negotiate on behalf of the Muslims of India. It is, therefore, very much to be regretted that you should have referred to "other Muslim organisations" in this connection.

The Council is equally anxious to bring about a settlement the much-vexed Hindu-Muslim question," and thus hasten the realisation of the common goal, but it is painful to find that suitable arguments are being introduced to cloud the issue and retard the progress of the negotiations.

In view of the facts stated above, the Council wishes to point out that it considers undesirable the inclusion of Mussalmans in the Committee that might be appointed by the Congress, because it would meet to solve and settle the Hindu-Muslim question and so in the very nature of the issue involved, they would not command the confidence of either Hindus or the Mussalmans and their position indeed would be most embarrassing. The Council, therefore, request

you to consider the question in the light of the above negotiations.

With reference to the third resolution, it was the memorandum of the Conference referred to in your letter dated the 15th of May 1938, in which mention of other minorities was made and the Muslim League expressed its willingness to consult them if and when it was necessary in consonance with its declared policy.

As regards your desire for the release of the correspondence including this letter, for publication, the Council has no objection to your doing so.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. Jinnah.

On August 16, Mr. Bose addressed the following letter to Mr. Jinnah:—

“38/2 Elgin Road Calcutta
August 16, 1938.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd August 1938. I regret the delay in replying to it. As the issue is a very important one, I desire to place your letter before the Congress Working Committee at its next meeting in September. Thereafter you will hear from me again.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Subhas Bose.

WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

The Working Committee have considered your letter of October 10, 1938 and regret the decisions contained therein. Since the Committee do not find it possible to agree with the Council of the Muslim League as to the basis of the negotiation and since the Council insist that an agreement as to the basis is a *sine qua non* on any negotiations between the Congress and the League, the Working Committee regret that they are not in a position to do anything further in the direction of starting negotiations with the League with a view to arriving at a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question.

I am sorry for the delay in replying to your letter but I did not want to say anything till the Working Committee met and considered the matter.

Since the previous correspondence has been published already, I am taking the liberty of issuing this to the press.

Yours sincerely,
Subhas C. Bose.

CHAPTER VI

THE DARE-DEVIL DODGE

Having crossed swords with Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose became something of a Mahatma himself. Gandhi entered into his soul in almost the same sense as iron is said to enter. Having failed to floor his body, the Mahatma took the upper hand of Bose's mind. Suddenly the dynamic rebel took fancy for a peaceful life. Having exchanged a few statements with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, he suddenly suspended all activities. He kept the room to himself. He saw nobody, not even the members of his family. He spent his hours in religious worship. He took the vow of silence. He lived on milk and fruit juice. Like an ascetic he spent his days in deep meditation. All these peculiarities brought him nearer to Mahatma Gandhi than he desired. His admirers were shocked. Perhaps, the hero was testing the relation between goat's milk and Indian politics. Perhaps, he was giving up the mumbo-jumbo of a social cavalcade. Perhaps, he was going up the Himalayas.

I

On the Independence Day, January 26, 1941, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose made a bid for his independence and the freedom of his fatherland. Mysteriously he disappeared. Vanished into the thin air like an Invisible Man! He was disgusted with politics. The politics of the Mahatma had embittered him. That was an open secret. It was believed that disgust had overpowered him. It had hounded him out of politics, as it had previously driven Sri Aurovindo Ghose. Wearing of the Mahatma, ironically enough, he had become

the Mahatma himself. Bose became the mystery man of the Indian politics.

Then the Government of India opened its mouth. It was declared in the House of Commons and repeated in the Council of State, parrot-wise, that Subhas Bose was believed to be either in Rome or in Berlin. Eric Comar Smith, Secretary, Home Department, spoke for the British authorities. His information was based on pamphlets circulated in Calcutta. Besides, the Counter-propaganda Department had heard Rome, Berlin and Tokyo radios to that effect. The country hesitated to accept the news. The nationalists touched it with a pair of tongs. But the rapid repetition of the news transformed it into truth.

The *Statesman*, in a series of articles, accused Subhas of Fascist activities. The Reuter cried itself hoarse. Mr. Bose was supposed to be getting regular funds from the Axis powers before his departure. He was said to have organized a 'Fifth Column' in India. A controversy about affiliations of Bose raged wild round the country.

In March 1942, the Reuter flashed another thunder-bolt from London. It is stated that Subhas Chandra Bose was killed "in an air crash off the coast of Japan." Reuter quoted Lyons radio. Lyons had quoted a Tokyo message. But Berlin promptly contradicted the news. And Berlin of course quoted the Tokyo radio. Bose was hale and hearty and he was attending the Free India Congress in Tokyo. He had his own staff of adjutants.

Then the London correspondent of the *Bombay Chronicle* reported that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose had visited Berlin. He met Hitler. And Hitler conferred upon him the title of 'India's Fuehrer and Excellency.'

He was given the rank of a foreign ambassador. He struck an alliance with the Axis Powers for the liberation of

India from the foreign yoke. And he actually signed a pact with Japan, Germany and Italy.

II

Sri Rash Behari Bose was directing Indian Independence Movement in East Asia when Subhas Chandra Bose arrived on the scene. When the Japanese attacked Malaya, the Indians were not clear in their minds. Their loyalties were torn between India, Malaya, Japan and Britain. They did not know their political camp, but they at once organized themselves to defend their hearths and homes against the local looters. A meeting was held and a goodwill mission was sent to Japan. A conference was held in Tokyo with Sri Rash Behari Bose as Chairman. It was decided that the Indian Independence Movement should be launched. "Independence," it was resolved, "complete and free from foreign domination, interference or control of whatever nature shall be the object of the Movement." An Indian National Army was raised from the Indian troops in East Asia as well from Indian civilians. It was decided to bring the Independence Movement in line with the aims and intentions of the Indian National Congress. Such was the condition when Bose arrived from Berlin and assumed command of the Indian National Army.

Sometime ago, Peter De Mendelssalm, a noted writer on Oriental affairs, described the activities of Subhas Bose in a British liberal weekly. He began by describing the Indian Independence League of East Asia, with which Bose was believed to be associated :—

"The indirect propaganda attack is operated through the Indian 'Independence League of East Asia' the Quisling organisation which the Japanese have established throughout the territories under their control. It is the more prominent, the more intelligent and also the more effective of the two. The

Japanese like to emphasise that the quisling movement, though enjoying their protection and support, conducts its own policy, while the leaders of the League stress that although confident of Japan's assistance, they seek no help from her and must achieve their ends through their own exertions. In actual fact the Indian Independence League does nothing of the kind. It is a purely Japanese creation."

After thus describing the Indian Independence League, Peter De Mendelssalm says that it was at first under the leadership of an Indian exile, Rash Behari Bose, and later on passed under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose :—

"For a time Rash Behari suffered from the competition of the 'Free India Movement' set up by Hitler in Europe under the more vigorous and imaginative leadership of his namesake Subhas Chandra Bose, the former Congress President. Although the two movements were to a certain extent co-ordinated and outwardly complementary, the Japanese seem to have felt that they could not make the necessary headway so long as Hitler had the better man. Early this year they succeeded in enticing Subhas Bose away from Berlin, and soon afterwards he appeared in Tokyo. How he contrived to get there, and what induced Hitler to release him has not been divulged."

This, says the writer, led to ousting of the former President of the League and installation of Subhas Bose in his place.

"On July 4th, 1943, at a mass meeting of the Indian Independence League in Singapore, Subhas Bose was elected President."

Having become its President, Bose was associated with formation of a national army. What were the aims of this army ?

Peter De Mendelssalm says, it strove to achieve Indian freedom by having plans, which must appear to all sober-

mindless Indians as fantastic—about marching to the Indian Frontier. If this army had any such bare-brained scheme, they have been foiled by anti-Fascist legions across the Burma Border.

But Peter De Mendelssalm is also doubtful about the practicability of such activities. He says :—

“ It is difficult to estimate the effect of all these activities. While Indians and Japanese are probably equals in their profound contempt for each other, there nevertheless exists a vague and indefinable atmospheric affinity which is felt almost everywhere in South East Asia. One might call it the spiritual climate of Buddhism, which Japan has never quite renounced and which in her contact with people of the Asiatic continent, she is most careful to keep alive. It is nothing that can be exploited in a practical political way, but it constitutes a vague, unweighable asset of which the Japanese are well aware.”

Mendelssalm describes the crude ways of Japanese propaganda all too familiar to Indians. He says they even go to the extent of appealing to Indians to join their co-prosperity sphere, which is in fact the co-plundering sphere. But Gandhi acts as a counter-weight to Japanese propaganda. His doctrine of Non-violence has deep roots in Indian soil. “Gandhi is another difficulty. His policy of non-violence has caused Tokyo advocates of ruthlessness considerable trouble, for a saint and leader of Eastern Freedom Movement, his words must obviously be treated with respect.”

And then describing Bose's attitude towards non-violence Mendelssalm says, “Bose, however, who knows both India and Gandhi better than Mr. Fujima (a Japanese Dr. Goebels), senses the danger in this propaganda line, and continues to urge Indians ‘not to use methods of violence and to adhere strictly to our Mahatma's principle ?’ ”

Concluding he says:—

“Gandhi obviously is a force which not even the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army can afford to disregard.”

The last statement of Mendelssalm must add to the mystery of Subhas Bose's activities. If Bose is a vorary of Mahatma's non-violence (which he has always professed to be), then it is difficult to see before the war was over how he could be associated with the activities of Indian Independence League, or the so-called National Army, with aggressive aims. Mahatma is an avowed opponent of Japan and must always remain so. Considering all this Subhas Bose's activities and views were a matter of speculation. While there was reason to believe that he was in Axis territory and associated with Independence League, it was not known, whether he had gone Fascist or still adheres to Samyavada Sangh; which was a synthesis of old European “Isms”. He has also his past anti-Hitlerite and anti-Japanese utterances to consider; and Peter De Mendelssalm's opinion about his views on non-violence was also to be borne in mind.

Speculation on these lines continued and the mystery deepened still further till the war ended in victory for the democratic countries.

The following are extracts from an article on the Indian Independence Movement organised by Indians in the East Asia, published in the “Free Press Journal” of Bombay:—

“When the Japanese attacked the British in Malaya, the majority of the Indian population in that country, numbering about seven lakhs, were not quite clear in their own mind as to their reactions to the incident. There were of course frantic efforts at evacuation, resulting in panic in the public mind. But the background of British rule in Malaya for the previous few years, spoilt by the firing on estate labourers, who-

had struck work demanding an increase in wages in keeping with the rise in cost of living and other prejudicial acts towards Indians, like ordering pre-censorship of the Indian-owned papers, while the British-owned press was free, and similar acts had produced a spirit of suppressed antagonism to the British in the Indian mind. In the case of Indian troops, particularly among the officers, there was disaffection owing to the exhibition of colour prejudice as in the case of the order prohibiting Indian Officers from using the swimming pool of the Singapore Swimming Club, though they were allowed membership after much agitation.

“Singapore fell on February 15, 1942. On the 17th February a few Indians were invited to meet Major Fujiwara of the Japanese Military Headquarters. The Major said that England's power was dwindling and that it was the opportunity for India to strike for Independence. He said that Japan was prepared to give all assistance to Indians to attain Independence for India. Indians, though British subjects and technically enemy nationals, would not be considered as such by the Japanese in the conquered countries, since they realised that Indians were not British subjects of their own will. He suggested the formation of an Indian Independence League to organise all the Indians for fighting for India's Independence, promising to place all facilities to that end. The Indian leaders said, that they would consider the proposal and meet him again in a few days' time.

A meeting of Indian leaders from different parts of Malaya was held in Singapore, on the 9th and the 10th March, 1942. Meanwhile, there was an invitation from Sri Rash Behari Bose in Tokyo for representatives in Malaya and Thailand to go to Tokyo for a Conference. So the meeting of the Indian leaders in Malaya, to which some representatives from Thailand had also come, decided to send a Good-

will Mission to Tokyo. This decision was taken against the desire of the Japanese, who preferred an official delegation to be sent committed to a specific course of action.

A Conference at Tokyo was held from 28th to 30th March, 1942, with Sri Rash Behari Bose as Chairman. Apart from the Goodwill Mission from Malaya, there were Indian representatives from Hong Kong, Shanghai and Japan. Thailand was not represented owing to the death of the representatives in a plane crash on way to Tokyo.

At the Conference it was decided that the time was opportune for starting an Independence Movement among the Indians in East Asia and that :—

“Independence complete and free from foreign domination, interference or control of whatever nature shall be the object of the Movement’.”

It was resolved, “that military action against India will be taken only by the Indian National Army and under the command of Indians, together with such military, naval, and air co-operation and assistance as may be requested from the Japanese Authorities by the Council of Action of the Indian Independence League to be formed.”

The Conference also decided “that the framing of the future constitution of India will be left entirely to the representatives of the people of India.

It was decided at Tokyo that another Conference, more fully representing all the territories in East Asia should be called at Bangkok in June, officially to inaugurate the Indian Independence Movement.

Accordingly, a Conference of Indians in East Asia was held at Bangkok from 15th to 23rd June 1942. Over 100 delegates, representing Indians in Japan, Manchukuo, Hong-kong, Burma, Borneo, Java, Malaya and Thailand as well as

representatives of the Indian Army (prisoners of war) in Malaya and Hongkong were present. The resolutions passed at this Conference formulated the basic principles, on which the Indian Independence Movement was to be organised in all territories.

The outstanding conclusions of the Bangkok Conference were :—

1. To organise Indians in East Asia into an Indian Independence League to strive for India's Independence.

2. To raise an Indian National Army from the Indian troops in East Asia, as well as from Indian civilians.

3. To control and direct the programme and plan of action of the Independence Movement, to bring them in line with the aims and intentions of the Indian National Congress.

4. To demand from the Japanese Government a further clarification of their policy towards this Movement as well as towards India.

Thus the Indian Independence League was inaugurated by the Bangkok Conference. Its headquarter was established in Singapore. Sri Rash Behari Bose was elected President of the Indian Independence League. A Central Council of Action was formed. Branches were organised in all territories in East Asia.

But in the meanwhile relations between the Council of Action and the Japanese were becoming strained. The reasons for this were mainly :—

(a) the absence of any specific reply from the Tokyo Government to the Bangkok resolution. There was a general reply renewing Japan's determination to help India to get Complete Independence and stating that Japan had no territorial or other ambitions over India. But the Council of Action was not satisfied with the reply.

(b) the attitude of the Iwakuro Kikan, which had been organized by the Japanese, as their Liaison Department between the Indian Independence League and the Japanese Military Authorities and the Japanese Government was not fair. The Council of Action resented attempts by the officials of the Iwakuro Kikan, to interfere in the working of the League as well as the Indian National Army.

A crisis was reached in December 1942, when the Council of Action refused to allow the Indian National Army, that had been organised in Malaya, to be transferred to Burma before all outstanding points were clarified by the Japanese Government. The situation was made critical on the 3th December 1942, by the arrest of Col. N. S. Gill of the Indian National Army by the Japanese as a suspected British spy, without prior consultation with the Council of Action. The members of the Council of Action resigned.

Sri Rash Behari Bose declared that he would go to Japan and try to get the necessary clarification of issues from the Tokyo Government and requested that, till then the organization, *i. e.*, the branches of the Indian Independence League should carry on. This was agreed to. The Malaya Branch agreed, but added a rider :—

“that Sri Rash Behari Bose be requested to try every possible means to secure a clarification of all matters relating to the Movement from the Tokyo Government by declarations, statements and otherwise at as early a date as possible and that while the normal working of the Movement will be carried on as usual, any further forward move will be decided only after such declaration and statements.”

The Iwakuro Kikan started trying to build up parallel organisations to weaken the Indian Independence League. A Youth Movement was launched secretly by them and intensive propaganda was carried on against the leaders of the

Independence League. In February 1943, the Committee of the Malaya Branch of the Independence League, after three days meeting, decided to present a Memorandum to Sri Rash Behari Bose as President of the Indian Independence League, setting out the difficulties of the situation. The decision of the Committee was that they should resign if no improvement was noticed.

The Japanese managed to get information of the memorandum before it reached the President, Sri Rash Behari Bose and they brought pressure to bear on Sri Behari Bose, to insist on the resignation of his office by the President of the Malaya Branch, Sri N. Raghavan. As a result Sri Raghavan resigned. The other members of the Malaya Branch felt that their resignation was exactly what the Japanese wanted, so that the Japanese can put in their own men—Indians who would be amenable to Japanese desires—in key positions. This would have created an Indian Organisation, which would be a puppet body, managed by the Japanese. To prevent that possibility, the other Indian members of the Malaya Branch refrained from resigning along with Sri Raghavan.

In April 1943, another conference of delegates from all territories in East Asia was called at Singapore in which Sri Rash Behari Bose announced that Sri Subhas Chandra Bose would succeed him in the leadership of the Movement.

On July 2, 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose, arrived in Singapore and at a Conference of delegates held on July 4, he took over the Presidentship of the Indian Independence League from Sri Rash Behari Bose, who resigned.

The organisation of the Indian Independence League was overhauled including the Indian National Army. At a review of the Indian National Army, held in Singapore

on 5th July, 1943, the formation of the Army was announced to the world.

With the assumption of leadership by Sri Subhas Chandra Bose events moved rapidly.

Women joined in large numbers, as members of the Indian Independence League. Volunteers from women members formed a regiment called "Rani of Jhansi Regiment." Many women also enlisted in a Red Cross Section. A camp for training women recruits was opened in Singapore in October 1943, and later another training camp was started in Rangoon also.

In 1942, there had been a call for volunteers for the Indian National Army. A large number had enlisted. But owing to difficulties put by the Japanese in the way of training the recruits no progress was made. Now recruiting started in full vigour and four training camps were opened in Malaya, with a total capacity of training nearly 7,000 recruits at one time.

An officer's training school was also started to train officers for the Indian National Army from among the N.C.O.'s and sepoys of the Indian Army as well as from the civilians. Donations from Indians towards the Indian Independence League Fund started to come in, in large amounts. Much of the goods required by the League and the Indian National Army were received free from the Indians.

To strengthen the Movement further, a Provisional Government of Free India was formed on 21st October, 1943, with Sri Subhas Chandra Bose as Head of the State. It was recognised by all countries then fighting against England. On October 23, the Provisional Government formally declared war on England and America. It was felt that the Headquarters of the Provisional Government and the Indian

Independence League should be transferred to Burma to be nearer to India. This was effected on 7th January 1944.

On 4th February, 1944, the Indian National Army went into action and on 18th March, 1944, they crossed the Indo-Burma Frontier.

The Indian National Army detachments along with the Japanese detachments surrounded Imphal after taking Morai and other villages. But the lack of air support and the disruption of supplies owing to monsoon, forced the Indian National Army to withdraw.

The Indian National Army engaged in a defensive campaign, when the British Forces invaded Burma. During this campaign, many Staff Officers of the Indian National Army went over to the British forces. There were other officers who remained loyal to the Indian National Army. When Meyktila fell and the 14th Army's progress was seen to be too fast for the Japanese to stop, it was decided to evacuate Rangoon.

Sri Subhas Chandra Bose and his colleagues left Rangoon on 24th April 1945 for Bangkok,—they were the last to leave. The Japanese Commander-in-Chief and the Burma Government had left on the 23rd. A force of over 6,000 men and officers of the Indian National Army was left in Rangoon to protect Indian life and property under Major-General Lokanathan. The Indian Independence League was left in charge of Sri J. N. Bahaduri, Vice-President.

All liabilities incurred in the name of the Provisional Government of India were met in full, before Sri Subhas Chandra Bose withdrew from Rangoon.

The Indian National Army took control of the City of Rangoon and there was not a single case of dacoity or robbery during the period of transition from Japanese to British control.

Later reports showed that the branches of the Indian Independence League had prevented any harm befalling Indian lives and properties in the districts of Burma also.

On 5th May 1945, Brigadier Lauder of the 36th Indian Infantry, who was in command of the Rangoon area, sent for Sri Bahaduri. On his request Sri Bahaduri described to him what the Indian Independence League was. Brigadier Lauder suggested that the League should continue with its non-political work. Sri Bahaduri agreed to do this. In Rangoon, the Indian Independence League had been running five free dispensaries. These were re-opened.

The National Bank of Azad Hind, which had been organized in Rangoon in April 1945, was allowed to continue operating till the 19th May, 1945, when the Bank was seized by the Military Authorities. The activities of the Indian Independence League came to a close on 28th May 1945, when Sri Bahaduri and other office-bearers of the League were arrested by the Field Security Service.

The Indian Independence League Movement was supported by Indian money. From all over East Asia, contributions were received. Nearly 8 crores of rupees were collected in Burma alone. In Malaya, 40 lakhs of rupees were collected as New Year Gift to India in two weeks in January 1945. All the needs of the Indian National Army excepting arms and ammunition, were met by purchases by the Indian Independence League, with its own funds.

The Indian Independence League was a political organization, formed with the purpose of fighting for Indian Independence. But along with that, it also carried out a programme of social service.

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The opinion that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was really responsible for the Japanese not launching an invasion of

Ceylon and organising a large scale invasion of India because he never intended to involve India in actual warfare, was expressed by party of Indian merchants from Hong-Kong, who passed through Colombo, on October 7, 1945.

It was their conviction that Mr. Bose was playing the game of bluff with the British and hoped that, with a threat of invasion, Britain could be forced or persuaded by circumstances to declare India independent.

If it had been done, as Mr. Bose sincerely believed then, according to the merchants, it was on the books of Mr. Bose to turn on the Japanese in Burma and, with the Burmese whom he understood as well as Bengalis, to drive them out of Burma.

In any case, Mr. Bose never contemplated or designed a situation wherein Japanese soldiers would be on Indian soil as an invading army, because he had no illusions about the Japanese.

The merchants said that this was the reason why Mr. Bose insisted on establishing his headquarters in Rangoon and not Andamans or Ceylon, either of which would have been a logical and valuable base, if a regular invasion of India had been contemplated. The Indo-Burma frontier gave him an ideal strategic position, from which he could put his plans into force of turning ultimately on the Japanese in Burma.

The Merchants claimed that they had the benefit of a grandstand view of the entire chess-board of the Far East at Hong Kong, whence they could study and learn every move made. They asserted that from all reports they were convinced that Mr. Bose, though sincere in his determination to achieve the freedom of India was quite opposed to plunging the country into a bloody war, particularly his own beloved Bengal. Once he realised that his bluff did not work with the British, he began to play for time with the Japanese. Time

after time, Mr. Bose invented some excuse for delay in throwing his Indian National Army into the fight. Once he said that his troops needed special training and at another time that he needed more arms, equipment and planes, which nevertheless, he would not accept as a gift from the Japanese.

On the plea that he had to collect levies from Indians for the campaign, he succeeded, to a large extent in persuading the Japanese to give Indians a comparatively better treatment during the entire occupation.

Finally, he could not help making a gesture to convince the Japanese of the sincerity by staging a token invasion of India, but the merchants opined that Mr. Bose was long before convinced that his bluff had failed with the British Government.

When the final invasion had also failed, Mr. Bose pleaded that his army and equipment were inadequate for a large-scale action and, thereafter, almost exclusively devoted himself to intervening with the Japanese to mitigate the difficulties of Indians. As an instance, the merchants related the story that some Indian merchants in Hong Kong were sentenced to death by the Japanese Military Tribunal on the trivial charge of refusal to help or collaborate with the Japanese authorities but, in some mysterious manner, at the last minute the execution, which was usually prompt and summary, was stayed and never took place.

The merchants believed that but for Mr. Bose and his Indian National Army, Indians in Burma would have suffered untold sufferings as in the days immediately following the occupation of Burma and Malaya. Mr. Bose's army played a valuable part in protecting the lives and property of Indians from being looted by the Japanese and hostile sections of the local population.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose rendered an invaluable service to the Indian Nationals in South East Asia.

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No wonder, Mr. Bose had a very hard time, fighting a battle of nerves between the British, the Burmese and Japanese. His problems were immediate as well as of remote nature. And not even the bitterest enemies of Bose can deny him the honour of having protected the Indian lives and property in an hostile territory. He used the Japanese magnificently for safeguarding Indian interests, even though he failed to use them as a cat's paw for obtaining the ultimate independence of India. Anyhow, he did single-handed on one side, what Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress did on the other through their "Quit India" resolution. Indian Independence Movement and the "Quit India" have given international status to our political aspirations.

The closing chapters in the chequered history of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Government and the I.N.A. were being enacted in mid-August in the palatial residence of a Jewish millionaire named Mayer at Sigapore, where Mr. Bose used to stay, writes Reuter's special correspondent.

These days were marked by a frequent stormy exchange of views between Mr. Bose and Japanese Liaison Officers. Mr. Bose knew during these days that Japan's collapse was only a matter of days, but even after the radioed reports of Japan's unconditional surrender were available, the Japanese Commander of Sigapore, General Itagaki, continued to be truculent.

On the night of August 15, Mr. Bose drove down to Qathay Buildings, which housed both Mr. Bose's Azad Hind Radio Station and the Japanese-managed radio, Shonan, and wanted to broadcast a message to Indians in Malaya, Siam, Indo-China, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, the Philpines, Japan and other parts of Asia.

The Japanese censor suggested that he should read over the script first, but Mr. Bose protested vigorously and walked straight into the studio. This broadcast was probably the last document to which Mr. Bose affixed his signature before he left for Tokyo early next morning.

In this broadcast, Mr. Bose praised the sacrifices of Indians in South East Asia, and urged them not to be depressed at the temporary failure.

Beyond the fact that he was going for important consultations, even Mr. Bose's closest associates in Singapore did not know why he should go to Tokyo the day after Japan's surrender.

Mr. Bose's plane reached Bangkok safely after which nothing is known here denfinitely. A few days later, the Tokyo radio broadcast a Domei agency report that Mr. Bose had air-crashad and died in Hospital.

Singapore was only the rear headquarters of the I.N.A. and the Azad Hind Government. This seat of Government was shifted from Rangoon to Bangkok.

Major-General Kiani, who was incharge of I.N.A. men in Singapore had been arrested and lodged in Pearl Hill prison.

While over 2,000 I.N.A. men had been segregated at Didadari Camp, reports from Penang state that Mr. N. Raghevan stated to be one of the original founders of the movement, had also been arrested.

Members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, drawn from among Indian families, were all disbanded soon after the fall of Rangoon.

Judging from what the authorities did at Rangoon, it was permissible to assume that I.N.A. men would be taken back to India, as soon as circumstances permit, after which it would be the responsibility of the Indian Government to deal with them.

It was on August 23, 1945 that there came the saddest news of all the war.

The Japanese news agency announced the death of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, said the agency, died in a Japanese hospital from injuries received in an air-crash.

The Japanese news agency said that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, who was head of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, left Singapore on August 16 by air for Tokyo for talks with the Japanese Government.

He was seriously injured when his plane crashed at Daihoku airfield at 2 p. m. on August 18.

He was given treatment in a hospital in Japan, where he died at midnight.

Lt.-General Tsunamasa Shidi was instantly killed and Col. Habibur-Rahman, Mr. Bose's Adjutant, and four other Japanese officers were injured in the crash, the announcement said.

CHAPTER VII

 HE CANNOT DIE

*When can their glory fade ?
 O the wild charge they made !
 All the world wonder'd.
 Honour the charge they made !
 And their Noble Commander.*

The Noble Commander of the Indian National Army cannot die. Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is not made of the stuff that dies. He has within him the flame of immortality that cannot be extinguished by a puff of languid breeze that blows across the face of a defeated soldier.

I

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was described as India's greatest patriot and the greatest man in India after Mahatma Gandhi at a meeting held in London, organised by the Indian Independence Union.

The meeting formed a committee to aid those who had joined Mr. Bose's Indian National Army.

At the meeting held in London, Swami Avyaktananda of Ramkrishna Mission attacked Britain for its lack of liberalism and for its "niggardly doles of self-government." The meeting discussed the present Attlee-Wavell offer and the role of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose in Indian politics.

The Chairman, Doctor D. N. Dutt, a friend and associate of Mr. Subhas Bose, described hardships Mr. Bose had undergone and quoted him as saying that "there is some consola-

tion in the thought that I am a nuisance to the Government and not an ally."

Tribute was paid to Mr. Bose by Doctor Dewan Singh, Leader of the Sikh Community in Britain, while the veteran Indian National Doctor C. B. Vakil compared Mr. Subhas with M. Stalin.

The British press was condemned for calling Mr. Subhas Bose a quisling.

Bombay observed August 25, 1945 as "Subhas Day" as a mark of respect to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. A large number of shops were closed in the city. The Cotton Exchange, the Bullion Exchange, the Stock Exchange and the main cloth markets of the city suspended business for the day. While more than 50 mills remained closed, workers of a few other mills came out after completing morning shift. Students of some of the schools and colleges in the city joined in the observance of the day. The tricolour flag flew on many buildings.

Glowing tributes to the "memory" of Subhas Chandra Bose were paid by several speakers at a crowded public meeting held in the evening at Jinnah Hall under the auspices of Bombay Provincial Congress Committee.

Mr. Nagindas T. Master who presided over the meeting said that they were meeting to pay tributes to his patriotism. He recalled Bose's services for the freedom of nation and said that Subhas Bose had cast aside a promising career and jumped into the work of national freedom, because he was convinced that as long as British imperialism survived, there could be no freedom for India. The entire nation was steeped in sorrow at the "news of his death". The speaker was confident that the cause for which he lived would triumph and that people whom he loved would learn to emulate his spirit of heroic sacrifices.

What happened in Bombay happened in every city of India. Leaders all over India showed profoundest sympathy. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru overflowed with affection.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad issued the following statement on the "reported death" of Subhas Bose on August 26 :—

"The tragic circumstances in which Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is reported to have died in exile will be learnt with grief in India. From his youthful days he was passionately devoted to the cause of Indian freedom and pursued his aim with uncommon zeal and single-mindedness. He attained a high place in the estimation of his compatriots at an early age and was rewarded with the highest office the nation could bestow on a person. His patriotism was beyond doubt. But for the wrong step he took at a critical juncture, he might have been in our midst to-day. It is extremely sad and tragic that a life of much promise has met with a premature end in circumstances which everyone in India will regard with sorrow.

"I cannot help thinking to-day of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and other members of the family, who came under a cloud of suspicion on account of the deceased's ill-fated association with Axis Powers. They have suffered incarceration for a long period. Now that the war has ended and even Subhas Chandra Bose is no more there, there is no reason left for prolonging the incarceration of any of them any longer. Demand for their release has been repeatedly made by influential sections of their countrymen and I earnestly hope that Government will no longer hesitate to set them free." (At last they were liberated)

The love of India and the Indians overflows for Subhas Chandra Bose who staked his all on the national cause.

The Russian newspaper, *Red Star's* allegation that Subhas Chandra Bose was a Japanese agent since 1916 is

due to a confusion in Russian newspaper offices between Subhas Chandra Bose and Rash Behari Bose, it is suggested in New Delhi.

Rash Behari Bose went to Japan several years ago and settled down in Tokyo with his Japanese wife. But Subhas Chandra Bose is known to have been in communication with the Japanese Government only after he mysteriously disappeared from Calcutta four years ago.

It is emphasised in New Delhi that Subhas Bose is not regarded by Indians as a quisling. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru recently made a statement to this effect and Mahatma Gandhi wrote in the 'Harijan.' Subhas Babu is not an enemy of this country. Subhas Bose was only 19 in 1916.

II

Now it is firmly believed all over India that Subhas Chandra Bose is not dead. The All-India Congress Committee withdrew its condolence resolution. A man like him was not made to die. Once again he is the mystery man. The Nationalist India awaits his reappearance with suspense.

One of Singapore's leading per-war lawyers' Mr. S. C. Goho, who was appointed as Agent to the Government of India just before Singapore's Japanese occupation and who during occupation associated with Mr. Raghavan and Mr. K. P. Menon who were running the original Indian Independence Movement in Singapore, according to the war correspondent of the 'Ceylon Observer,' in Singapore, does not believe that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is dead.

He considers that Mr. Bose was not a 'quisling' for (1) he was violently anti-British; (2) an intense and sincere patriot; (3) not pro-Japanese but perfectly prepared to use the Japanese as a dominating power for establishing complete independence in India, to obtain which—unlike Mr. Gandhi—

he was prepared to go to the extreme measures ; (4) unlike Pandit Nehru he liked ostentation and always went about with ceremony and escort.

Mr. Goho added, "Up to the time I attended the conference in Tokyo late in 1942, after which I was convinced of the insincerity of the Japanese intentions towards India, I was ready to maintain an attitude of tolerance, because they were then the dominant power and would co-operate in rehabilitation and relief work."

Mr. Goho then detailed Bose's association with Mr. Rashbehari Bose and formation and development of Indian Independence Movement and his visits to Tokyo and Bangkok where he demanded a formal declaration from the Japanese Government that Japanese had no territorial ambitions in India. This was construed as an insult to Japan, Premier Tojo's statement being considered as sufficient. The Indians were suspected by the Japanese and in March they started the Indian Youth Movement which they announced was designed to wipe out all British tendencies from certain members. Mr Goho said, "They tried to change the Indian leadership to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose who soon showed that he was a Japanese puppet and appointed himself as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army."

Mr. Goho stated that he resigned his membership of the Singapore Branch in March, 1943 but kept in touch with the Indians till the end. He still considers himself as the Agent of the Government of India till officially informed otherwise.

Mr. Goho concluded, "My own view is that no Indian wanted a single Japanese to step on the Indian soil."

III

The Indian National Army which gambled for the freedom of their Fatherland deserves to be mercifully treated.

It has been decided that in the trial of members and officers of the Indian National Army, the court-martial, after hearing the defence counsel, will record the finding of "guilty" or "not guilty," and in case of finding guilty the sentence will be pronounced by it.

This sentence, to be valid, will have to be confirmed by the King.

An appeal in the nature of a written representation may be made to the Commander in-Chief, the Government of India⁴ or His Majesty the King.

The confirming authority will not hear arguments, either of the accused or of his counsel. This will be done in the absence of the accused or his counsel.

That is much too harsh a decision. The Congress leaders are burning midnight oil to arrange a strong defence, but the Muslim League has not moved the littlest finger and done nothing for the victims who include a large number of Muslims and Sikhs. Where is Mr. Jinnah dumping away his legal talents? Should he not have been the first to offer his services?

In the course of an interview with K. B. Raja Fatch Khan, M.L.A. Rawalpindi, the Premier of the Punjab expressed the following with regard to the Indian National Army:—

"Although the Indian officers and other ranks of the I.N.A. were somehow misled after having become prisoners of war, I most sincerely hope that in view of the splendid victory of the Allies and particularly in view of the glorious sacrifices of the martial province of the Punjab, the Imperial Government will extend complete amnesty to all these persons and show them forbearance worthy of victors and mercy rather than justice."

The Indian Army has mostly been recruited from the martial classes of India. These classes have been very loyal to the Government. They have always stood with the Government in all matters in India—internal or external. In the last Great War of 1914—18 and in the present World War, they have shown their worth in every theatre of war. In spite of preferential treatment with their comrade-in-arms from other countries, they have been very cool and disciplined. They did their duty to their King and Country under all climatic circumstances.

There is a great feeling amongst the martial classes of India for these unfortunate people. The record of services of martial classes of India is such that it can ask the highest Military authorities to be lenient with their brothers who had gone wrong somehow or other. The martial classes are naturally very anxious about the fate of their brethren who became the members of I.N.A. They appeal to the authorities to be more considerate and lenient and to show their magnanimity in the matter of these people. Forgiveness is the greatest virtue in a man.

At an emergent meeting of the workers of the Lahore Students' Congress, the following resolution was passed :—

“The Lahore Students' Congress, while viewing with great dismay the Government of India's decision to court-martial the 'Indian National Army' men, is of the opinion that considering the most unfortunate and unfavourable circumstances in which they were left to surrender on various fronts, combined with the treacherous policy of the Japanese Government in forcing them under the threat of gallows to join the 'Indian National Army,' these men are above any sort of crimes or treason. For the maintenance of cordial relations that the Indian public is trying to set up with the British Government,

the Lahore Students' Congress, thinks it expedient to appeal to the Government of India to release all these soldiers.

Of all the defenders of the Indian National Army, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been the first and the foremost to take up arms. Inside and outside the Congress he has criticized the British authorities for their hostile attitude towards the dauntless soldiers who fought for their motherland in all sincerity. He demands an international status for them and a treatment according to international laws. Being an integral part of the Japanese forces, they should be treated as prisoners of war rather than as rebels.

IV

The Indian National Army possessed the spirit of Subhas Chandra Bose. And the flame which he has lit cannot be extinguished. Thus said Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar long ago :—

“Shriyut Subhas Bose has in him the making of an Indian De Valera. He possesses the same determination, the same spirit of restlessness, of sacrifice and of devotion to the country's cause as are such a marked feature in the career of the great Irish leader. Subhas Babu is endowed with courage and rectitude of character as few other Indian leaders can lay claim to. He is immensely resourceful and far-sighted. He has unbounded capacity for work and inspires enthusiasm for an object on which he sets his heart. His gift for organization is almost unrivalled. He is an idealist, but he never ignores practical considerations. Endowed with such virtues, he is bound to succeed where many others have failed.”

It is worth while to quote some passages from the ‘News-Review’ of England which would reveal what the foreign Press thinks of his principles. Soon after his disappearance, the journal wrote :—

“A sleek young Cambridge graduate with extreme left

wing views on India's future used to be tipped a year or so ago as Mahatma Gandhi's eventual successor.

"Plump, amiable Subhas Chandra Bose, ex-President of the Congress, later Leader of the Swarajya (self-rule) Party, had a programme which was as different from the mind of Mahatma as chalk from cheese.

"Its main points were :

(1) Complete Independence from Britain (According to Bose Mr. Gandhi was ready to compromise).

(2) Continuance of the nationalist campaign. (Gandhi wanted to postpone it).

(3) Progressive industrialisation (Gandhi was content with his pet hobbies, prohibition and the fostering of handicrafts)."

The A.I.C.C had passed two resolutions banning Satyagraha in the provinces without the consent of the Provincial Congress Committees and defining the relations between the Congress Ministries and Provincial Congress Committees over which Mr. Bose differed sincerely. He was of the opinion that "these two resolutions if given effect to will serve to accentuate the drift towards constitutionalism and to increase the influence, power and authority of the Provincial Ministries at the cost of the Congress organisation, to isolate artificially the Congress from the federal public as also the A.I.C.C. from the rank and file of the Congress." He, therefore, announced the organising of protest meetings against the decision of A.I.C.C. The Congress President regarded this attitude of Mr. Bose and his followers as revolt against the A.I.C.C. and after a formal exchange of some letters between the Congress President and Mr. Bose, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and gave the following verdict :—

"The Working Committee has come to the painful

conclusion that it will fail in its duty if it condones the deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline by Subhas Chandra Bose.

“The Working Committee resolves that, for his grave act of indiscipline, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is declared disqualified as the President of the Bengal Congress Committee for three years, as from August 1939,”

He received the news in quite an unconcerned manner because such favours from Wardha were by no means new to him. “Is that all ?” he exclaimed when the decision of the Working Committee was conveyed to him.

V

In Singapore Subhas Chandra Bose have had his first opportunity of putting his ideas into practice.

“Subhas Chandra Bose characterised his and Gandhi’s political ideas as different roads towards the same single goal,” C. Hagiwara, a reputable Japanese newspaperman, told the United Press of America.

Hagiwara said, Bose made the statement at a Press Conference in Manila late in 1943.

“According to Bose, Gandhi told him that he would not join his operations as he could not believe in the success of military action against the British,” Hagiwara said.

“I saw Bose four times at Press Conferences in various places in East Asia,” said Hagiwara, “at Rangoon, Bangkok and Singapore as well as in Manila, and I found him extremely talented.”

“When I stayed in Maymyo in Northern Burma, I visited a local association of the Indian Independence League. There I met a member of the Indian National Army who had

penetrated into India to collect inside information about his home country. He told me he was much surprised to find that Bose's speeches on the radio were listened to almost everywhere in India despite the British orders forbidding public broadcast of these talks under the Defence of India Act.

"When Bose came to Rangoon in August 1943, the total strength of the Indian National Army was reported as ranging from 50,000 to 200,000. At a Press Conference, however, Bose expressed confidence that it would not be difficult to get more Indian volunteers as soon as he could show some 'good' progress' in his operations in the Indo-Burma area.

"Bose, unlike Gandhi, made it clear that he believed that military action would stir the blood and passion of his colleagues as well as the mass of the people. He believed such action was necessary for the ultimate success of the Indian emancipation movement; even if he himself should die miserably in failure.

"One beautiful day in November 1943, Bose went to Luneta Park on Manila Beach to present a wreath at the famous statue of Jose Rizal, the Philippine's number one patriot and independence martyr. At the statue he was surrounded by a crowd of hundreds of Indians who lived in and around Manila. They cheered many times with loud cries of 'Azad Hind'. Bose posed together with the crowd for the photographers. But for a long time after the newspapermen and cameramen had finished their business, he did not move. He gazed silently at the statue of Rizal for several long, tense minutes. The flag of Azad Hind, showing a manual cotton mill as a symbol of independent India, fluttered in the morning breeze and the flowers presented by Bose at the feet of the big statue made the whole scene extremely colour-

ful. Bose looked intently at the statue while the crowd watched and waited.

“Such an episode might lead one to imagine Bose as a passionate and martyr-like figure. But I do not think that any one who ever interviewed Bose got such an impression. On the contrary, many of my colleagues have told me that they were impressed by his calm and rather meditative personality. His behaviour at Press Conferences was slow and very sure. He smiled seldom. But when he did, he smiled softly and gently. I thought he kept a firm balance between passion and reason.”

Here are some facts about the I.N.A. which will be read with interest :—

The Indian Independence League, which organised the Indian National Army, met its expenses from contributions from Indians all over East Asia. In Burma alone, Indians contributed Rs. 80 crores. In the first two weeks of January 1945, about Rs. 40 lakhs were collected. Except for weapons, all other expenditure was met from this fund.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was the Prime Minister and War Minister in the Provisional Indian National Government. The other ministers were Finance, Propaganda, Foreign Affairs, Women's Affairs, etc. Andaman and Nicobar Islands were under the Provisional Indian National Government. If Imphal had fallen, the Provisional Indian National Government would have introduced its own currency.

The I.N.A.'s strength was one division on the Assam front, one division in Rangoon, one division in Malaya and two divisions under training. Half the soldiers in these five divisions were ex-prisoners of war, that is former soldiers of the British Indian Army. The other half were civilian volunteers in the I.N.A. training centres in Singapore, Rangoon,

Penang, etc. All instructors were Indians. There were no Japanese officials or soldiers.

Each I.N.A. division had four brigades, The first division, which fought in Imphal and in the Arakan, consisted of the following brigades:—

Gandhi Brigade, Commanding Colonel Inayat Kayani, 2,800 men.

Azad Brigade, Commanding Colonel Zulmara Singh, 2,800 men.

Nehru Brigade, Commanding Colonel Gurbaksh Singh-Dhillon, 3,000 men.

Subhas Brigade, Commanding Colonel Shah Nawaz Khan, 3,200 men.

The Subhas Brigade, Gandhi Brigade and Azad Brigade with about 1,000 non-combatent ranks, were on the Imphal front. Out of these only 3,400 returned when the I.N.A. withdrew.

The I.N.A. had no planes. Each Commander had a car, but there were no lorries for transport. The soldiers themselves had to carry munitions and supplies. The I.N.A. had only one kitchen, where Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and all others ate together. The Indian National Government's language was Hindustani with Roman script. The I.N.A.'s flag was the tricolour and the salute "Jai Hind."

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was weighed in gold sometime in January 1945, and the precious metal so obtained became the asset of a national bank formed in South-East Asia. This story was told by seven I.N.A. prisoners recently released from the Jubbulpur camp jail, who were entertained last October by the Badshahi Mandi Congress Committee.

The prisoners related their experiences and circumstances under which the Indian National Army was formed. They said on February 15, 1942, the day Singapore was captured there was a conference the same night between Indian army officers and Japanese military officers and the next day Indian officers held a parade of the men of the Indian army, which had surrendered, and asked those of them to raise their hands who wanted to fight for the freedom of their motherland. There were about 55,000 men on parade and almost all of them raised their hands for fight for their motherland. We resolved to do so because of our patriotism, stated the I.N.A. men. Replying to a question they asserted that it was not the fear of the Japanese cruelties but their patriotism coupled with the discontent against the treatment meted out to the Indians in general in the army that prompted them to form an Indian National Army.

The I.N.A. men also narrated the stories how an average Japanese soldier found it difficult to distinguish between the British and the Indian. There were even cases, they stated, when Indians were mistaken by these soldiers for Britishers because the distinctive marks, which they were told, were not to be found on these Indians.

It is learnt about 500 I.N.A. prisoners are still lodged in the Jabulpur Camp Jail.

Information reaching here shows how funds for the Azad Hind League and the Indian National Army were raised. The League collected about eight crores of rupees for carrying its activities.

Sri Subhas Chandra Bose, whenever he addressed meetings, was garlanded and the garlands were put to auction after his speech.

The first auction fetched rupees one lakh, the second auction brought Rs. 2 lakhs, the third Rs. 3 lakhs and the last auction fetched Rs. 12 lakhs.

In one of the auctions one Punjabi gentleman entered into the bid and purchased garlands by all his property.

Wherever Mr. Bose addressed meetings, the audience was between 20,000 and 25,000. Men, women and children attended the meetings from far-off places. Rain or sun did not deter them, and Subhas Bose used to speak for three to four hours at a stretch.

"Subhas Chandra Bose, who was on his way to Japan from Singapore for consultation with the Japanese Government, died of injuries received when his plane crashed near Taihoku."

"To that effect ran an announcement issued by the Japanese Board of Information about a week after the Japanese surrender was announced by the Emperor," said Mr. K. V. Narain, an Indian student from Bangalore City, in a statement to the United Press of America.

Mr. Narain added: "While this piece of news more or less got lost in the midst of the post-surrender confusion, in the minds of the Indians in Japan suspicion at once arose as to its credibility. To some it seemed certain that Bose had been bumped off by the Japanese, while many others believed that it was another smart move by Bose himself to disappear for sometime until things settled down. This latter view seemed quite plausible if one recalled the mysterious circumstances under which the ex-Congress President disappeared from India in 1941, only to show up a few months later in Axis Europe. However, nobody could be sure until more news and definite proofs could be had of the whole affair.

“About three weeks later, the news went around that Bose’s remains had been brought to Japan by another Indian, who had been accompanying him on the plane and who had been reported at the time of the accident as having been seriously injured. His whereabouts, was hushed up in the greatest secrecy. While the Indians were anxious to know what the ‘remains’ were that had been brought over here, no one was even informed where the remains were kept, let alone allowed access to the place.

“Doubts now began to grow in the minds of the Indians as to the truth of the whole story. Those doubts increased even more when one Indian, who discovered where Bose’s ‘ashes’ were kept, asked when the ‘funeral’ would be held. He was told—after he had been asked to offer incense in the Buddhist fashion and pay his respects to the ashes—that all Indians would be informed in due course and that in view of the prevailing circumstances, the ceremony could not but be held in a quiet manner. But as it happened, no one was informed, and everyone was surprised to read in the paper a couple of days later that funeral rites for Mr. Bose had been held in Tokyo two days before this Indian had inquired about the funeral date and had been told he would be informed well in time.

“Thus, all this hush-hush and the evasiveness about the whole affair has certainly not done anything to remove the doubt in the minds of the Indians in Japan that there is something fishy about it.

“First the time and location of the plane accident itself makes one ask the questions: Why, of all places, did the accident occur in Formosa—where there would be no prying eyes—and was it merely a coincident that the Japanese surrender had come only a few days before? The conjecture

among those close to Mr. Bose, it would seem, is that he did not want to remain in Malaya where when the Allies came he would come under the charge of the local commander there, but wanted to be in Tokyo in which case he would have been taken in charge by the Supreme Allied Commander and consequently have had a better chance to plead his own case in the eyes of the international public. But this is nonsense, since in any case, Mr. Bose would have known that wherever he might be taken he would be handed over to the charge of the Indian Government to be handled by them as they decided.

“Second what happened to his remains? The ashes, supposed to be his were brought to Tokyo. But ashes don’t prove who the dead man is; they might be anybody’s, or they may not be those of a human being at all. As for his other remains like personal belongings—the suit he was wearing, etc.,—it is said that they were cremated along with him. If Mr. Bose were really dead, common sense should have told that his personal belongings should have been saved as proof of his death for, the circumstances of his reported death having been mysterious, the world would certainly ask for all available proofs to be convinced of his being no more.

“There is however, one point which, to an extent would support the view that Mr. Bose is dead; the Indian who supposedly was with Mr. Bose on the same plane has been seen, with his hands and face bruised. But this again is no conclusive proof. He might have been involved in some other accident.

“So the mystery remains unsolved, and local Indians are no more convinced of his death than they were at the time it was announced. If anything, they are more convinced than ever that it is all a make-believe by Mr. Bose.”

VI

Even if Subhas Bose is dead or *will die*—as all mortals must do one day—his ideas will shine forever in the midnight sky and blazon the murky horizon of India. The sublime soul and spirit of Bose are embodied in an historic letter which is looked upon as his “Political Testament.” He wrote this letter to the Government from behind the prison bars and that invests it with a sacred halo.

He addressed this memorable letter to His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, the Hon’ble the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers on 26th November 1940. Here are some extracts from the letter :—

“Herein I shall recapitulate what I have to say regarding my own case and shall also put down in black and white the considerations that are impelling me to take the most fateful step in my life.

“I have no longer any hope that I shall obtain redress at your hands. I shall, therefore, make but two requests—the second of which will be at the end of this letter. My first request is that this letter be carefully preserved in the archives of the Government, so that it might be available to those of my countrymen who will succeed you in office in future. It contains a message for my countrymen and is, therefore, my political testament.....

“There has been manifest illegality and injustice. Only one explanation can, to my mind, account for such strange conduct, *viz.*, that Government have been pursuing a frankly vindictive policy towards me for reasons that are quite inexplicable.

“For more than two months, the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over again as to what I should do in such a predicament.

“Should I submit to the pressure of circumstances and accept whatever comes in my way—or should I protest against what, to me, is unfair, unjust and illegal? After the most mature deliberation I have come to the conclusion that surrender to circumstances is out of the question. It is a more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong. So, protest I must.

“But all these days, protest has been going on and the ordinary methods of protest have all been exhausted. Agitation in the press and on the platform, representations to the Government, demands in the Assembly, exploration of legal channels—have not all of these been already tried and found ineffective? Only one method remains—the last weapon in the hands of a prisoner—*i.e.*, hunger-strike or fast.

“In the cold light of logic I have examined the pros and cons of this step and have carefully weighed the loss and gain that will accrue from it. I have no illusion in the matter and I am fully conscious that the immediate tangible gain will be nil, for I am sufficiently conversant with the behaviour of Governments and bureaucracies during such crises. The classic and immortal examples of Terence Macswiney and Jatin Das are floating before my mind’s eye at the moment. A system has no heart that could be moved, though it has false sense of prestige to which it always clings.

“Life under existing conditions is intolerable for me. To purchase one’s continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself rather than pay this price. Government are determined to hold me in prison by force. I say in reply, ‘Release me or I shall refuse to live—and it is for me to decide whether I choose to live or to die.’

“ Though there may be no immediate tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering and sacrifice alone that a cause can flourish and prosper and in every age and clime the eternal law prevails—the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church.

“ In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish—but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea—but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move in and the ideas, the dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal or suffering and sacrifice.

“ What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that he has unfinished his task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause?

“ Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth, he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life immortal.

“ This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. To-day I must die so that India may live and may win freedom and glory.

“ To my countrymen I say—‘Forget not that the greatest curse for a man is to remain a slave.’ Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and

wrong. Remember the external law—you must give, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against iniquity, no matter what the cost may be.

“To the Government of the day I say—cry halt to your mad drive along the path of communalism and injustice. There is yet time to retrace your steps. Do not use a boomerang which will soon recoil on you. And do not make another Sind of Bengal.

“I have finished. My second and last request to you is that you should not interfere forcibly with my end and let me die peacefully. In the case of Terence MacSwiney or Jatin Das, or Mahatma Gandhi and in our own case in 1926—Government did decide not to interfere with the fast. I hope they will do the same this time.....

These are immortal words of Subhas Bose. And an immortal philosophy is embedded in them. Generations yet unborn will delve deep into this gold-mine of immortality. Men may come and men may go but Bose will live on for ever.

SECOND PART

Subhas Speaks

CHAPTER VIII

BRILLIANT BITS OF BOSE

It is now time to put together some notable ideas of Subhas Chandra Bose in a readable form, a mirror that will show us the mind of the hero at a glance. Many charges have been laid upon the shoulders of Shri Subhas Bose, but the study of his writings between the lines gives him a clean sheet. It is with that point in view that the following bouquet of ideas has been set forth before the reader. Bose is neither a Socialist nor a Fascist, but a profoundly thoughtful Nationalist. And to that end he devoted the fireworks of his intellect and the embers of his comet-like career.

SWARAJ PARTY

“Considering the influence of Mahatma Gandhi in 1921 and 1922, the rise of Swaraj Party must be regarded as something unaccountably remarkable. Though the leaders and the rank and file of the party had the highest respect for the personality of the Mahatma, the party was frankly anti-Gandhi Party, and it was strong enough to force the Mahatma to voluntary retirement from politics.”

PLANS FROM PRISON

It was in Maharashtra that Subhas Bose outlined the plans he had evolved in Mandalay Prison. He was called

upon to preside over the Maharashtra Provincial Conference and he writes as follows about that Conference :—

“ The enthusiasm I met there was striking. In my speech I advocated some new lines of activity for Congressmen which I had decided on during my prolonged incarceration in Burma. For instance, I urged that the Congress should directly take up the task of organising labour and that youth and students should start organisations of their own for their country. I also urged several political organisations for women in addition to their participation in the organisation.”

THE LEFT WING

“The left wing to which I belonged had resolved previously to come to Karachi, survey the situation there, consider carefully what the Mahatma had communicated to me in Bombay as to his future attitude and then make their final decision. At Karachi it was quite clear that they would not have much support from the elected delegates, who alone could vote at the Congress, though among the general public and particularly the youth, they had larger support. There was another factor which had to be considered. If we were consistent and honest it would not do to merely oppose the pact and then go back home. We would have to give notice to the Government and start the movement again. What support would we get if we did so? There was no doubt that the response in men and money would be disappointing. There was, therefore, no possibility that if we continued the fight we would achieve better results than the Mahatma had done. If we were defeated as we were sure to be, our opposition would be futile. If we succeeded in throwing out the pact which was unlikely in the circumstances but failed to carry on a more vigorous campaign, the country would not gain by our opposition.”

GANDHI IN ITALY

“He was given a warm reception by the Government and the people of Italy, and was received in audience by the head of Government, Signor Mussolini. This meeting was certainly a historic one. The Dictator of Italy conveyed his best wishes for the success of the Mahatma's efforts. It was the only occasion on the continent that the Mahatma came into contact with a man who really counts in the politics of modern Europe. The Mahatma's attitude towards the Fascist authorities including his attendance at a demonstration of the Fascist boys (the Balilla) was severely criticised in anti-Fascist circles. But there is no doubt that from the point of view of India, the Mahatma rendered great public service by his visit to Italy. The only regret is that he did not stay there longer and did not cultivate more personal contact.”

NEHRU VERSUS BOSE

In a press statement issued in December 18, 1938, Nehru had said :—

“I do believe that fundamentally the choice before the world to-day is between some form of Communism and some form of Fascism, and I am all for the former, that is Communism. I dislike Fascism intensely and indeed I do not think it is anything more than a crude and brutal effort of the present capitalist order to preserve itself at any cost. There is no middle road between Fascism and Communism. One has to choose between the two and I choose the Communist ideal. In regard to the methods and approach to this ideal, I may not agree with everything that the orthodox Communists have done. I think that these methods will have to adapt themselves to changing conditions and may vary in different countries. But I do think that the basic ideology of Communism and its scientific interpretation of history is sound.”

Commenting on this Subhas Bose writes :—

“The view expressed here is according to the writer fundamentally wrong. Unless we are at the end altogether, there is no reason to hold that our choice is restricted to two alternatives. Whether one believes in the Hegelian or in the Bergsonian or any other theory of evolution—in no case need we think that creation is at an end. Considering everything one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world history will produce a synthesis between Communism and Fascism. And will it be a surprise if that synthesis is produced in India? This view has been expressed in the introduction that, in spite of India's geographical isolation the Indian awakening is organically connected with the march of the progress in other parts of the world and facts and figures have been mentioned to substantiate that view. Consequently, there need be no surprise if an experiment of importance to the whole world is made in India—especially when we have seen with our own eyes that another experiment (that of Mahatma Gandhi) made in India has roused profound interest all over the world.”

COMMUNISM AND FASCISM

After this Subhas Bose goes on to describe the points of resemblance between Communism and Fascism :—

“In spite of the antithesis between Communism and Fascism there are certain traits common to both. Both Communism and Fascism believe in the supremacy of the state over the individual. Both denounce parliamentary democracy. Both believe in party rule. Both believe in the dictatorship in the party and in the ruthless suppression of all dissenting minorities. Both believe in a planned industrial reorganisation of the country. These common traits will form the basis of the new synthesis. That synthesis is called by the

writer "Samyavada" an Indian word, which means literally "the doctrine of synthesis."

SAMYAVADA SANGH

In the plan of the New Party outlined by Subhas Bose, we find that it is essentially anti-Capitalist and anti-Imperialist and bears the stamp of ideas preached in Germany and Italy at that time. He lays down ten points of his programme—

1. The party will stand for the interest of the peasants, workers, etc., and not for the vested interests, that is, the landlords, capitalists, and money-lending classes.

2. It will stand for the complete political and economic liberation of the Indian people.

3. It will stand for a Federal Government for India as the ultimate goal but will believe in a strong Central Government with dictatorial powers for some years to come, in order to put India on her feet.

4. It will believe in a sound system of state planning for the reorganisation of the agricultural and industrial life of the country.

5. It will seek to build up a new social structure on the basis of the village communities of the past, that were ruled by the village 'Panch' and will strive to break down existing social barriers like castes.

6. It will seek to establish a new monetary and credit system in the light of the theories and the experiments that have been and are current in the modern world.

7. It will seek to abolish landlordism and introduce a uniform land tenure system for the whole of India.

8. It will not stand for democracy in the mid-Victorian sense of the term, but will believe in government by a strong party bound together by military discipline, as the only means

of holding India together and preventing a chaos, when Indians are free and are thrown entirely on their own resources.

9. It will not restrict itself to a campaign inside India but will resort to international propaganda also, in order to strengthen India's case for liberty and will attempt to utilise the existing international organisations.

10. It will endeavour to unite all the radical organisations under a national executive so that whenever any action is taken there will be simultaneous activities on many fronts."

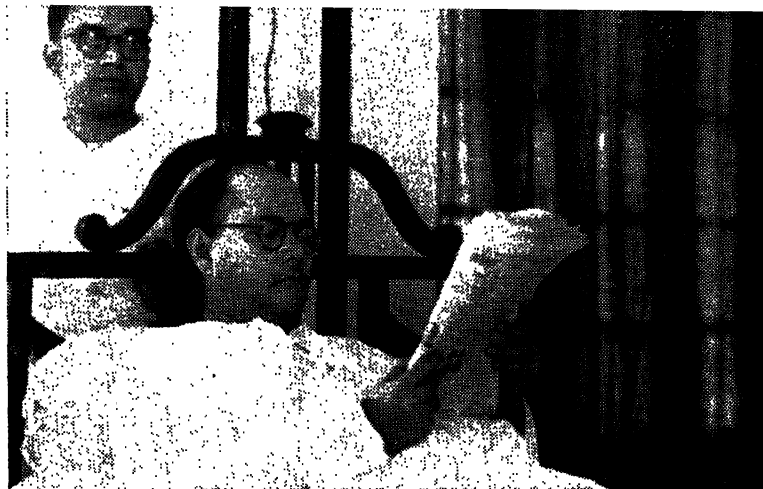
Let us now turn to the conditions in India, when Subhas Bose was advocating "Samyavada Sangh" in Europe. How did the Indians react to it? Writing in 1935 Subhas Bose strikes a very optimistic note about the future of "Samyavada Sangh" in India. He says:—

"To come back to the Congress. The present controversy between Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is of passing interest as the issue is a very minor one. Neither the Congress Nationalist Party nor the official Congress Parliamentary Party has a role to play in future, because both of them are heterogeneous parties without any clear ideology or programme. It only remains to consider the future of Gandhis in India. It has been urged sometimes that Gandhism is an alternative to Communism. The idea is, in the opinion of the writer, erroneous. Mahatma Gandhi has given the country (and may be the world) a new method—the method of passive resistance or *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation. He has not given his country or humanity a new programme of social reconstruction as Communism has—and the alternative to Communism can be only another theory of social reconstruction. No doubt, the Mahatma has condemned the 'machine civilisation' of the modern world and has eulogised the good old days when men were content with

their cottage industries and their wants were few. But that is a personal belief or idiosyncrasy. Whenever he has expounded the contents of Swaraj, he has spoken in the language of mid-Victorian Parliamentary Democracy and of traditional capitalist economics. The "Eleven Points," which he enunciated in 1920 as connoting his substance of independence, will be unreservedly accepted by any Indian Industrial magnate. One could, therefore, say that the Mahatma does not intend pulling down the modern structure if he were to get political mastery of his country, nor does he desire to completely industrialise the country. His programme is one of reform—he is fundamentally a reformist and not a revolutionary. He would leave the existing social and economic structure much as it is to-day (he would not even abolish the army altogether) and would content himself with removing the glaring injustices and inequalities against which moral sense revolts. There are millions of his countrymen who accept his method owing to the pressure of circumstances, but not his programme of reconstruction and who would like to build up quite a different India if they had the power. As has been already indicated the future of India ultimately lies with a party with a clear ideology, programme and plan of action—a party that will not only fight for and win freedom but will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction—a party that will break the isolation that has been India's curse and bring her into the comity of nations—firm in the belief that the fate of India is indissolubly linked up with the fate of humanity."

SOCIALIST PARTY

"The Socialist Party, in the form it has assumed to-day cannot make much headway. The composition of the party is not homogeneous, and some of the ideas are out of date. But the instinct that has urged the formation of the party if



Worried, wearied and worn-out the health of Subhas Bose broke down under the stress and storm of the historic Tripuri Session. He gave up food, but not his daily dose of newspaper.

The Beloved of India : Men of all castes, colours and communities join together to accord a cordial reception to Subhas Bose wherever he has the occasion to go.





Fighting for Health Subhas Bose had long to fight for his health as well as his country's freedom. The careful nursing of his loving brother, Sudhir Chandra Bose and his wife was mainly responsible for his recovery from illness during his term as President of the Congress.

patriotic is right. Out of this left-wing revolt there will ultimately emerge a new full-fledged party, with a clear ideology, programme and plan of action. ”

And also :

“ The Congress Socialists appear at the moment to be under the influence of Fabian Socialism and some of their ideas and shibboleths were the fashion several decades ago. Nevertheless the Congress Socialists do represent a radical force within the Congress and in the country. Many of those who could have helped them actively are not available at present. When their assistance will be forthcoming, the party will be able to make more headway. ”

FULL FREEDOM

While in London he declared :—

“ We demand full freedom and a constitution framed by the people. Nobody wants a conflict for the sake of conflict, and if a compromise can be reached which can satisfy our demands it would undoubtedly be accepted. ” Reviewing the recent progress Mr. Bose said :—“ The Ministers have made a good beginning, but have not achieved enough to satisfy the rank and file of the Congress. It is a mistake to assume that they accepted office permanently regardless of what they have achieved. There will be stock-taking after the end of the year. I am not very optimistic as regards the future. ”

FEDERATION OF FREE NATIONS

“ British Empire must fall or transform itself into Federation of Free Nations, ” said Bose. “ The Czarist Empire collapsed in 1917, but out of its debris sprang the union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There is still time for Great Britain to take a leaf out of Russian history. Will she do so ? ” He further declared that the freedom of British people lay only in becoming a Socialist State and they could not become

a Socialist State unless they freed the Empire. There is an inseparable connection between the capitalist ruling classes in Britain and the colonies abroad. As Lenin pointed out long ago, reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations. The British aristocracy and bourgeoisie exist primarily because there are colonies and overseas dependencies to exploit. The emancipation of the latter will undoubtedly strike at the very existence of the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and precipitate the establishment of a Socialist Republic in that country. It should, therefore, be clear that a Socialist order in Great Britain is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonies and that we who are fighting for the political freedom of India and other enslaved countries of the British Empire are incidentally fighting for the economic emancipation of the British people as well. ”

AIR FORCE

“ To-day Britain can hardly call herself master of seas. Her phenomenal rise in 18th and 19th centuries was the result of her sea-power, her decline in the 20th will be the outcome of the emergence of a new factor in the world history, Air Force. It was due to this new factor that an impudent Italy could successfully challenge a fully mobilised British Navy in the Mediterranean. ”

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

“ We shall find in every country men and women who will sympathise with Indian freedom, no matter what their views may be. ” He said : “ In this matter we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a Communist State, here diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with non-socialist States and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should

therefore aim at developing a nucleus of men and women in every country who would feel sympathetic towards India. ”

“ But have we got a well-disciplined volunteer corps for this purpose he asked ? “ Have we got a cadre of officers for our national services ? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers ? The answer to these questions is too patent to need elaboration. We have not yet provided all these requirements of a modern political party, but it is high time that we did. A disciplined volunteer corps manned by trained officers is exceedingly necessary. Moreover education and training should be provided for our political workers so that we may produce a better type of leaders in future. This sort of training is provided by political parties in Britain through summer schools and other institutions and is a speciality in totalitarian states... Everybody must have observed how some European countries have been dealing with this problem. Though our ideas and methods of training are quite different from theirs it will be admitted on all hands, that a thorough scientific training is requisite for our workers. Further an institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study, and with suitable modification may prove beneficial to India. ”

THE CONGRESS PARTY

Discussing the role of Congress party in the future states he said that Congress Party could not wither away after political freedom was won. “ On the contrary, the party will have to take power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil its role. If it were forcibly to liquidate itself, chaos would follow. Looking at post-war Europe we find that only in those countries has there been orderly and continued progress where the party which seized power undertook the work

of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstances standing behind the State will convert that State into a totalitarian one ; but I cannot admit the charge. The State will possibly become a totalitarian one if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should be banned. Moreover, the party itself will have a democratic basis, unlike, for instance, the Nazi Party which is based on the leader principle. ”

THE LEFTIST ELEMENTS

“ There has been a great deal of controversy over the question of forming a party, like the Congress Socialist Party within the Congress. I hold no brief for the Congress Socialist Party, and I am not a member of it. Nevertheless I must say that I have been in agreement with its general principles and policy from the very beginning. In the first place, it is desirable for the Leftist elements to be consolidated into one party ; secondly, a Leftist bloc can have a *raison d’être* only if it is Socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a bloc being called a party but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that bloc a group, league or party ; within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a Leftist bloc to have socialist programme, in which case it can be very well called a group, League or Party. But the role of the Congress Socialist Party, or any other party of the same sort, should be that of a left-wing group. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us—nevertheless, Socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the country for Socialism when political freedom has been won. And that propaganda can be conducted only by a party like the Congress Socialist Party, which stands for and believes in Socialism. ”

TRIBUTE TO GANDHI

“In conclusion, I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people united. We need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness and hatred. We need him for the cause of Indian Independence. What is more we need him for the cause of humanity. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism but against World Imperialism as well, of which the former is the key-stone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved. *Bande Matram.*”

BOSE-GUPTA DISPUTE

“On our side there is no bitterness. We are still prepared to leave the matter to Pt. Motilal whatever the decision be and are prepared to abide by it. If Pt. Motilal thinks that the Bengal dispute can be settled only by my resigning from it then we have no objection.”

SOCIO-POLITICAL VIEWS

When Subhas Bose first announced his ideas about *Samyavada Sangh*, Fascism and Communism had divided the European people in opposite sides. *Samyavada Sangh* was discussed in Britain. Sane statesmen always came to the rescue of Mr. Bose whenever he got in trouble at the hands of the Conservative press.

Replying to his critics Mr. Bose issued a statement from Geneva in which he defended himself. He said:

“In view of certain statements made in the British Press and reproduced thereafter in the Indian press, which may have led to some misunderstanding of my socio-political

views, I desire to say that there has been no fundamental change in my position. Since I came to Europe, I maintain more strongly than ever that while it is imperatively necessary that we should study all the modern movements abroad, it is equally necessary for us in India to chalk out the future lines of our progress in conformity with our past history and our present and future requirements. The geographical and intellectual isolation which India has enjoyed for centuries, should enable us to adopt a sympathetic but critical attitude towards others, lands and nations. It is necessary for us in India to distinguish clearly once for all between our internal and external policy.....In determining our internal policy, it would be a fatal error to say that the choice for India lies between Communism and Fascism. No one standpoint or other in socio-political affairs can be the last word in human wisdom. The socio-political theories and institutions of modern nations are the product of their history, environment and needs. They are liable to change or develop just as human life is. Moreover it should be remembered that some of the most interesting institutions of the present day are still under experiment. Time must elapse before they could be declared to be successful and in the meantime we should not mortgage our intellect anywhere. My own view has always been that India's task is to work out synthesis of all that is useful and good in the different movements that we see to-day. For this purpose we should have to study with critical sympathy all the movements and experiments that are going on in Europe and America and we would be guilty of folly if we ignore any movement or experiment because of any preconceived bias or predilection."

LONDON ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

British politicians were posing before the world as the main spokesmen about Indian affairs. At the World

Economic Conference there was nobody to represent India. Before the Economic Conference in London, a Conference of International Chamber of Commerce was also held in Vienna. India was represented at that Conference but not in London. Subhas Bose issued a statement declaring that decisions concerning India were being taken without consulting the Indian representatives. "The Vienna Conference," he said "had opposed the idea of Tariff-Truce, but these ideas will not be heard at the London Economic Conference."

THE HERO IN CHAINS

While in Europe Subhas Bose received a message that his father had become seriously ill. He decided to fly to India. When he landed in India he was served with an order under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act. The order put restrictions on his movements, and ran as follows :—

1. To proceed at once to 38/2, Elgin Road and reside there till further orders.
2. Not to be absent from the precincts of the said house and not to interview any visitor at any time.
3. Not to correspond, converse, or communicate or associate in any manner with anybody save the members of your family actually living at 38/2 Elgin Road.
4. To deliver unopened to the Deputy Superintendent of police, Special Branch, Calcutta, or the officer specially deputed by him for the purpose all books or communications (whether such communications be in the nature of telegrams, letters, postal packages or otherwise) received by you from any source whatever or intended for or to whomsoever addressed and whether the same be received by you or by some agent or servant on your behalf.
5. When so required by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, or by any Magistrate, to facilitate

in every way access of such person for any lawful purposes to the premises in which you be living.

6. If you knowingly disobey any of the directions, you will be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and also liable to fine.

THE FEDERAL SCHEME

"It is widely believed that there is a prospect of a compromise on the Federal Scheme between the right wing of the Congress and the British Government during the coming year. Consequently the Right Wing do not want a Leftist President who may be a thorn in the way of a compromise and may put obstacles in the path of negotiations."

LEFTISM AND FEDERATION

"It is really to be regretted," he said, "that my name has been proposed as a candidate for Presidentship. I had suggested to numerous friends that a new candidate from the left should be put up this year, but unfortunately that could not be done and my name was proposed by several provinces." "Even at this late hour," he added, "I am prepared to withdraw from the contest if a genuine anti-Federationist like Acharya Narendra Deo for instance, be accepted as the President for the coming year. If the Right Wing really want national unity and solidarity they would be well advised to accept a Leftist as President." Mr. Bose had gone even one step further in his next statement to avoid the contest but it seemed that the Right Wing leaders were confident of their victory, so they did not care to devote their consideration to the offer.

"And as I have already stated more than once," said Mr. Bose in one of his statements, "it is still possible to avoid contest if the Right Wing will accept as President"

somebody who will command the confidence of the left. If a contest does take place, as appears inevitable at the moment of writing, the responsibility for dividing the Congress will devolve entirely on the Right Wing. Will they shoulder that responsibility or, even at this late hour, will they decide to stand for national unity and solidarity on the basis of a progressive programme."

Had the Right Wing leaders accepted this offer of Mr. Bose, the present dissension in Congress could certainly have not taken place. The offer was not at all cared for, so the inevitable result of it was that the election took place. The total number of votes polled in all the provinces was 2,957, out of which Mr. Bose got 1,580 and Dr. Pattabhi Sitarmayya 1,377, and Mr. Bose was declared elected by a majority of more than 200 votes.

CONGRESS SOLIDARITY

When the election results were conveyed to Mr. Bose, he took the wisest step and in a befitting manner warned the enemies of India's freedom who were eagerly looking forward to a split in the Congress ranks.

"It is no time for jubilation," Mr. Bose declared. "On the contrary, it is time for heart-searching and for preparation for the future. Let us accept the result of the contest in a spirit of humility, and deep sense of respect. I feel overwhelmed with thoughts about to-morrow, so should everybody feel who voted on my side.

"Lest the enemies of Indian freedom should think that there has been split in the Congress, let me make it perfectly clear that the Congress stands united as ever before. Congressmen may have their differences in certain matters, but where fight against Imperialism is concerned, they are all one.

In a similar tone and in still more impressive words Mr. Bose expressed the same view at a public meeting which was held in Calcutta to felicitate him on his success in the election contest. "We should not be so foolish," he said, "as to accept the verdict of the delegation in a spirit of elation or jubilation. On the contrary, we should accept it in spirit of humility and with a deep sense of responsibility. In this hour of victory do not utter a word or do anything which may hurt the feelings of anybody or cast reflections on any person."

END OF GANHDI ERA

Although the President refrained from making any comment himself and also advised his supporters not to enter in any jubilation, yet the presidential election became the talk of the whole of political India. Some sections of the press actually regarded it as defeat of the Right Wing policy and total discontinuance of the Gandhian era in the Congress, but Mr. Bose took up still another excellently wise step to silence such irresponsible interpreters. "It will always be my aim and object," said he "to try and win his (Mahatma's) confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic step for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of the other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man."

BENGAL AND PATRIOTISM

Some statements appeared in the press that the meeting of the A.I.C.C. should not be held at Calcutta lest the people of Bengal should be excited to avenge humiliation they faced at Tripuri. These were, however, false apprehensions. Mr. Bose, therefore, on coming to know of these fears issued the following reassuring statement :

"Those who entertain such fears, do not, in my opinion, know Bengal. To be able to hold the A.I.C.C. meeting in a province is a privilege, honour and

welcome opportunity. On this occasion the people of Bengal and of Calcutta, in particular, will be the hosts of the rest of India. I am sure that in keeping with the tradition of patriotism and hospitality of which Bengal can legitimately feel proud, our guests will be given the warmest reception possible and will be offered our customary hospitality.

COMMON MINIMUM PROGRAMME

“It was generally felt that all progressive, radical and anti-imperialist elements in the Congress, who might not be ready to join the Socialist or Communist Party, should be organised on the basis of the common minimum programme. I feel further that only by that means could the onslaught of the right be resisted and the soil prepared for the growth of a Marxist Party.”

THE CONGRESS GIANTS

While writing about the Congress Cabinet after 1929 he said :—

“Since the death of these three giants (L. Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu C.R. Dass), the leadership of the Congress has fallen to a low intellectual level. The Congress Working Committee to-day is undoubtedly composed of some of the finest men of India—men who have character and courage, patriotism and sacrifice. But most of them have been chosen primarily because of their blind loyalty to Mahatma and there are few among them who have the capacity to think for themselves or the desire to speak against the Mahatma when he is likely to take a wrong step. In the circumstances, the Congress Cabinet of to-day is a one-man show.”

“But since their death, the entire intellect of the Congress has been mortgaged to one man and those who dare to think freely and speak out openly are regarded by the Mahatma and his disciples as heretics and are treated as such.”

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

“The position of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in this connection is an interesting one. His ideas and views are of a radical nature and he calls himself a full-blooded Socialist but in practice he is a loyal follower of the Mahatma. It would probably be correct to say that while his brain is with the Left-Wingers, his heart is with Mahatma Gandhi.”

WHAT BOSE THINKS OF GANDHI ?

“There is something in Mahatma Gandhi which appeals to the mass of the Indian people. Born in another country he might have been a complete misfit. What, for instance, would he have done in countries like Russia or Germany or Italy? His doctrine of non-violence would have led him to the cross or to the mental hospital. In India it is different. His simple life, his vegetarian diet, his goat's milk, his day of silence every week, his habit of squatting on the floor instead of sitting on the chair, his loin-cloth, in fact everything connected with him, has marked him out as one of the eccentric Mahatmas of old and has brought him nearer to his people. Wherever he may go, even the poorest of the poor feels that he is a product of the Indian soil, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. When the Mahatma speaks, he does so in a language that they comprehend—not in the language of Herbert Spencer and Edmund Burke, as for instance, Sir Surendra Nath Bannerji would have done, but in that of the Bhagavad Gita and the Ramayana. When he talks to them about Swaraj, he does not dilate on the virtues of provincial autonomy or federation, he reminds them of the glories of Rama-rajya, and they understand. And in talks of conquering

through love and *Ahimsa*, they are reminded of Buddha and Mahavira, and they accept him.

“The Indian National Congress of to-day is largely his creation. The Congress Constitution is his handiwork. From a talking body he has converted the Congress into a living and fighting organisation. It has its ramifications in every town and village in India, and the entire nation has been trained to listen to one voice. Nobility of character and capacity to suffer have been made the essential tests of leadership, and the Congress is today the largest and most representative political organisation in the country. But how could he achieve so much within this short period? By his simple-hearted devotion, his relentless will, and his indefatigable labour. Moreover, the time was auspicious and his policy prudent. Though he appeared as a dynamic force, he was not too revolutionary for the majority of his countrymen. If he had been so, he would have frightened them, instead of inspiring them; repelled them, instead of drawing them. His policy was one of unification. He wanted to unite the Hindu and the Muslim; the high caste and the low caste; the capitalist and the labourer; the landlord and the peasant. By his humanitarian outlook and his freedom from hatred, he was able to rouse sympathy even in his enemy's camp. With such purity of character and with such an unprecedented following, why has the Mahatma failed to liberate India? He has failed because the strength of a leader depends not on the largeness but on the character of one's following. With a much smaller following, other leaders have been able to liberate their country while the Mahatma with a much larger following has not. He has failed because, while he has understood the character of his own people, he has not understood the character of his opponents. The logic of the Mahatma is not the logic which appeals to John Bull. He has

failed because his policy of putting all his cards on the table will not do. He has failed because he has made use of the international weapon. If we desire to win our freedom through non-violence, diplomacy and international propaganda are essential. He has failed because the false unity of interests that are inherently opposed, is not a source of strength, but a source of weakness in political warfare. Last but not the least, the Mahatma has failed because he has had to play a dual role in one person—the role of the leader of an enslaved people and that of a world-teacher, who has a new doctrine to preach. It is this duality which has made him at once the irreconcilable foe of the Englishman, according to Mr. Winston Churchill, and the best policeman of the Englishman according to Miss Ellen Wilkinson.

“What of the future? What role will the Mahatma play in the days to come? Will he be able to emancipate his dear country? Several factors have to be considered. So far as his health and vitality are concerned, it is highly probable that he will be spared many years of active and useful public life, and his determination to achieve something tangible in the direction of his country's freedom will keep up his spirits. So far as his popularity and reputation are concerned, they will endure till the end of his life because unlike other political leaders the Mahatma's popularity and reputation do not depend on his political leadership, but largely on his character. The question we have to consider, however, is whether the Mahatma will continue his political activities or whether he will voluntarily withdraw himself from active politics—of which there are indications at the present moment—and devote himself exclusively to social and humanitarian work. A prediction in the case of the Mahatma is a hazardous proposition. Nevertheless, one thing is certain. The Mahatma

will not play second fiddle to any one. As long as it will be possible for him to guide the political movement, he will be there but if the composition or the mentality of the Congress changes, he may possibly retire from active politics. That retirement may be temporary or permanent. A temporary retirement is like a strategic retreat and is not of much significance, because our hero will be back into the picture once again. We have had experience of the Mahatma's retirement from active politics once before—from 1923 to 1928. Whether there is a possibility of the Mahatma's permanent retirement depends to some extent at least on the attitude of the British Government. If he is able to achieve something tangible for his country, then his position will be unassailable among his countrymen. Nothing succeeds like success, and the Mahatma's success will confirm public faith in his personality and in his weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. But if the British attitude continues to be as uncompromising as it is to-day—public faith in the Mahatma as a political leader and in the method of non-violent non-co-operation will be considerably shaken. In that even they will naturally turn to a more radical leadership and policy.

“In spite of the unparalleled popularity and reputation which the Mahatma has among his countrymen and will continue to have, regardless of his future political career—there is no doubt that the unique position of the Mahatma is due to his political leadership. The Mahatma himself distinguishes between his mass-popularity and his political following and he is never content with having merely the former. Whether he will be able to retain that political following in the years to come in the event of the British attitude being as unbending as it is to-day, will depend on his ability to evolve a more radical policy. Will he be able to give up the attempt to unite all the elements in the country and boldly identify himself with

the more radical forces? In that case nobody can possibly supplant him. The hero of the present phase of the Indian struggle will then be the hero of the next phase as well. But what does the balance of probability indicate? The Patna meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in May 1934 affords an interesting study in this connection. The Mahatma averted the Swarajist revolt by advocating Council entry himself. But the Swarajists of 1934 are not the dynamic Swarajists of 1922-23. Therefore, while he was able to win them over, he could not avoid alienating the Left-Wingers, many of whom have now combined to form the Congress Socialist Party. At the present moment another challenge to the Mahatma's policy has crystallised within the Congress in the Congress Nationalist Party led by Pandit Malaviya. The dispute has arisen over the Communal Award of the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. One definite prediction can be made at this stage, namely, that the future parties within the Congress will be based on economic issues. It is not improbable that in the event of the Left-Wingers capturing the Congress machinery, there will be a further secession from the Right and the setting up of a new organisation of the Right-Wingers like the Indian Liberal Federation of to-day. It will of course take some years to clarify the economic issues in the public mind so that parties may be organised on the basis of a clear programme and ideology. Till the issues are clarified, Mahatma Gandhi's political supremacy will remain unchallenged, even if there is a temporary retirement as in 1924. But once the clarification takes place, his political following will be greatly affected. As has been already indicated, the Mahatma has endeavoured in the past to hold together all the warring elements—landlord and peasant, capitalist and labour, rich and poor. That has been the secret of his success as surely as it will be the ultimate cause

of his failure. If all the warring elements resolve to carry on the struggle for political freedom, the internal social struggle will be postponed for a long time, and men holding the position of the Mahatma will continue to dominate the public life of the country. But that will not be the case. The vested interests, the 'haves' will in future fight shy of the 'have-nots' in the political fight and will gradually incline towards the British Government. The logic of history will therefore follow its inevitable course. The political struggle and the social struggle will have to be conducted simultaneously. The party that will win political freedom for India will be also the party that will win social and economic freedom of the masses. Mahatma Gandhi has rendered and will continue to render phenomenal service to his country. But India's salvation will not be achieved under his leadership."

—*The Indian Struggle*

CHAPTER IX

FIGHTING ON THE FREEDOM FRONT

(This is the full-fledged Presidential Address of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose at the Fifty-First Session of the Indian National Congress held at Haripura on 19th February 1938. Bose, with his characteristic comprehensiveness, covers the entire field of India's political struggle. Like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, he has an international horizon, and there is a great deal in common between his address and that delivered by Jawaharlal the year earlier. Both look at India, not merely as geographic but political and economic part of the world. But each has a charm of his own, and in this remarkable speech Shri Bose gives us a clear-cut programme for fighting on the Freedom Front of India. He does not even forget the intricate question of common language for India and the knotty problem of our countrymen who have gone overseas and there they are being subjected to the hardships of an enslaved people.)

Mr. Chairman and Friends.

I am deeply sensible of the honour you have done me by electing me as the President of the Indian National Congress for the coming year. I am not so presumptuous as to think for one moment that I am in any way worthy of that great honour. I regard it as a mark of your generosity and as a tribute to the youth of our country, but for whose cumulative contribution to our national struggle, we would not be where we are to-day. It is with a sense of fear and trepidation that I mount the tribune which has hitherto been graced by the most illustrious sons and daughters of our 'motherland.' Conscious as I am of my numerous limitations, I can only hope and pray that with your sympathy and support I may be able in some

small measure to do justice to the high office which you have called upon me to fill.

At the outset, may I voice your feelings in placing on record our profound grief at the death of Shrimati Swaruprani Nehru, Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose and Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji. Shrimati Swaruprani Nehru was to us not merely the worthy consort of Pandit Motilal and the revered mother of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Her suffering, sacrifice and service in the cause of India's freedom were such as any individual could feel proud of. As compatriots we mourn her death and our hearts go out in sympathy to Pandit Nehru and other members of the bereaved family.

To Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose, India will always remain beholden for being the first to secure for her an honoured place in the modern scientific world. A nationalist to the core of his heart, Acharya Jagadish gave his life not merely to science, but to India as well. India knows it and is grateful for it. We convey our heartfelt sympathy to Lady Bose.

Through the untimely death of Dr. Sarat Chandra Chatterji, India has lost one of the brightest stars in her literary firmament. His name, for years a household word in Bengal, was not less known in the literary world of India. But if Sarat Babu was great as a literateur, he was perhaps greater as a patriot. The Congress in Bengal is distinctly poorer to-day because of his death. We send our sincerest condolence to the members of his family.

Before I proceed further I should like to bow my head in homage to the memory of those who have laid down their lives in the service of the country since the Congress met last year at Faizpur. I should mention especially those who died in prison or in internment or soon after release from internment. I should refer in particular to Syt. Harendra Munshi, as political prisoner in the Dacca Central Jail, who laid down

his life the other day as a result of hunger-strike. My feelings are still too lacerated to permit me to say much on this subject. I shall only ask you if there is not 'something rotten in the state of Denmark' that such bright and promising souls as Jatin Das, Sardar Mahabir Singh, Ramkrishna Namada Mohit, Mohan Maitra, Harendra Munshi and others should feel the urge not to live life but to end it.

When we take a bird's eye view of the entire panorama of human history, the first thing that strikes us is the rise and fall of empires. In the East as well as in the West, empires have invariably gone through a process of expansion and after reaching the zenith of prosperity, have gradually shrunk into insignificance and sometimes death. The Roman Empire of ancient times and the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian Empires of the modern period are striking examples of this law. The empires in India—the Maurya, the Gupta and the Moghul—are no exception to this rule. In the face of these objective facts of history, can any one be so bold as to maintain that there is in store a different fate for the British Empire? That Empire stands today at one of the cross-roads of history. It will either go the way of other empires or it must transform itself into a federation of free nations. Either course is open to it. The Czarist empire collapsed in 1917 but out of its debris sprang the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There is still time for Great Britain to take a leaf out of Russian history. Will she do so?

The British Empire is hybrid phenomenon in politics. It is a peculiar combination of self-governing countries, partially self-governing dependencies and autocratically governed colonies. Constitutional device and human ingenuity may bolster up this combination for a while, but not for ever. If the internal incongruities are not removed in good time, then quite apart from external pressure, the empire is sure to

break down under its own strain. But can the British Empire transform itself into a federation of free nations with one bold sweep? It is for the British people to answer this question. One thing, however, is certain. This transformation will be possible only if the British people become free in their own homes—only if Great Britain becomes a Socialist State. There is an inseparable connection between the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and the colonies abroad. As Lenin pointed out long ago, "Reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations." The British aristocracy and bourgeoisie exist primarily because there are colonies and oversea dependencies to exploit. The emancipation of the latter will undoubtedly strike at the very existence of the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and precipitate the establishment of a socialist order in Great Britain. It is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonialism and that we who are fighting for the political freedom of India and other enslaved countries of the British Empire are incidentally fighting for the economic emancipation of the British people as well.

It is a well-known truism that every empire is based on the policy of divide and rule. But I doubt if any empire in the world has practised this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly as Great Britain. In accordance with this policy, before power was handed over to the Irish people, Ulster was separated from the rest of Ireland. Similarly, before any power is handed over to the Palestinians, the Jews will be separated from the Arabs. An internal partition is necessary in order to neutralise the transference of power. The same principle of partition appears in a different form in the new Indian Constitution. Here we find an attempt to separate the different communities and put them into watertight compartments. And in the Federal Scheme there is

juxtaposition of autocratic Princes and democratically-elected representatives from British India. If the new Constitution is finally rejected, whether owing to the opposition of British India or owing to the refusal of the Princes to joining it, I have no doubt that British ingenuity will seek some other constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralising the transference of power to the Indian people. Therefore, any constitution for India which emanates from Whitehall must be examined with the utmost care and caution.

The policy of 'Divide and Rule' though it has its obvious advantages, is by no means an unmixed blessing for the ruling power. As a matter of fact it creates new problems and new embarrassments. Great Britain seems to be caught in the meshes of her own political dualism, resulting from her policy of 'Divide and Rule'. Will she please the Muslim or the Hindu India? Will she favour the Arab or the Jew in Palestine—the Arab or the Kurd in Iraq? Will she side with the King or the *Wafd* in Egypt? The same dualism is visible outside the empire. In the case of Spain, British politicians are torn between such alternatives as Franco and the lawful Government and in the wider field of European politics, between France and Germany. The contradictions and inconsistencies in Britain's foreign policy are the direct outcome of the heterogeneous composition of her Empire. The British Cabinet has to please the Jews, because she cannot ignore Jewish high finance. On the other hand, the India Office and Foreign Office have to placate the Arabs because of Imperial interests in the Near East and in India. The only means whereby Great Britain can free herself from such contradictions and inconsistencies is by transforming the Empire into a federation of free nations. If she could do that, she would be performing a miracle in history. But if she fails, she must reconcile herself to the gradual dismemberment of a

vast empire where the sun is supposed not to set. Let not the lesson of the Austro-Hungarian Empire be lost on the British people.

The British Empire at the present moment is suffering from strain at a number of points. Within the Empire in the extreme West there is Ireland and in the extreme East, India. In the middle lies Palestine with the adjoining countries of Egypt and Iraq. Outside the empire there is the pressure exerted by Italy in the Mediterranean and Japan in the Far East, both of these countries being militant, aggressive and imperialist. Against this background of unrest stands Soviet Russia whose very existence strikes terror into the hearts of the ruling classes in every imperialist State. How long can the British Empire withstand the cumulative effect of this pressure and strain?

Today, Britain can hardly call herself "the Mistress of the Seas." Her phenomenal rise in the 18th and 19th centuries was the result of her sea power. Her decline as an empire in the 20th century will be the outcome of the emergence of a new factor in the world history—Air Force. It was due to this new factor, Air Force, that an impudent Italy could successfully challenge a fully mobilised British Navy in the Mediterranean. Britain can realm on land, sea and air up to the utmost limit. Battleships may still stand up to bombing from the air, but air force as a powerful element in modern warfare has come to stay. Distances have been obliterated and despite all anti-aircraft defences, London lies at the mercy of any bombing squadron from a continental centre. In short, air force has revolutionised modern warfare, destroyed the insularity of Great Britain and rudely disturbed the balance of power in world politics. The clay feet of a gigantic empire now stand exposed as it has never been before.

Amid this interplay of world forces India emerges much stronger than she has ever been before. Ours is a vast country with a population of 350 millions. Our vastness in area and in population has hitherto been a source of weakness. It is to-day a source of strength if we can only stand united and boldly face our rulers. From the standpoint of Indian unity the first thing to remember is that the division between British India and the Indian States is an entirely artificial one. India is one and the hopes and aspirations of the people of British India and of the Indian States are identical. Our goal is that of an Independent India and in my view that goal can be attained only through a federal republic in which the Provinces and the States will be willing partners. The Congress has, time and again, offered its sympathy and moral support to the movement carried on by the States' subjects for the establishment of democratic Government in what is known as Indian India. It may be that at this moment our hands are so full that the Congress is not in a position to do more for our compatriots in the States. But even to-day there is nothing to prevent individual Congressmen from actively espousing the cause of the States' subjects and participating in their struggle. There are people in the Congress like myself who would like to see the Congress participating more actively in the movement of the States' subjects. I personally hope that in the near future it will be possible for the Indian National Congress to take a forward step and offer a helping hand to our fellow fighters in the States. Let us not forget that they need our sympathy and our help.

Talking of Indian unity, the next thing that strikes us is the problem of the minorities. The Congress has, from time to time, declared its policy on this question. The latest authoritative pronouncement made by the All-India Congress

Committee at its meeting in Calcutta in October 1937, runs thus :

“ The Congress has solemnly and repeatedly declared its policy in regard to the rights of the minorities in India and has stated that it considers its duty to protect these rights and ensure the widest possible scope for the development of these minorities and their participation in the fullest measure in the political, economic and cultural life of the nation. The objective of the Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantages and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of the people of India. This objective of unity and mutual co-operation in a common freedom does not mean the suppression in any way of the rich variety and cultural diversity of Indian life, which have to be preserved in order to give freedom and opportunity to the individual as well as to each group to develop unhindered according to its capacity and inclination.

“ In view, however, of attempts having been made to misinterpret the Congress policy in this regard, the All-India Congress Committee desire to reiterate this policy. The Congress has included in its resolution on Fundamental Rights that—

- (i) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully

- and without arms, for a purpose not opposed to law or morality ;
- (ii) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality ;
 - (iii) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected ;
 - (iv) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex ;
 - (v) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling ;
 - (vi) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort maintained out of State or local funds, or dedicated by private person for the use of the general public ;
 - (vii) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions ;
 - (viii) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage ;
 - (ix) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

“ These clauses of the Fundamental Rights and resolution make it clear that there should be no interference in matters of conscience, religion or culture, and a minority is entitled to keep its personal law without any change in this respect being imposed by the majority.

“ The position of the Congress in regard to the communal decision has been repeatedly made clear in Congress resolutions and finally in the Election Manifesto issued last year. The Congress is opposed to this decision as it is anti-national, anti-democratic and is a barrier to Indian freedom and the development of Indian unity. Nevertheless the Congress has declared that a change in, or supersession of, the Communal Decision should only be brought about by the mutual agreement of the parties concerned. The Congress has always welcomed and is prepared to take advantage of any opportunity to bring about such a change by mutual agreement.

“ In all matters affecting the minorities in India, the Congress wishes to proceed by their co-operation and through their good-will in a common undertaking and for the realization of a common aim which is the freedom and betterment of all the people of India.”

The time is opportune for renewing our efforts for the final solution of this problem. I believe I am voicing the feelings of all Congressmen when I say that we are eager to do our very best to arrive at an agreed solution consistent with the fundamental principles of Nationalism. It is not necessary for me to go into details as to the lines on which a solution should take place. Much useful ground has already been covered in past conferences and conversations. I shall merely add that only by emphasising our common interests, economic and political, can we cut across communal divisions and dissensions. A policy of ‘live and let live’ in matters religious and an understanding in matters economic and political should be our objective. Though the Muslim problem looms large whenever we think of the question of the minorities and though we are anxious to settle this problem finally, I must say that the Congress is equally desirous of doing justice to other minorities and especially the so-called depressed classes whose

number is a very large one. I would put it to the members of the minority communities in India to consider dispassionately if they have anything to fear when the Congress programme is put into operation. The Congress stands for the political and economic rights of the Indian people as a whole. If it succeeds in executing its programme, the minority communities would be benefitted as much as any other section of the Indian population. Moreover, if after the capture of political power, national reconstruction takes place on socialistic lines—as I have no doubt it will—it is the ‘have-nots’ who will benefit at the expense of the ‘haves’ and the Indian masses have to be classified among the ‘have-nots’. There remains but one question which may be a source of anxiety to the minorities, viz., religion and that aspect of culture that is based on religion. On this question, the Congress policy is one of live and let live—a policy of complete non-interference in matters of conscience, religion and culture as well as of cultural autonomy for the different linguistic areas. The Muslims have, therefore, nothing to fear in the event of India winning her freedom—on the contrary they have everything to gain. So far as the religious and social disabilities of the so-called depressed classes are concerned, it is well known that during the last 17 years the Congress has left no stone unturned in the effort to remove them, and I have no doubt that the day is not far off when such disabilities will be things of the past.

I shall now proceed to consider the method which the Congress should pursue in the years to come as well as its role in the national struggle. I believe more than ever that the method should be *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation in the widest sense of the term, including civil disobedience. It would not be correct to call our method passive resistance. *Satyagraha*, as I understand it, is not merely passive resistance but active resistance as well, though that activity must be

of a non-violent character. It is necessary to remind our countrymen that *Satyagraha* or non-violent non-co-operation may have to be resorted to again. The acceptance of office in the provinces as an experimental measure should not lead us to think that our future activity is to be confined within the limits of strict constitutionalism. There is every possibility that a determined opposition to the forcible inauguration of federation may land us in another big campaign of civil disobedience.

In our struggle for independence we may adopt either of two alternatives. We may continue our fight until we have our full freedom and in the meantime decline to use any power that we may capture while on the march. We may, on the other hand, go on consolidating our position while we continue our struggle for *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence. From the point of view of principle, both the alternatives are equally acceptable and *a priori* considerations need not worry us. But we should consider very carefully at every stage as to which alternative would be more conducive to our national advancement. In either case, the ultimate stage in our progress will be the severance of the British connection. When that severance takes place and there is no trace left of British domination, we shall be in a position to determine our future relations with Great Britain through a treaty of alliance voluntarily entered into by both parties. What our future relations with Great Britain will or should be, it is too early to say. That will depend to a large extent on the attitude of the British people themselves. On this point I have been greatly impressed by the attitude of President de Valera. Like the President of Eire, I should also say that we have no enmity towards the British people. We are fighting Great Britain and we want the fullest liberty to determine our future relations

with her. But once we have real self-determination, there is no reason why we should not enter into the most cordial relations with the British people.

I am afraid there is a lack of clarity in the minds of many Congressmen as to the role of the Congress in the history of our national struggle. I know that there are friends who think that after freedom is won, the Congress Party having achieved its objective, should wither away. Such a conception is entirely erroneous. The party that wins freedom for India should be also the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction. Only those who have won power can handle it properly. If other people are pitchforked into seats of power which they were not responsible for capturing, they will lack that strength, confidence and idealism which is indispensable for revolutionary reconstruction. It is this which accounts for the difference in the record of the Congress and non-Congress Ministries in the very narrow sphere of Provincial Autonomy.

No, there can be no question of the Congress Party withering away after political freedom has been won. On the contrary, the party will have to take over power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil its role. If it were forcibly to liquidate itself, chaos would follow. Looking at post-war Europe we find that only in those countries has there been orderly and continuous progress where the party which seized power undertook the work of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstances, standing behind the state, will convert that state into a totalitarian one; I cannot admit the charge. The state will possibly become a totalitarian one, if there be only one party as in countries like Russia, Germany and Italy. But there is no reason why other parties should

be banned. Moreover the party itself will have a democratic basis, unlike, for instance, the Nazi Party which is based on the "leader principle". The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress Party will prevent the future Indian State becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust upon the people from above, but are elected from below.

Though it may be somewhat premature to give a detailed plan of reconstruction, we might as well consider some of the principles according to which our future social reconstruction should take place. I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines. The very first thing which our future national government will have to do, would be to set up a commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan of reconstruction. This plan will have two parts—an immediate programme and a long period programme. In drawing up the first part, the immediate objectives which will have to be kept in view will be threefold—firstly, to prepare the country for self-sacrifice; secondly, to unify India; and thirdly, to give scope for local and cultural autonomy. The second and third objectives may appear to be contradictory, but they are not really so. Whatever political talent or genius, we may possess as a people, will have to be used in reconciling these two objectives. We shall have to unify the country so that we may be able to hold India against any foreign invasion. While unifying the country through a strong central government, we shall have to put all the minority communities as well as the provinces at their ease, by allowing them a large measure of autonomy in cultural as well as governmental affairs. Special efforts

will be needed to keep our people together when the load of foreign domination is removed, because alien rule has demoralised and disorganised us to a degree. To promote national unity we shall have to develop our *lingua franca* and a common script. Further, with the help of such modern, scientific contrivances as aeroplanes, telephone, radio, films, television, etc, we shall have to bring the different parts of India closer to one another and through a common educational policy we shall have to foster a common spirit among the entire population. So far as our *lingua franca* is concerned, I am inclined to think that the distinction between Hindi and Urdu is an artificial one. The most natural *lingua franca* would be a mixture of the two, such as is spoken in daily life in large portions of the country and this common language may be written in either of the two scripts, Nagari or Urdu. I am aware that there are people in India who strongly favour either of the two scripts to the exclusion of the other. Our policy, however, should not be one of exclusion. We should allow the fullest latitude to use either script. At the same time, I am inclined to think that the ultimate solution and the best solution would be the adoption of a script that would bring us into line with the rest of the world. Perhaps, some of our countrymen will gape with horror when they hear of the adoption of the Roman Script, but I would beg them to consider this problem from the scientific and historical point of view. If we do that, we shall realise at once that there is nothing sacrosanct in a script. The Nagari script as we know it to-day, has passed through several phases of evolution. Besides, most of the major provinces of India have their own script and there is the Urdu script which is used largely by the Urdu-speaking public in India and by both Muslims and Hindus in provinces like the Punjab and Sind. In view of such diversity, the choice of a uniform

script for the whole of India should be made in a thoroughly scientific and impartial spirit, free from bias of every kind. I confess that there was a time when I felt that it would be anti-national to adopt a foreign script. But my visit to Turkey in 1934 was responsible for converting me. I then realised for the first time what a great advantage it was to have the same script as the rest of the world. So far as our masses are concerned, since more than 90 per cent. are illiterate and are not familiar with any script, it will not matter to them which script we introduce when they are educated. The Roman script will, moreover, facilitate their learning a European language. I am quite aware how unpopular the immediate adoption of the Roman script would be in our country. Nevertheless, I would beg my countrymen to consider what would be the wisest solution in the long run.

With regard to the long period programme for a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population. I do not desire to go into the theoretical question as to whether India is over populated or not. I simply want to point out that where poverty, starvation and disease are stalking the land, we cannot afford to have our population mounting up by thirty millions during a single decade. If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. It will therefore be desirable to restrict our population until we are able to feed, clothe and educate those who already exist. It is not necessary at this stage to prescribe the methods that should be adopted to prevent a further increase in population, but I would urge that public attention be drawn to this question.

Regarding reconstruction, our principal problem will be how to eradicate poverty from our country. That will

require a radical reform of our land system, including the abolition of landlordism. Agricultural indebtedness will have to be liquidated and provision made for cheap credit for the rural population. An extension of the co-operative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers. Agriculture will have to be put on a scientific basis with a view to increasing the yield from the land.

To solve the economic problem, agricultural improvement will not be enough. A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownership and state-control will be indispensable. A new industrial system will have to be built up in place of the old one, which has collapsed as a result of mass production abroad and alien rule at home. The Planning Commission will have to carefully consider and decide which of the home industries could be revived despite the competition of modern factories and in which sphere, large-scale production should be encouraged. However much we may dislike modern industrialism and condemn the evils which follow in its train, we cannot go back to the pre-industrial era, even if we desire to do so. It is well, therefore, that we should reconcile ourselves to industrialisation and devise means to minimise its evils and at the same time explore the possibilities of reviving cottage industries where there is a possibility of their surviving the inevitable competition of factories. In a country like India, there will be plenty of room for cottage industries, especially in the case of industries including hand-spinning and hand-weaving allied to agriculture.

Last but not the least, the State on the advice of a Planning Commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socializing of our entire agricultural and industrial system in the spheres of both production and appropriation.

Extra capital will have to be procured for this, whether through internal or external loans or through inflation.

Opposing or resisting the provincial part of the constitution will be hardly possible now, since the Congress Party has accepted office in seven out of eleven provinces. All that could be done would be to strengthen and consolidate the Congress as a result of it. I am one of those who were not in favour of taking office—not because there was something inherently wrong in doing so, not because no good could come out of that policy, but because it was apprehended that the evil effects of office-acceptance would outweigh the good. To-day I can only hope that my forebodings were unfounded.

How can we strengthen and consolidate the Congress while our Ministers are in office? The first thing to do is to change the composition and character of the bureaucracy. If this is not done, the Congress Party may come to grief. In every country, the Ministers come and go but the steel frame of the permanent services remains. If that is not altered in composition and character, the Governmental Party and its Cabinet are likely to prove ineffective in putting their principles into practice. This is what happened in the case of the Social Democratic Party in post-war Germany and perhaps in the case of the Labour Party in Great Britain in 1924 and 1929: It is the permanent services who really rule in every country. In India they have been created by the British and in the higher ranks they are largely British in composition. Their outlook and mentality is in most cases neither Indian nor national and a national policy cannot be executed until the permanent services become national in outlook and mentality. The difficulty, of course, will be that the higher ranks of the permanent services being, under the Statute, directly under the

Secretary of State for India and not under the Provincial Governments, it will not be easy to alter their composition.

Secondly, the Congress Ministers in the different provinces should, while they are in office, introduce schemes of reconstruction in the spheres of education, health, prohibition, prison, reform, irrigation, industry, land reform, workers' welfare, etc. In this matter attempts should be made to have, as far as possible, uniform policy for the whole of India. This uniformity could be brought about in either of two ways. The Congress Ministers in the different provinces could themselves come together—as the Labour Ministers did in October, 1937 in Calcutta—and draw up a uniform programme. Over and above this, the Congress could lend a helping hand by giving directions to the different departments of the Congress-controlled Provincial Governments in the light of such advice as it may get from its own experts. This will mean that the members of the Congress Working Committee should be conversant with the problems that come within the purview of the Congress Governments in the provinces. It is not intended that they should go into the details of administration. All that is needed is that they should have a general understanding of the different problems so that they could lay down the broad lines of policy. In this respect, the Congress Working Committee could do much more than it has hitherto done and unless it does so, I do not see how that body can keep an effective control over the different Congress Ministries.

At this stage I should like to say something more about the role of the Congress Working Committee. This Committee, in my judgment, is not merely the directing brain of the national army of fighters for freedom. It is also the shadow cabinet of Independent India and it should function accordingly. This is not an invention of my own. It is the role

which has been assigned to similar bodies in other countries that have fought for their national emancipation. I am one of those who think in terms of a Free India—who visualise a National Government in this country within the brief span of our own life. It is consequently natural for us to urge that the Working Committee should feel and function as the Shadow Cabinet of a Free India. This is what President de Valera's Republican Government did when it was fighting the British Government and was on the run. And this is what the Executive of the Wafd Party in Egypt did before it got into office. The members of the Working Committee while carrying on their day-to-day work, should accordingly study the problems they will have to tackle in the event of their capturing political power.

More important than the question of the proper working of the Congress Governments is the immediate problem of how to oppose the inauguration of the federal part of the Constitution. The Congress attitude towards the proposed Federal Scheme has been clearly stated in the resolution adopted by the Working Committee at Wardha on Feb. 4, 1938, which will be placed before this Congress after the Subjects Committee has considered it. That resolution says :—

“The Congress has rejected the new Constitution and declared that a constitution for India which can be accepted by the people must be based on Independence and can only be framed by the people themselves by means of a Constituent Assembly without the interference by any foreign authority. Adhering to this policy of rejection, the Congress has, however, permitted the formation in provinces of Congress Ministries with a view to strengthening the nation in the struggle for Independence. In regard to the proposed Federation, no such consideration

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applies even provisionally, or for a period and the imposition of this Federation will do grave injuries to India and tighten the bonds which hold her under the subjection of an imperialist domination. This Scheme of Federation excludes from the sphere of responsibility the vital functions of the Government.

“The Congress is not opposed to the idea of Federation, but a real Federation must, even apart from the question of responsibility, consist of free units, enjoying more or less the same measure of freedom and civil liberty and representation by a democratic process of election. Indian States participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions, responsible Government, civil liberties and the method of election to the Federal House. Otherwise Federation, as it is now contemplated will, instead of building Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the State in internal and external conflict.

“The Congress, therefore, reiterates its condemnation of the proposed scheme and calls upon Provincial and Local Congress Committees and the people generally as well as Provincial Governments and Ministries, to prevent its inauguration.

“In the event of an attempt being made to impose it, despite the declared will of the people such an attempt must be combated in every way and the Provincial Governments and Ministries must refuse to co-operate with it.

“ In case such a contingency arises, the A. I. C. C. is authorised and directed to determine the line of action to be pursued in this regard.”

I should like to add some more arguments to explain the attitude of uncompromising hostility towards the proposed Federation. One of the most objectionable features of the Federal Scheme relates to the commercial and financial safeguards in the new Constitution. Not only will the people continue to be deprived of any power over defence or foreign policy, but the major portion of the expenditure will also be entirely out of popular control. According to the budget of the Central Government for the year 1937-38, the Army expenditure comes to 44 61 crores of rupees (£33.46 millions) out of a total expenditure of 77.90 crores of rupees (£58.42 millions) that is, roughly 57 per cent. of the total expenditure of the Central Government. It appears that the reserved side of the Federal Government which will be controlled by the Governor-General will handle about 80 per cent. of the Federal expenditure. Moreover, bodies like the Reserve Bank and the Federal Railway Authority, are already created or will be created which will work as imperium in imperio uncontrolled by a Federal Legislature. The Legislature will be deprived of the power it possesses at present to direct and influence railway policy and it will not have any voice in determining the currency and exchange policy of the country which has a vital bearing on its economic development.

The fact that external affairs will be a reserved subject under the Federal Government will prejudicially affect the freedom of the Indian Legislature to conclude trade agreements and will seriously restrict, in effect, fiscal autonomy. The Federal Government will not be under any constitutional obligation to place such trade agreement before the Legislature for their ratification, even as they decline at present to give an

undertaking to place the Indo-British Trade Agreement before the Indian Legislative Assembly. The so-called fiscal autonomy convention will have no meaning unless it is stipulated that no trade agreement on behalf of India shall be signed by any party without its ratification by the Indian Legislature. In this connection, I should like to state that I am definitely of opinion that India should enter into bilateral trade agreements with countries like Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy and the United States of America with whom she has had close trade relations in the past. But under the new Constitution, it will not be within the power of the Federal Legislature to force the Federal Government to enter into such bilateral trade agreements.

The iniquitous and inequitable commercial safeguards embodied in the Act will make it impossible for any effective measures to be adopted in order to protect and promote Indian national industries especially where they might, as they often do conflict with British commercial or industrial interests. In addition to the Governor-General's special responsibility to see that provisions with regard to discrimination, as laid down in the Act, are duly carried out, it is also his duty to prevent any action which would subject British goods imported into India to any kind of discriminatory or penal treatment. A careful study of these stringent and wise provisions will show that India can adopt no measures against British competition which the Governor-General cannot, in effect, stultify or veto whether in the Legislative or in the Administrative sphere. It is of course, preposterous to permit foreigners in this country to compete with the nationals on equal terms and there can be no genuine *Swaraj* if India is to be denied the power to devise and adopt a national economic policy including the right, if her interests so require, of differentiating between nationals and non-nationals. In a famous article in "Young India" under

the caption "The Giant and the Dwarf" written soon after the conclusion of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931, Mahatma Gandhi declared plainly that "to talk of no discrimination between Indian interest and English or European, is to perpetuate Indian harlotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf?" Even the meagre powers enjoyed by the Central Legislature at present to enact a measure like the reservation of the Indian coastal trade for Indian-owned and Indian-managed vessels has been taken away under the so-called reformed Constitution. Shipping is a vital industry which is essential for defensive as well as for economic purposes, but all the accepted and legitimate methods of developing this key industry including those adopted even by several British Dominions, are henceforth rendered impossible for India. To justify such limitation on our sovereignty on the ground of "reciprocity" and "partnership" is literally to add insult to injury. The right of the future Indian Parliament to differentiate or discriminate between nationals and non-nationals whenever Indian interests require it, should remain intact and this right we cannot sacrifice on any account. I would like in this connection to cite the Irish parallel. The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1935 provides for a distinct Irish citizenship in connection with the electoral system, entry into public life, merchant shipping, law, aircraft as also in connection with special privileges which it is thought proper to reserve for Irish nationals such as those conferred through measures for assisting Irish industry. Irish citizenship, in other words, is distinct from British, which cannot claim equal rights in the State of Eire (or Ireland) on the basis of British citizenship which is not recognised there. I feel that India must similarly seek to develop her own distinct nationality and establish a citizenship of her own.

While on the question of fiscal autonomy and commercial safeguards, I might refer briefly to the need of an

active foreign trade policy for India. India's foreign trade should be viewed not in a haphazard or piecemeal manner as is often done in order to provide some immediate or temporary benefit to British Industry, but in a comprehensive manner so as to co-ordinate India's economic development with its export trade on the one hand and its external obligation on the other. The very nature of India's export trade makes it essential that it shall not have any restrictive agreement with England such as would jeopardize its trade with the various non-Empire countries which have been in several respects its best customers, or such as would tend to weaken India's bargaining power *vis-a-vis* other countries. It is unfortunate that the protracted negotiations for an Indo-British Trade Agreement are still proceeding, while the Ottawa Agreement, even after the expiry of its notice period and despite the decision of the Legislative Assembly to terminate it, still continues, and along with the differential duties on British steel and textiles, the said Ottawa Agreement secures the prevailing advantages for British industries. There is no doubt that, under the existing political conditions, any trade agreement between England and India is bound to be of an unequal character because our present political relationship would weigh the scales heavily in favour of England. There is also no doubt that the British preferential system is political in origin and before we permit non-Indian vested interests to be established or consolidated in this country under the shelter of a trade agreement, we should be careful as to its political repercussions and economic consequences. I trust that the present Indo-British Trade negotiations will not be allowed to impede the conclusion of bilateral trade agreements with other countries whenever possible and that no such trade agreement will be signed by the Government of India unless it is ratified by the Indian Legislature.

From the above, it will be quite clear that there is no analogy between the powers of the Provincial Ministries and those of the proposed Federal Ministry. Moreover, the composition of the Federal Legislature is reactionary to a degree. The total population of the Indian States is roughly 24 per cent. of that of the whole of India. Nevertheless the Rulers of the States, not the subjects, have been given 38 per cent. of the seats in the Lower House and 40 per cent. in the Upper House of the Federal Legislature. In these circumstances, there is no possibility, in my opinion, of the Congress altering its attitude towards the Federal Scheme at any time. Our success in resisting the imposition of Federation by the British Government will depend on our immediate political future. We have to fight Federation by all legitimate and peaceful means not merely along constitutional lines and in the last resort, we may have to resort to mass civil disobedience which is the ultimate sanction we have in our hands. There can be little doubt that, in the event of such a campaign being started in the future, the movement will not be confined to British India but will spread among the States' subjects.

To put up an effective fight in the near future it is necessary to put our own house in order. The awakening among our masses during the last few years has been so tremendous that new problems have arisen concerning our party organisation. Meetings attended by fifty thousand men and women are a usual occurrence now-a-days. It is sometimes found that to control such meetings and demonstrations, our machinery is not adequate. Apart from these passing demonstrations, there is the bigger problem of mobilising this phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and directing them along proper lines. But have we got a well-disciplined Volunteer Corps for this purpose? Have we got a cadre of officers for our national service? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers? The answers to these questions are too patent

to need elaboration. We have not yet provided all these requirements of a modern political party, but it is high time that we did. A disciplined Volunteer Corps manned by trained officers is exceedingly necessary. Moreover, education and training should be provided for our political workers, so that we may produce a better type of leaders in future. This sort of training is provided by political parties in British through Summer Schools and other institutions and is a speciality in totalitarian states. With all respect to our workers who have played a glorious part in our struggle, I must confess that there is room for more talent in our party. This defect can be made up partly by recruiting promising young men for the Congress and partly by providing education and training for those whom we already have. Everybody must have observed how some European countries have been dealing with this problem. Though our ideals and methods of training are quite different from theirs, it will be admitted on all hands that a thorough scientific training is a requisite for our workers. Further, an institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study and with suitable modification, may prove beneficial to India.

While dealing with the question of enforcing discipline within our own party, we have to consider a problem which has been causing worry and embarrassment to many of us. I am referring to organisations like the Trade Union Congress and the Kisan Sabhas and their relations with the Indian National Congress. There are two opposing schools of thought on this question—those who condemn any organisations that are outside the Congress and those who advocate them. My own view is that we cannot abolish such organisations by ignoring or condemning them. They exist as objective facts and since they have come into existence and show no signs of liquidating themselves, it should be manifest that there is an historical necessity

behind them. Moreover, such organisations are to be found in other countries. I am afraid that whether we like it or not, we have to reconcile ourselves to their existence. The only question is how the Congress should treat them. Obviously, such organisations should not appear as a challenge to the National Congress which is the organ of mass struggle for capturing political power. They should, therefore, be inspired by Congress ideals and work in close co-operation with the Congress. To ensure this, Congress workers should in large numbers participate in trade union work. I feel that this could easily be done without landing oneself in conflict or inconsistency. Co-operation between the Congress and the other two organisations could be facilitated if the latter deal primarily with the economic grievances of the workers and peasants and treat the Congress as a common platform for all those who strive for the political emancipation of their country.

This brings us to the vexed problem of the collective affiliation of workers' and peasants' organisations to the Congress. Personally I hold the view that the day will come when we shall have to grant this affiliation in order to bring all progressive and anti-imperialist organisations under the influence and control of the Congress. There will, of course, be difference of opinion as to the manner and the extent to which this affiliation should be given and the character and stability of such organisations will have to be examined before affiliation could be agreed to. In Russia, the united front of the Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers played a dominant part in the October revolution, but on the contrary in Great Britain we find that the British Trades Union Congress exerts a moderating influence on the National Executive of the Labour Party. In India we shall have to consider carefully what sort of influence, organisations like the Trade Union Congress

and the Kisan Sabhas will exert on the Indian National Congress in the event of affiliation being granted and we should not forget that there is the possibility that the former may not have a radical outlook if their immediate economic grievances are not involved. In any case, quite apart from the question of collective affiliation, there should be the closest co-operation between the National Congress and other anti-imperialist organisations and this object would be facilitated by the latter adopting the principles and methods of the former.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the adoption of forming a party, like the Congress Party, and I am not a member of it. Nevertheless, I must say that I have been in agreement with its general principles and policy from the very beginning. In the first place, it is desirable for the Leftist elements to be consolidated into one party. Secondly a Leftist bloc can have a *raison d'être* only if it is socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a bloc being called a party, but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that bloc a group, league or party. Within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a leftist bloc to have socialist programme in which case it can be very well called a group, league or party. But the role of the Congress Socialist Party or any other party of the same sort, should be that of a left-wing group. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us, nevertheless, socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the country for socialism when political freedom has been won. And that propaganda can be conducted only by a party like the Congress Socialist Party, which stands for and believes in Socialism.

There is one problem in which I have been taking deep personal interest for some year and in connection with which

I should like to make my submission—I mean the question of a foreign policy for India and of developing international contacts. I attach great importance to this work because I believe that in the years to come, international developments will favour our struggle in India. But we must have a correct appreciation of the world situation at every stage and should know how to take advantage of it. The lesson of Egypt stands before us as an example. Egypt won her Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain without firing a shot, simply because she knew how to take advantage of the Anglo-Italian tension in Mediterranean.

In connection with our foreign policy, the first suggestion that I have to make is that we should not be influenced by the internal politics of any country or the form of its state. We shall find in every country men and women who will sympathise with Indian freedom no matter what their own political views may be. In this matter we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a Communist state, her diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with Non-socialist states and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should therefore aim at developing a nucleus of men and women in every country who would feel sympathetic towards India. To create and develop such a nucleus, propaganda through the foreign press, through Indian-made films and through art exhibitions, would be helpful. The Chinese, for example, have made themselves exceedingly popular in Europe through their art exhibitions. Above all, personal contacts are necessary. Without such personal contacts, it would be difficult to make India popular in other countries. Indian students abroad could also help in this work, provided we in India look to their needs and requirements. There should be closer contact between Indian

students abroad and the Indian National Congress at home. If we could send out cultural and educational films made in India, I am sure that India and her culture would become known and appreciated by people abroad. Such films would prove exceedingly useful to Indian students and Indian residents in other countries, who at present are like our non-official ambassadors.

I do not like the word propaganda—there is an air of falsity about it. But I insist that we should make India and her culture known to the world. I say this because I am aware that such efforts will be welcomed in every country in Europe and America. If we go ahead with this work, we shall be preparing the basis for our future embassies and legations in different lands. We should not neglect Great Britain either. We have even in that country a small but influential group of men and women who are genuinely sympathetic towards Indian aspirations. Among the rising generation, and students in particular, interest in and sympathy for India is rapidly on the increase. One has only to visit the universities of Great Britain to realise that.

To carry on this work effectively, the Indian National Congress should have its trusted agents in Europe, Asia, Africa and in North, Central and South America. It is a pity that we have so far neglected Central and South America where there is profound interest in India. The Congress should be assisted in this work of developing international contacts by culture and by the Indian Chambers of Commerce working in the sphere of international commerce. Further, Indians should make it a point to attend every International Congress or Conference. Participation in such conferences is a very useful and healthy form of propaganda for India.

While talking of international contacts, I should remove a misgiving which may be present in some minds. Developing international contacts does not mean intriguing against the British Government. We do not need go in for such intrigues and all our methods should be above board. The propaganda that goes on against India all over the world is to the effect that India is an uncivilized country and it is inferred therefrom that the British are needed in order to civilize us. As a reply, we have only to let the world know what we are and what our culture is like. If we can do that, we shall create such a volume of international sympathy in our favour that India's case will become irresistible before the bar of world opinion.

I should not forget to refer to the problems, the difficulties and the trials which face our countrymen in different parts of Asia and Africa—notably in Zanzibar, Kenya, South Africa, Malaya and Ceylon. The Congress has always taken the keenest interest in their affairs and will continue to do so in future. If we have not been able to do more for them, it is only because we are still slaves at home. A free India will be a healthy and potent factor in world politics and will be able to look after the interests of its nationals abroad.

I must in this connection stress the desirability and necessity of developing closer cultural relations with our neighbours—*viz.* Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal, China, Burma, Siam, Malaya States, East Indies and Ceylon. It would be good for both parties if they know more of us and we knew more of them. With Burma and Ceylon in particular, we should have the most intimate cultural intercourse in view of our age-long contacts.

Friends, I am sorry I have taken more of your time than I had intended at first, but I am now nearing the end of my address. There is one important matter—the burning topic of

the day—to which I should now draw your attention—the question of the release of detenus and political prisoners. The recent hunger-strikes have brought this question to the forefront and have focussed public attention on it. I believe that I am voicing the feelings of at least the rank and file of the Congress when I say that everything humanly possible should be done to expedite release. So far as the Congress Ministries are concerned, it would be well to note that the record of some of them has not come up to public expectation. The sooner they satisfy the public demand the better it will be for the Congress and for the people who are suffering in provinces ruled by non-Congress ministries. It is not necessary for me to labour this point and I fervently hope that in immediate future the public will have nothing to complain of so far as the record of the Congress Ministries on this point is concerned.

It is not only the detenus and political prisoners in jail and detention who have their tale of woe. The lot of those who have been released is sometimes no better. They often return home in shattered health, victims of fell diseases like tuberculosis. Grim starvation stares them in the face and they are greeted, not with the smiles but with the tears of their near and dear ones. Have we no duty to those who have given of their best in the service of their country and have received nothing but poverty and sorrow in return? Let us, therefore send our heartfelt sympathy to all those who have suffered for the crime of loving their country and let us all contribute our humble mite towards the alleviation of their misery.

Friends, one word more and I have done. We are faced with a serious situation to-day. Inside the Congress there are differences between the right and the left which it would be futile to ignore. Outside, there is the challenge of British imperialism which we are called upon to face. What shall

we do in this crisis? Need I say that we have no stand four square against all the storms that may beset our path and be impervious to all the designs that our rulers may employ. The Congress to-day is the one supreme organ of mass struggle. It may have its right bloc and its left but it is common platform for all anti-imperialist organisations striving for Indian emancipation. Let us, therefore, rally the whole country under the banner of the Indian National Congress. I would appeal specially to the leftist groups in the country to pool all their strength and their resources for democratising the Congress and reorganising it on the broadest anti-imperialist basis. In making this appeal, I am greatly encouraged by the attitude of the leaders of the British Communist Party whose general policy with regard to India seems to me to be in keeping with that of the Indian National Congress.

In conclusion, I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people united. We need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness and hatred. We need him for the cause of Indian Independence. What is more—we need him for the cause of humanity. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism—but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the key-stone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved.

“ *BANDH MATARAM* ”

CHAPTER X

SHADOWS OVER EUROPE

(Shri Subhas Chandra Bose had seen the shadows over Europe long before the World War Number Two was fought. During his stay in Europe he had made a minute study of the conditions prevailing in Europe, and therefore, this article, published by Subhas Chandra Bose in the *Modern Review*, makes an interesting reading. His analysis of the current European situation is masterly and although written long before the War, it has an everlasting charm about it. The article was entitled, "Europe—To-day and To-morrow," and so it has the additional fascination of a political prophecy about it)

It is customary in modern politics to classify the different nations as the 'Haves' and 'Have-nots.' The 'Haves' are those like Great Britain and France, that have profited as a result of the Treaties of Versailles, Trianon and Nevelly, following the Great War. The 'Have-nots' are those that have lost territory under some of these treaties or have specific grievances against their provisions. In Europe, Great Britain, France, as well as the Succession States that have been carved out of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire are among the 'Haves.' On the other hand Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria are among the 'Have-nots.' Though Russia lost much of her territory, as a result of the last War, she is now interested in maintaining the *status qua* and is therefore classified among the 'Haves.' And though Italy acquired territory from the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the War, she is nevertheless regarded as a 'Have-not,' because she was expecting a greater share of the spoils of

war. Italy was cajoled into joining the Allies in 1915 by the terms of Secret Pact of London, wherein Britain and France promised her several things including the Dalmatian Coast which later on was assigned by the Peace Conference to Jugoslavia (called in the Peace Treaty the kingdom of the Servs, Croats and Slovenes).

Though Austria should be one of the principal 'Have-nots,' she seems to have resigned herself to her fate and does not cherish any irradiant dreams. Austria is, therefore, no longer an explosive force. The Government Party, led by Chancellor Schuschnigg, which has the backing of the Catholic Church and a section of the peasantry, is interested in maintaining the integrity of Austria's present frontiers. The younger generation who do think and dream of a change, look forward to an 'Anschluss' or union with Germany. Occasionally one hears that the Government Party is thinking of reverting to the monarchical form of Government with Archduke Otto as Emperor. Though Austria is not herself an explosive force, she is unwittingly a disturbing factor, inasmuch as Germany wants to annex her, while France and Italy want to preserve her independence. And behind both these parties, moves the youthful and sinister figure of Archduke Otto, who from his Belgian retreat, plots and schemes for the throne of his ancestors.

Of the other 'Have-nots,' Bulgaria is the quietest. She lost territory to all her neighbours (Rumania, Greece and Servia—now Jugoslavia) as a result of the Balkan War of 1912 and Great War as well. But she nurses her grievances in secret and sighs for better days, though she feels helpless within a ring of hostile powers. Hungary is more active, so far as propaganda goes. Her protagonists roam all over Europe and endeavour to canvass support among the Big Powers for revision of her frontiers. From the military point of view,

Hungary is not an important factor to-day, having lost more than half of her former territory and population to Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia (formerly Serbia) and Rumania.

Till recently, Soviet Russia would have been regarded as an explosive force of gigantic proportions, busy in stirring up revolution all over the world. But such is not the case to-day. After the death of Lenin and the elimination of Trotsky, Soviet Russia under the guidance of Stalin is interested only in building up Socialism within the Soviet frontiers. The sudden insurgency of Germany has helped to accentuate this tendency. Russia has therefore joined the League of Nations, which by the way is dominated by the capitalist powers under the slogan of 'Collective Security and Peace,' and is doing everything possible to prevent a disturbance of the *status quo* in Europe.

The really explosive forces in Europe to-day are Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Ranged against them are Britain, France and Soviet Russia. On the complicated chess-board of Europe interminable moves are going on and the scene is changing from day to day.

Before the Great War, the *status quo* was preserved by maintaining the 'Balance of Power.' The Powers interested in preserving the *status quo* would have a secret alliance among themselves and would endeavour to play against one another the potentially hostile ones who refused to join them. The League of Nations which was constituted in 1912 was meant to put an end to secret diplomacy and to the division of the world into rival groups of powers, which served to keep up the bogey of war. In its place, was introduced a new technique, whereby all nations were to be brought into the League and made jointly responsible for the maintenance of 'Collective Security and Peace.' Both the League of Nations and its new technique seem to have failed in their objective, because

there are powers that do not feel interested in preserving the *status quo* and among them Japan and Germany are no longer members of the League—while the most powerful factor in international politics, the U. S. A., has never been a member.

To understand the meaning and purpose behind the recent disturbances in Europe, one has to comprehend the aims of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Since Mussolini came to power in 1922, Italy has been thinking aggressively of expansion—of a place in the sun—of a revival of the Roman Empire. But till January 1935, Italy did not herself know which direction her policy of expansion should follow. She has grievances against Yugoslavia who had robbed her of the Dalmation Coast. She was snarling at France who had taken the Italian Districts of Savoy and Nice and was in possession of Tunisia, in North Africa, with a large Italian population, and of the Island of Corsica which belongs geographically to Italy. She was hostile to imperialist Britain who was in control of Italian 'Malta' and had by French acquiescence, converted the Mediterranean Sea into a British lake. The tension between Italy and France was particularly acute, with the result that both sides of the Franco-Italian frontier were heavily fortified and guarded. Then in 1933, the Nazi Colossus suddenly appeared on the scene and changed the whole aspect of Europe. France rushed to England for support and alliance against the new danger. But Britain was non-committal. Perhaps in her heart of hearts she relished the idea of a check to French hegemony on the Continent. Perhaps she was simply following her traditional policy in international affairs. However, France was nettled and in annoyance, she turned to Italy and Soviet Russia. France wanted to withdraw her troops from the Italian frontier and concentrate them against Germany and she wanted,

further, an ally on Germany's Eastern flank. Thus there come into existence the Laval-Mussolini Pact and the Franco-Soviet Pact.

The Laval-Mussolini Pact in January 1935, decided for Italy the direction of her future expansion. Italy squared up her differences with France and gave up territorial ambitions in Europe. In return France agreed to give her a free hand in Africa. The result was the rape of Abyssinia.

After the conquest of Abyssinia, Mussolini made a speech in which he declared to the world that Italy had now become a 'satisfied' power. The annexation of Abyssinia had been regarded by Britain as an encroachment on her preserves in Africa and the speech appeared as a pointer in the direction of renewal of an Anglo-Italian friendship. That expectation was not fulfilled, however. Though Britain had at first challenged Italy over the Abyssinian question and then beaten a quick retreat before the bluff and swagger of Mussolini—she had not forgotten the humiliation. In order to repair the damage done to her prestige among the Mediterranean and Near Eastern nations, she set about strengthening her naval and aerial bases in the Mediterranean and concluded it with a public declaration that Britain would not withdraw from that zone. Other Cabinet Ministers, like Anthony Eden, also made pronouncements to the effect that the Mediterranean was Britain's life-line—that it was not merely a short-cut but a main arterial road. It is this determination on the part of Britain to maintain her position in the Mediterranean and to strengthen it further which has irritated and antagonised Italy—for Italy is equally determined to increase her influence in the Mediterranean through the expansion of her Navy and Air Force and this could take place only at the expense of Britain. It should, therefore, be clear that the present Anglo-Italian tension is not a product of II Duce's ill-humour nor is it a

passing phase. It will continue until the question of the future hegemony over the Mediterranean is finally solved through the voluntary withdrawal or defeat of one of the two rival powers. Fraternising letters may pass between Neville Chamberlain and Signor Mussolini, Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers may shake hands—but a political conflict born of objective factors and forces will continue so long as the causes remain.

Italy's reply to Britain's renewed interest in the Mediterranean is her intervention in the Spanish Civil War. It would be puerile to think or suggest that Italy has plumped for Franco because of her sympathy for the latter's Fascist aims or her hatred of Communism. Political sympathy she would have for Franco in any cause, but she is pouring out her blood and money for Franco primarily for strategic reasons. The same is true of Germany and whoever does not realise this, understands nothing of the Spanish Civil War.

In spite of her progress of rearmament, Italy is no match for Britain. British rearmament throughout the world has made Italy's position weaker since the end of the Abyssinian War. In any case, Britain through her control of Gibraltar and Suez can, in the event of a war with Italy bottle up the Italian fleet and carry out an economic blockade which may prove disastrous to the latter. Italy has to import most of her raw materials like coal, iron, oil, wool, or cotton etc., and two-thirds of her seaborne trade comes from the Atlantic, while eighty per cent of her imports come over the Mediterranean. Her coastline is long and vulnerable and she can maintain contact with her African possessions—Libya, Eritrea and Abyssinia, only if she dominates the Mediterranean. For all these reasons, an economic blockade combined with an attack from British naval stations, like Malta and Cyprus, can create havoc for Italy and even strangle her. She may retaliate by attacking British possessions in the Mediterranean

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or British trade passing through that sea, but she can neither attack Britain nor touch Britain's sources of raw material and food which lie outside Mediterranean zone. Thus, matched against Britain in war, Italy is virtually helpless and can play a primarily defensive role. And as long as Spain remains friendly to Britain, or even neutral, Italy's helplessness will remain unrelieved. Only with the help of Spain can Italy escape from her fatal strategic position. With Spain under her control, Italy could take the offensive against Britain. She could destroy Gibraltar and menace both the trade routes of Britain—the Mediterranean route and the Cape route. What is more, she could get over the blockade by using the land routes over Spain in order to bring imports from the Atlantic side. As the advent of Air Force more than compensated Italy for the weakness of her navy, *vis-a-vis* Great Britain, during the Abyssinian Campaign, so the control of Spain, or even a foothold in Spanish territory would enable her to convert her present, fatally weak and defensive position into a strong, offensive one in the event of a future war.

Thus Italy is fighting Great Britain. She is helping Franco in order to get a foothold in Spanish territory.

After considering these strategic factors, one need not be surprised that Italy is so greatly interested in Franco's success. Rather, it is surprising that there should be people in England who sympathise with Franco and the rebels. As Captain Liddell Hart, the well-known British strategist says in *Europe in Arms* :

“Strategically, the danger (to British interests) is so obvious that it is difficult to understand the eagerness with which some of the most avowedly patriotic sections of the British public have desired the rebels' success.”

This is probably a case of political prejudice, (*viz.* hatred of the Socialists and Communists) overriding the dictates of self-interest.

Notwithstanding all that I have just said, it has to be pointed out that Italy to-day is on the whole a satisfied power. She resents British supremacy in the Mediterranean and she thinks that, as in days of yore, the Mediterranean should be a Roman lake. But she will not go to any extreme in her conflict with Great Britain. Intervention in the Spanish Civil War is all right for her, because, she knows fully well that none of the big Powers is yet ready for an International War. Mussolini is far too shrewd a politician to stake his position or the position of his country in a risky adventure in the near or distant future. Therefore, we may rest assured that Italy will not take the offensive in disturbing the peace of Europe—nor will she enter into a war unless she is pretty sure of victory.

But Germany under Hitler is an incalculable factor, despite the sober and cautious policy of the Reichswehr, the German Army. Nazi Germany has been dreaming dreams which can be fulfilled only through the arbitration of war. Moreover, the economic crisis within Germany has been growing so acute that many observers opine, that the day is not far off when she may have to launch on a war abroad, in order to stave off discontent at home. To understand the future of Germany, we shall have to probe a little deeper.

Since the Great War there has been a French hegemony on the Continent. Not content with crushing Germany, France erected a diplomatic wall around Germany through alliances with Poland and with the Little Entente—the Succession States, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Rumania. She followed this up by establishing cordial relations with Turkey which was formerly within the German orbit of influence. Germany

looked on helplessly while she was thus diplomatically isolated from the civilized world. Her only reply to this policy of encirclement was the Treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia.

French hegemony in post-war Europe has been anathema to Germany, whose influence on the Continent had been paramount since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, resulting in the ignominious defeat of France. Since then, Germany had been expanding in several directions. Outside Europe she went in for colonial expansion. In the sphere of trade she bade fair to be a rival of Great Britain and the U.S.A. She built a powerful navy which was looked upon with suspicions by Britain. She brought Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey within her sphere of influence and planned the Berlin-Baghdad Railway which was regarded as a thrust at Britain's Eastern possessions. But she was smashed of all these achievements and aspirations and for a decade Germany lay in the slough of despair, while her thinkers began to philosophise about the decline of the West and Spengler wrote his *Untergang des Abend Landes*. Then came the new awakening through the emergence of the Nationalist Socialist or Nazi Party.

The political doctrine of the Nazi Party can be summed up in one phrase—'Drang nach Osten'—or 'Drive to the East.' The doctrine was first propounded by Muller von den Bruck in this book, *Das dritte Reich* or 'the Third Empire.' He did not live to see the establishment of the third Reich under Hitler in 1933, for he committed suicide in 1925 in a fit of despair. His idea was, however, taken up by Hitler and amplified in the (Hitler's) book *Mein Kampf*, 'or 'My struggle,' which he wrote in prison in 1923. The essence of the above doctrine is that Germany should give up the idea of being a naval or colonial power. She should remain a Continental Power and her expansion should take place on the Continent—

towards the East. It was pre-war Germany's greatest blunder to go in for colonial expansion and thereby come into conflict with Great Britain.

The new social philosophy of the Nazis, as expounded by Hitler, advocates the purification and strengthening of the German race through elimination of Jewish influence and a return to the soil. "Blut and Boden," or "Blood and Soil," is the new solgan for the German people. In foreign policy the Nazis advocate the unification of all German-speaking peoples and the acquisition eastwards of more elbow room for the prolific German race. In practical politics, the above objectives amount to the annexation (1) of Austria, (2) of Memel which she has lost to Lithuania (3) of Danzig which has been made a free city under the League of Nations, (4) of the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia with a population of 3½ millions, (5) of the Polish corridor and the Silesian coal-fields which she has lost to Poland, (6) of the rich grain-producing lands of Soviet Ukraine, and (7) possibly also of the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, Italian Tirol and other adjoining countries.

Since no country will oblige Germany by handing over any of the above territories, it goes without saying that she can realize her political objectives only through war and bloodshed. Germany herself is fully alive to this fact and that is why she has been rearming at a terrific rate on sea, land and air. Having repudiated the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles in March, 1935, and having occupied the Rhineland in March 1936, Germany has recovered her self-respect and her full national status as an independent State. Her continued rearmament under these circumstances can have but one meaning—*viz.*, preparation for war. Her rearmament has driven the last nail in the coffin of international disarmament and in sheer panic the whole of Europe is now

engaged in rearming. When such frantic preparations for war are going on all round, the slightest incident may one day light an international conflagration.

It now remains for us to consider to what extreme Germany will go in achieving her aims. At what stage will she go in for war and with whom ?

Political prophecy is always a difficult job—but one thing is certain. Germany has not forgotten the lesson of her last defeat. Hers was not a military defeat, but an economic one. And it was the British Navy which was primarily responsible for starving her to submission. It is, therefore, certain that Germany will not enter into a war if she knows that Britain will be against her. In 1914 Germany foolishly enough did not believe till the last moment that Britain would take up the gauntlet on behalf of Belgium and France. It is now generally admitted by historians that if British had made her intentions known to Germany beforehand, the latter would probably have kept aloof from the Austro-Serbian conflict and thereby averted—or at least postponed—the World War.

Though in his book, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler asked for a final show-down with France, Germany's foreign policy has been modified since the Nazis assumed the reins of office. Germany no longer wants to get back Alsace-Lorraine from France or Eupen Malmady from Belgium. In other words, Germany does not demand a revision of the frontiers in Western Europe. The reason for this is not far to seek. Germany knows quite well that an attack on France or Belgium or Holland will bring Britain into the arena at once and there would probably be a repetition of the last war. Germany has, therefore, been continually offering to sign a Western Pact which would guarantee the *status quo* in

Western Europe. For a large number of British politicians this offer is a tempting one, because it removes once for all any possible threat to British interests. Germany, while making this offer, has been striving hard to drive a bargain at the international counter, her demand being that Britain and France should cease to interest themselves in Central and Eastern Europe so that Germany may have a free hand in rearranging the map of that part of the world.

Germany is now preparing in three directions : Firstly, she is going in for an all-round rearmament. Secondly, she is trying to make herself self-sufficient as regards the supply of food and basic raw materials. (This is provision against a future economic blockade). This work was started last year in accordance with Germany's Four-year Plan. Thirdly, she is trying to persuade the Western Powers to agree to neutrality in the event of a war in Central or Eastern Europe. Until all these preparations are complete, it is extremely doubtful if Germany will voluntarily launch on a war.

To win over Britain to an attitude of neutrality, Germany has launched on a large scale propaganda in that country and she has already attained a fair measure of success. In this effort, Germany has exploited the general hatred of Communism which can be found among the richer and middle classes in Britain. The Franco-Soviet Pact has come handy and the Nazis continually emphasise that for Britain to be tied up with France means fighting a war in Eastern Europe on the side of Soviet Russia, though Britain has no interests in that zone. Alongside of this, the Nazis pledge themselves not to harm British interests in any quarter of the globe. As a result of this endeavour, there is influential pro-Nazi group in Great Britain—with supporters in the House of Lords, in the City of London and generally among the ruling classes and the fighting forces. There are supporters even

among the Labourites though they are attracted by different reasons. It is generally believed that Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, Premier Neville Chamberlain and Sir Robert Vanisttart, the strong man in the Foreign Office, are all pro-Nazi. It is even averred that Neville Chamberlain has inherited his pro-German attitude from his father, Joseph Chamberlain, who more than forty years ago wanted to enter into an alliance with Germany.

It is too early to say if Britain's foreign policy will ultimately follow a straight line or if it will continue to wobble, as it has often done in the past. At the present moment, British public opinion is terribly confused. Firstly, there is the pro-Nazi group, referred to above, who want a Western pact and no commitments in Central and Eastern Europe. Secondly, there is the anti-German Conservative Party represented by Winston Churchill who are distrustful of the Nazis and apprehend that when Germany is once supreme in Europe, she will challenge British interests abroad. They point out in this connection that Britain has nothing to fear from France and that outside Europe, British and French colonial interests are everywhere bound up together. Thirdly, there are the Socialists and Communists who on ideological grounds are anti-German and pro-French in their general attitude.

In the midst of this confusion, the British Foreign Office, despite Anthony Eden, is following a definite policy, viz., to persuade France to give up her interests in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of Vanisttart's policy is to force Germany to be and to remain a European Continental Power. That is why Britain has acquiesced in German rearmament, made the Naval Agreement with Germany in June 1935, advised France to ignore German military occupation of the Rhineland in March 1935, warned France not to help the

Spanish Government thought she was clearly entitled to do so under International Law. It is further alleged by those who are in a position to know diplomatic secrets that the British Foreign Office encouraged Poland in 1933 to come to terms with the Nazi Government. (The German Polish Non-Aggression Pact was adopted the next year). It also encouraged Belgium to break the alliance with France and return to neutrality, and Jugoslavia to make friends with Italy and Germany, against the advice of France. It further encouraged the pro-Nazi Henlein Party in Czechoslovakia and intrigued for breaking, or at least slackening, the bonds of the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Rumania) and of the Balkan Entente (Jugoslavia, Rumania, Greece and Turkey) which are under French influence.

It would not be improper to conclude from the above facts that the British Foreign Office has been secretly working contrary to France, at least in Europe, and French hegemony on the Continent is distasteful to Whitehall. Perhaps because of this, French politicians of the Right were greatly annoyed with Great Britain, and Laval proceeded to make alliances with Italy and Soviet Russia, independently of Britain. In fact Laval's foreign policy might, from one point of view, be regarded as anti-British. But French politicians of the Left follow blindly the policy of the British Foreign Office, believing that France and Britain should hold together through thick and thin.

At present the German Foreign Office is playing an aggressive role, while France is busy trying to counteract the former's moves and activities. Outside Britain, the Nazis have been remarkably successful in Belgium. A pro-Nazi Party (the Rexists) has come into existence in Belgium and Nazi propaganda is active among the Flemish-speaking people of Belgium. The Belgian Government has broken away from

the alliance with France and will in future adopt an attitude of neutrality in the event of war in Central or Eastern Europe. The treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia has virtually lapsed since the Nazis came to power in 1933, but as if to compensate Germany for that, the Nazi Government entered into a Non-Aggression Pact with Poland. This Pact served to undermine greatly French influence in Poland. Last year, France made gigantic efforts to recover her influence in Poland and a number of visits took place on both sides. But it seems probable that the Franco-Polish Alliance will never become a living force again and that in future Poland will follow an independent foreign policy—that is, a policy of neutrality in the event of a Franco-German or Russo-German conflict.

In addition to the above activities, Germany is now exceedingly busy in trying to weaken France by slackening the bonds of the Little Entente and Balkan Entente and by getting a foothold in Spanish territory. With the help of several alliances and friendly contacts, the position of France to-day is exceedingly strong and as long as this position continues, she will never agree to withdraw her interest in Central and Eastern Europe. She will continue to insist—as Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, also does—that peace is indivisible and that there should be one European Pact to guarantee collective security to all states under the aegis of the League of Nations. Failing this, besides the Western Pact, there should be another Pact to guarantee peace in Central and Eastern Europe. To this, Germany does not agree and will not agree.

France has fortified herself with military alliance with Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia. The two latter powers have also a military alliance between themselves. Consequently, these three powers will always be found together

the event of an international emergency. Czechoslovakia has an understanding with the other Little Entente powers, Jugoslavia and Rumania. And Jugoslavia and Rumania have an understanding with Greece and Turkey through the Balkan Entente. Germany hopes that by weaning away Jugoslavia and Rumania, she will isolate Czechoslovakia in Central Europe—for help from Russia can reach Czechoslovakia only through Rumania or through Poland. Poland is no longer a problem to Germany because of the non-aggression pact. Germany is trying to bring Austria under her influence through the instrumentality of Italy. Through Britain, she is trying to persuade France that, as a military factor, Soviet Russia is not of much consequence, and that France should give the good-bye to the military clauses of the Franco-Soviet Pact. The recent execution of eight Army Generals in Russia has given a handle to the capitalist powers and they are carrying on a terrific propaganda to the effect that the Soviet military machine is reeking with indiscipline and cannot be relied on in the event of war. Last but not least, Germany is trying her level best to obtain a foothold in Spanish territory, so that in the event of war with France she could stab her in the back by cutting off her communication with north Africa from where France always obtains large supplies of men and material, when war breaks out in Europe. Germany hopes that by weakening France on all sides and by putting pressure on her through the British Foreign Office, she will ultimately make her agree to a Western Pact, giving Germany a free hand in central and Eastern Europe. If France does not agree to this and if she ultimately goes to war with Germany on the side of Soviet Russia, she will find herself considerably weakened compared to what she was in 1914.

But will France fall in with Germany's plans? Ostensibly not. For Britain it is immaterial who dominates the

Continent—France or Germany—for Britain's interests lie outside Europe. But France cannot so easily give up her hegemony in Europe for, unlike Britain, she is a Continental Power, besides being a Colonial Power. Moreover France is fighting not merely for power and prestige, but also for her national safety. She has not forgotten the tragic defeat of 1870. Her population is stationary and is about two-thirds of that of Germany, whose population is still growing. Consequently, France has a genuine horror of German invasion, while Britain has not, as long as German Navy keeps to the prescribed limits of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. To crown everything, there is in France, a deep distrust of German aims and aspirations which has been accentuated by violent denunciations of France in Hitler's book: *Mein Kampf*. As a writer has put it succinctly, in France the right hates Germany, the left hates Hitler. In these circumstances, it is extremely doubtful if France will ever give up her allies and alliances in Central and Eastern Europe as long as the violently nationalistic Nazi Party remains in power.

The issue of the Spanish Civil War is hanging in the balance and it is too early to say how far German diplomacy will succeed there. But in Central and Eastern Europe it has made considerable headway. In Rumania, the King and the Cabinet are, on the whole, pro-German and the Francophile ex-Foreign Minister, Titulescu, has lost considerable influence. There is an anti-Semitic pro-Nazi party, the Iron Guard, led by Codreanu, which is behind the Government. In Jugoslavia, the Premier Stoyadinovitch is pro-Nazi, as also his Government, while the royal family is under British influence. In Greece, the Premier-General Mextaxas, who has made himself the Dictator, is undoubtedly

under German influence. And Greece is important to Germany, because should the Russian Fleet in the Black Sea enter the Mediterranean through the Dardanelles it could be attacked from a base in the Grecian Islands. Then Hungary and Bulgaria, being 'Have-not' powers are expected to line up with Germany, if they see any chance of having their national grievances redressed thereby. Thus it appears that Germany has stolen a march over France throughout the Balkan Peninsula and she has been throwing out commercial baits in profusion.

But in international politics there is no finality. France is following on the heels of Germany everywhere. It is difficult to predict how long the Governments of Mextaxas in Greece or Stoyadinovitch in Jugoslavia will last. The pro-France party in Rumania, though out of power for the time being, is not negligible and the Balkan temperament is proverbially changeable. Moreover, Germany finds pitted against herself, one of the finest diplomats of modern Europe, President Eduard Benes of Czechoslovakia.

The scene is changing from day to day and political forecasts are anything but easy. One thing is certain. If war comes, it will come as the result of a German challenge to the *status quo* in Central and Eastern Europe. But will it come? The answer rests primarily with Britain. Germany will not repeat the errors of 1914 and will not go into a war, if she knows that Britain will be against her. She might be trapped into it as she was in 1914, thinking that Britain would keep out of it. If France and Britain agree to be neutral in a conflict in Central or Eastern Europe, war will break out in Europe, as sure as the sun rises in the East, the moment Germany is ready for it. Even if France lines up with Soviet Russia, with Britain remaining neutral there may be war, though the upshot of it will be doubtful.

At the present moment two scenes need watching—Spain and the Balkans. If Franco wins, it will be a victory for Italy and Germany and will mean the end of British hegemony in the Mediterranean and dark days ahead of France, if war should break out on the Continent. In the Balkans, if Germany succeeds in isolating Jugoslavia and Rumania from Czechoslovakia, she will, in the event of war, be able to occupy Prague in six hours and overrun Czechoslovakia within a few days. But the bigger problem will remain—Russia. The Russian Colossus has often proved to be an enigma. It baffled Napoleon—the conqueror of Europe. Will it baffle Hitler?

CHAPTER XI

ATTRACTION OF JAPAN

[The views of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose about Japan are set forth in this article, and indirectly it tells us why Bose was fascinated by Japanese imperialism. The article was first published by him in the 'Modern Review' in 1937 under the caption "Japan's Role in the Far East." Most of his views about Japan have proved false as most of his views about Europe have proved correct. Thus his escape to Japan was an error of judgment, for which he has paid a very heavy price. "The U.S.A.", said Bose, "will certainly not go to war with Japan over her interests in the Far East." That is exactly what the Japanese war-lords imagined. Consequently, this essay, read after the unconditional surrender of Japan to U.S.A. makes a tragic reading, and fills the mind of the reader with profound thoughts at the uncertainty of human calculations.]

Every now and then we open our daily papers to read about some clash between China and Japan. Many pass over the columns as something happening too far away to interest us in India. Others go through the columns as a matter of routine. But I wonder how few of us understand the significance of the happenings reported.

The islands which form the homeland of the Japanese race are overpopulated. They have to support a population of about 70 millions with the result that there is overcrowding and too much pressure on the land. But that is not the end of the trouble. The Japanese are exceedingly prolific and their population has been growing by leaps and bounds. The

number of people per square mile in China is 100. In Japan it is 313. Moreover, Japan's birth-rate is twice that of Great Britain. Hence Japan wants more territory for her children to settle in—more raw materials for her growing industries and more markets for her finished goods. No one will make her a present of these three things—hence the resort to force. The only other solution for Japan is to restrict her population through birth-control and live within her own resources—but that solution does not ostensibly appeal to her. This is in short the *raison d'être* of Japanese imperialist expansion.

Japanese expansion can take place only in the face of Chinese, Russian, British or American opposition. If she expands on the Asiatic mainland, she is bound to incur the wrath of China or Russia. If she expands southwards—towards the Philippine Islands or Australia—she is bound to come into conflict with the United States of America or Great Britain. As far as one can judge, Japan seems to have decided in favour of the first course, notwithstanding the appeal made by Lt.-Commander, Ishimaru in his book *Japan Must Fight England* to the effect that she should make up with China, Russia and the U.S.A. and concentrate on fighting England. On the Asiatic mainland the territory on which Japan can cast her eyes belongs either to Russia or to China. To attack Russia would be folly for Japan because under Soviet rule, Russia is fully reawakened. She has, moreover, a first-class military machine, both in Europe as well as in the Far East. Therefore, the only alternative left to Japan for satisfying her imperialist ambitions is to expand at the expense of China. But though she may expand at the expense of China that expansion can take place only in the teeth of Russian opposition for reasons that will be explained below. So far as Britain is concerned

however much she may dislike the growth of Japanese power on the Asiatic continent, she will put up with the nuisance, knowing full well that the only alternative to it would be expansion to the south, bringing Japan into direct and unavoidable conflict with her and in her present mood, the U.S.A. will certainly not go to war with Japan over her 'interests' in the Far East.

Being an Asiatic country and living in close proximity to a huge continent, it is but natural that Japan should look primarily to the mainland of Asia to fulfil her imperialist requirements. There she finds a huge state—formerly the Celestial Empire and now the Republic of China—ill-managed and disunited and with more natural resources than she can herself develop. The vastness, the potential richness and the internal weakness of China constitute the greatest temptation for Japan.

The conflict between the two Asiatic countries is more than forty years old. It began towards the end of the last century. By that time, Japan had modernised her state-machinery with the help of modern methods and had modern weapons of warfare. She found that all the big European Powers had begun to exploit China and to enrich themselves at her expense. Why, then, should not Japan, an Asiatic Power living next-door, do the same and keep out the Western Powers from draining the wealth of East? This was the imperialist logic which started Japan on her race for expansion.

During the last forty years, Japan has not lost a single opportunity for wresting concessions from the Chinese Government and during this period she has been undermining the influence of the Western exploiting powers, slowly and steadily. Her greatest rivals were Russia, Britain, the U.S.A. and Germany. During the Russo-Japanese War of

1904-1905, she was able to checkmate the Czarist Empire. During the Great War she was able to wipe out Germany from the map of China. But she has not been able to tackle Britain and the U.S.A. And in the meantime Russia which was once beaten, has come back into the picture as a Soviet State, newly armed and considerably strengthened.

The disintegration of China began during the latter half of the nineteenth century. European powers like Britain, Russia, Germany, etc., and the U. S. A. put pressure on China and obtained "treaty-ports" like Hongkong, Shanghai, etc., which virtually amounted to annexation of Chinese territory. Just before the end of the last century, Japan appeared on the scene and also adopted Western tactics in her dealings with China. The island of Formosa lying to the south-east of China was acquired by Japan in the War of 1894-95 with China. Port Arthur in Southern Manchuria and the southern half of Sakhalin Island, then belonging to Russia, passed into Japanese hands after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. About the same time Japan took over the Kwantung Railway and the southern part of the Chinese Eastern Railway running through Manchuria, thereby making South Manchuria a Japanese sphere of influence. Korea, formerly Chinese territory, was annexed by Japan openly in 1910 and it is interesting to note that Japan had professed to secure its independence when she went to war with China in 1894. During the Great War Japan declared war on Germany and immediately proceeded to seize Tsingtao and other German possessions in the Shantung Peninsula. In 1915, when she found all the Western Powers up to their neck in the war, Japan presented 21 demands to China and extorted several concessions from her. After the war, Japan received as her share of the spoils, the mandate for the ex-German Pacific Islands, the strategic importance of which lies in their position

athwart the direct sea-route from the United States to the Philippine Islands. Then there was a lull in Japanese expansion, for a period, since Japan wanted time to assimilate what she had annexed. The next period of feverish activity began in 1931 with the conquest of Manchukuo (Manchuria) when Manchukuo formerly as a Chinese territory, was set up as a nominally independent state, just as Korea was in 1895. The present expansionist drive which has been continuing since 1931 can be traced to the now famous (or rather notorious) Tanaka memorandum of 1923 in which plans for Japan's future expansion on the Asiatic mainland were clearly laid down. From this brief historical survey it should be clear that Japan's determination to find more elbow-room for herself in this planet of ours is unshakeable. Outward circumstances can hardly thwart this imperious drive and can at best determine the direction and speed of her expansion.

A scientific examination of the internal economy of Japan will clearly explain Japan's military aggression since 1931. It is easy to understand her need for fresh territory when her population is growing and her existing territory is already too scanty for her present population. Looking to her industrial system, one finds that Japan has to import all her important raw materials, viz., cotton, wool, pulp, iron, oil, etc., from a great distance. The expansion of her industrial system, like her need for territory, is necessitated by the growth of population. Therefore, to maintain her large population, Japan requires a safe and regular supply of raw materials. The expansion of industries, again requires new markets. Now, how are all these needs to be fulfilled? Will China of her own accord give up territory for colonisation to Japan? Will she allow Japan to exploit her vast resources in raw materials and her extensive market? Certainly not. Both national honour and self-interest will stand in the way.

Further the European Powers and the U. S. A. will not voluntarily permit Japan to monopolise China, her resources and her markets. They will insist to the last on the 'Open Door' Policy in China which permits all powers to share the Chinese spoils. Hence Japan has to seize Chinese territory by force. She has been doing this by stages, biting off one slice at a time and taking time to digest it. Each attack is preceded by certain border incidents, which are carefully stage-managed in order to serve as a pretext for Japanese aggression. The tactics are the same, whether one observes the north-western frontier of India or Walwal in Abyssinia or the Manchurian frontier in the Far East.

Japan's imperialist needs and demands in the Far East can be fulfilled only if she can establish her political hegemony over China to the exclusion of the white races and by virtually scrapping the 'Open Door' policy. Time and again, her politicians have said as much in so many words. For instance, Japan's spokesmen have often said that she has special interests in the Far East which cannot be compared to those of any other Western Power; that it is Japan's mission to umpire the Far East and maintain peace in that quarter, etc., etc. No doubt, besides the purely economic motive the Japanese are inspired by the desire to found an Empire and the consciousness of being an unconquered race whets their imperialist appetite. Incidentally, the foundation of an empire abroad enables the Fascist elements in Japanese society to get the upper hand.

If China could somehow persuade herself to accept the political and economic suzerainty or patronage of Japan, the Sino-Japanese conflict would end in no time. This is what Hirota, Japan's foremost diplomat has been trying to achieve for the last three years. His speeches have been extremely

conciliatory on the surface, with a constant appeal for Sino-Japanese co-operation? Now, what is the objective of this co-operation? Obviously, the enrichment of Japan and the virtual enslavement of China. But this naked truth cannot be blurted out—hence the slogan is “Co-operation in a joint defence against Communism.” This slogan not only serves to cloak Japanese motives, but at the same time conciliates all anti-Socialist elements whether in Japan, China or elsewhere. Thus, the Indian papers of the 7th August, 1937 gave the following account of Hirota’s foreign policy :—

“Declaring that a major point in Japan’s requests in China was co-operation in a joint defence against Communism M. Hirota in the House of Representatives, said, he believed that Sino-Japanese co-operation was possible if the radical elements in China, particularly the Communists, were effectively controlled. He added, the Japanese Government wished to settle the North China incident on the spot and at the same time to effect a fundamental readjustment of Sino-Japanese relations.”

And similar statements in similar language have been made ever since Hirota first became Japan’s Foreign Minister a few years ago.

Can China submit to this demand even if it brings her peace? My own view is that left to himself, Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, the Dictator of the Nanking Central Government, would have done so. At heart he is violently anti-Communist and since the split in the Kuomintang (Chinese National Party) in 1927 when he managed to establish his supremacy, he has spared no pains to exterminate the Chinese Communists and their allies. But Marshal Chiang has encour-

tered consistent opposition from two quarters. The Western Provinces of China, known as the Chinese Soviet, being practically independent of Nanking, have kept up the fight against Japan and, on this point have faithfully echoed the feelings of the Chinese masses. Secondly, the Western Powers with their vast interests in China, and with their prestige to maintain before the Western races, cannot easily persuade themselves to scuttle. The foreign investments of U. S. A. in China are, in point of magnitude and importance, second only to its investments in Latin America (Central and South America). Regarding investments in China, the following extract from the *London Times* of the 19th August 1937 is illuminating :—

“British direct interests in China are worth about 250 million pounds, made up of 200 million pounds in business investments and 25 million pounds is tied up in Shanghai and of this 180 million, a high proportion, is in the Settlement District north of the Soochow Creek. This is the district now being most heavily shelled and bombed. It is where most of the public utility offices and works and most of the large mercantile businesses are established.”

The Times writer goes on to point out with dismay that whilst previously this district has been policed under British superintendents, the police stations have been evacuated and occupied by the Japanese. The white races are consequently alive to the fact that Japanese hegemony over China will mean not only the subjection of the latter but their own exclusion from the Far East.

Since the geography of a country often determines military strategy, it is necessary to note the salient features in the geography of China.

China's most important lines of communication are her

three great rivers : the Hwang-ho (or Yellow River) in the north, the Yang-tse in the Centre and the Si-Kiang in the South. The entrance to the Si-Kiang is controlled by the British port of Hong Kong ; to the Yang-tse by Shanghai, which is jointly held by the foreign powers with Britain and America predominating. The entrance to the Hwang-ho is dominated by Japan, entrenched first in Korea and now in Manchuria (Manchukuo) as well. The one practicable land route into China is that from the north. Along this route the Mongols and the Manchus entered China proper, and in the years preceding the Great War, both Russia and Japan had their eyes on it. Since 1931, Japan has been aiming at the possession of this route and the country adjoining it and since July 1937, fighting has been going on in this area. It should be remembered in this connection that high mountains separate China proper from the western part of the Republic (*viz.*, Sinkiang or Chinese Turkistan). The consequence of this is that the land route to China proper is from the north and we find that historically the power which has controlled Manchuria has always been in a strong position to dominate China.

In order to understand in their proper perspective the events in the Far East since 1931, it is necessary to understand the broad lines of the Japanese hegemony in China ; though peaceful penetration was not possible, Japan laid down her plans for a military conquest of China, or at least for military pressure on her. To achieve this objective, Japanese strategy had to work along two lines—firstly, to break up Chinese unity; and secondly, to make it impossible for any other Power to come to the aid of China. This purpose could be served only if Japan could seize the entire northern part of the Republic including Manchukuo, Mongolia and Northern China proper. These territories taken together form a compact mass, cutting off Russian Siberia from China proper (the valleys of Hwang-

ho, Yang-tse and Si-Kiang Rivers). A reference to the map will show that if Japan holds this area, she can in the event of war with Russia, penetrate through Outer Mongolia and cut the trans-Siberian Railway at Lake Baikal. And if Russia can be effectively isolated, no other country can come to China's rescue in an emergency. We shall see how Japan has progressed in the task of absorbing this area since 1931.

It is necessary to note at the outset that Japan never lays all her cards on the table and she proceeds with her aggression cautiously, taking care that she is not attacked by any other power when her own hands are full. Moreover, she always manages to stage some "incident" in order to give her a pretext for seizing Chinese territory. The first "incident" was staged on September 18th, 1931, by Lieutenant Kawamoto of the Japanese Imperial Army who was reconnoitring along the South Manchuria Railway track. This led to the seizure of the Mukden the next day and of the whole of Manchuria within a short period. At that time, the whole world was in grip of an acute economic depression and Russia was feverishly pushing on her first Five Year Plan. Japan was, therefore, sure that there would be no effective challenge to her predatory moves. The Lytton Commission sent out by the League of Nations reported against Japan and following that the League Assembly condemned the Japanese seizure of Manchuria. But Japan snapped her fingers at the League and walked out. This was followed by the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manchukuo by the Soviet Union in 1933, and in 1934 the Russo-Manchukuo Waterways Agreement was adopted. Though Manchukuo was not given *de jure* recognition by the other Powers, she obtained *de facto* recognition from most of them.

Manchukuo is a huge territory with plenty of room for colonisation; though the climate is severe, it is rich in

several raw materials including coal. Moreover, it is exceedingly useful as a jumping-off ground for Japan in the event of war with Soviet Russia. Many people thought it would take Japan years to develop Manchukuo, and in the meantime there would be peace in the Far East. But they were mistaken. Both on economic and on strategic grounds, Manchukuo cannot stand by itself. Only part of the raw material desired by Japan can be found there and the Manchukuan market is not big enough for Japan. Moreover, strategically Manchukuo is exceedingly weak, there being hostile territory on all sides. Consequently, to satisfy her economic needs and to ensure the safety of the new state Japan had to continue her aggression further.

In 1932 another "incident" was staged in Shanghai and the Shanghai War between China and Japan started. The upshot of it was that China was forced to demilitarise a certain area near Shanghai and submit to a few other Japanese conditions. The strategic importance of Shanghai was not so clear in 1932, but the present War (1937) has brought it to light.

By 1933, the consolidation of Manchukuo under the puppet Emperor, Pu Yi, was complete and Japan was ready for a further extension of her frontiers. Fighting took place in North China outside the frontiers of Manchukuo. The Japanese troops seized Jehol and a slice of Chahar and marched up to the gates of Peking (now called Peiping). Vanquished in battle, the Chinese had to bow to the inevitable and see another slice of their territory annexed by Japan. The war ended with the Tangku Truce in 1933.

The year 1934 was comparatively uneventful but hostilities broke out again in 1935. As always happens with Japan, a fresh act of aggression was preceded by conciliatory speeches and a show of moderation in foreign policy. On

January 23rd, 1935, Hirota delivered an address, advocating a policy of non-aggression and the adoption of a "good-neighbour" policy with a view to effecting a rapprochement with China. This time the slogan adopted by the Japanese was an autonomous North China (like an autonomous Manchukuo) and the Central Government of Nanking (new capital of China) was told not to interfere with Japanese activities and negotiations in North China. But Nanking could not wholly oblige Japan and the people of North China did not want to walk into Japanese trap as blindly as the Manchurians had done in 1931. The result was that the Japanese plans did not succeed. Nevertheless, when the conflict was finally liquidated, it was found that China had virtually lost another portion of the territory. In 1933 Jehol and a part of Chahar had been absorbed by Manchukuo. Now, a demilitarised zone was created in Hopei Province with its capital at Tongchow, 12 miles east of Peiping, called the East Hopei autonomous area. In charge of this area was a Chinese renegade, Yin Ju-Keng, and the territory was under Japanese domination. (Later on, large scale smuggling went on within this area, presumably with Japanese connivance, with a view to evading the Chinese customs). Further, the remaining part of Hopei (which contains Peiping and Tientsin) and a portion of Chahar were combined into a separate administrative unit under the Hopei-Chahar Political Council, headed by General Sung Cheh Yuan, the strongest leader outside Nanking. This Council while afraid to oppose Japan openly, did not sever its connections with Nanking.

In February 1936, there was a military revolt in Tokyo and, for a time, the Japanese Government had its hands full at home. Nevertheless, it was not altogether inactive. With a view to strengthening her position internationally,

Japan entered into a Pact with Germany—the German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact. Towards the end of the year in November 1936, an attempt was made to push into Inner Mongolia down the Peiping Pachtow Railway, but the Mongol Monchukuo Mercenaries of Japan were held at bay in the province of Suiyan by General Fu Tso I, with the aid of Nanking's troops.

It should be clear to any student of history that since 1931, Japan has been growing increasingly assertive not only in the Far East, but in world affairs in general. If she had not felt strong in the international sphere she would never have ventured an aggression against China. We have already referred to her withdrawal from the League of Nations after the seizure of Manchuria. Prior to this she had allowed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to lapse, probably because she felt that she was powerful enough to do without it. In the Washington Naval Treaty, Japan had agreed to the ratio 5 : 5 : 3 in the matter of warships, etc. as between Britain, U.S.A. and herself. When this treaty lapsed in 1935, Japan insisted on parity and since this was not agreed to by the other Powers at the London Conference, she contemptuously walked out of it. When Britain wanted to bring about an economic understanding with Japan in the matter of world markets, Japan refused to discuss any markets except those which were directly controlled by the former, and the London Conference of 1935 between the two Powers broke up. From all these facts it will be clear that when 1937 dawned, Japan was morally and internationally prepared for a major conflict in the Far East.

But sometimes even the most well-informed are led astray. Between March and July 1937 Japan lulled the whole world into the belief that she was passing through and

economic crisis and was therefore unable to launch on any military aggression against China. Articles appeared in several American journals to show that while the rest of the world was enjoying an economic recovery, in Japan it was the reverse. Owing to this recovery the price of all raw materials had gone up considerably. Japan had to buy them at a high price and so her cost of production had gone up—making it virtually impossible for her to compete in the world-markets successfully. (This statement is disproved by the remarkably low price of Japanese textiles in India at the present time.) American journalists took pains to argue that because of this economic crisis Japan had decided to go slow with China and was, therefore, offering her the hand of friendship. It was further argued that, owing to the same reason, extreme militarists were out of favour for the time being and moderate politicians were getting the upper hand in Japan. It now appears that Japan's moderation was simply a cloak to hide her real intentions in order to lull her enemies to a sense of security. Japan chose this particular moment for attacking China for obvious reasons. Neither the U.S.A. nor Britain nor Russia is yet ready to challenge Japan in war. All of them are preparing feverishly and are piling up armaments and two or three years later, the outlook for Japan may be gloomy. It was, therefore, a case of "now or never" for Japan, and she struck. She carefully prepared for this attack by a period of sober talk and moderate action. And when everybody felt convinced that Japan was thinking in terms of peace, she launched her attack. Thus, writing on April 24th 1937, the well-known journal of New York, *The Nation*, said: "The prospects of peace in the Far East are greater than at any time since 1931." Writing on June 26th, the same journal remarked that there was a lull in Japan's offensive against China. But little did the writer know then that it was merely a lull before the storm.

Apart from Japan's general preparedness for another drive, certain factors precipitated the present crisis in the Far East. The Scian coup and the kidnapping of Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek in December 1936, prepared the ground for a "United Front" policy in China. There seems to be little doubt now that before Chiang was released by his captors, an understanding had been arrived at between the Chinese Soviets and the Nanking Government on the basis of a common resistance against Japan. This understanding meant the completion of the unification of China for the first time in recent history. The Chinese Soviets were to give up their Communism and Separatism and submit to the direction of Nanking. Chiang was to lead United China against Japanese aggression and the Communist leaders, Chow En-lai and Chiang's own son, were to fall in with him. Japan came to know of this and attacked, before United China could proceed further with the work of consolidation.

This time is opportune for Japan in many ways. Though British, Russian and American rearmament is proceeding apace, as already stated, neither of them is yet ready for a conflict. It will still take time for Britain to complete her Singapore base. The Neutrality Act adopted by the U.S.A. is a clear indication that she wants to keep out of every international conflict. The Russian Army, according to Fascist reports, is seething with discontent and in any case is not as formidable as it appeared twelve months ago. The clash on the Soviet Manchukuo border followed by the withdrawal on July 4th, 1937, of the Soviet troops from the disputed islands which belonged to Russia under the 1860 Agreement with China—was a further proof that the Soviet Government was not prepared for a war.

Three days after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Amur River, a fresh "incident" was staged near

Pieping and the attack on North China was resumed on July 8th, 1937.

Man is proverbially wiser after a calamity has befallen him. It is now reported by well-informed journalists that Japan had been preparing for this war for sometime past. She is not satisfied with the occupation of Manchukuo. This country is too cold for Japanese immigrants. It has contributed only a small proportion of the raw materials needed by Japanese industry. It has, no doubt, brought some increase of trade to Japan but this has been offset by the cost of administration and the losses incurred as a result of the competition of Manchurian products in the Japanese market. On the other hand, economically North China (viz., the provinces of Shantung, Hopei, Chahar, Shansi and Suiyan) offers far more than Manchukuo. There are iron deposits in Chahar, Shansi and Southern Hopei. Shansi has also highgrade coal. Moreover tin, copper, gold and oil are scattered throughout the five provinces. The Yellow River (Hwang-ho) valley is suitable for the cultivation of cotton which is now imported into Japan from India and America to the value of 400 million yens annually. And the climate is more favourable to Japanese immigrants than that of Manchukuo as well as to cattle breeding.

The Japanese drew up plans for the exploitation of this territory sometime ago, but Japanese capital was loath to come in as long as the area remained under Chinese sovereignty. Hence, militarism had to come to the aid of capitalism.

Apart from the economic urge behind the present aggression, there lurks the psychological factor. American journalists were partly right when they wrote during the earlier part of this year about the economic crisis in Japan, but their conclusions were wrong. Contrary to what they

wrote, economic difficulties may instigate a "Totalitarian" Government to launch on war abroad in order to stave off discontent at home. (The same crisis may overtake Germany in the not distant future). In the case of Japan, it may be averred that the economic difficulties which she encountered in the recent past as a result of her declining trade balance, made a revival of war psychology necessary.

Further, since the defeat of the Japanese-directed expedition against Suiyan (a province in North China) in November 1936, it became apparent that the strategic areas of Inner Mongolia could only be obtained if the whole of North China were brought into subjugation. Without controlling Chahar and Suiyan, in particular, it is impossible to push into Inner Mongolia from the direction of Manchukuo.

Why is Japan so keen about Inner Mongolia, a barren country of little economic value? The reason is strategic rather than economic. It has been remarked above that Japan has been aiming at a compact mass of territory comprising Manchukuo, North China and Mongolia. Now, in the meantime, Soviet diplomacy has not been idle and two big provinces of the Chinese Republic have passed under Russian influence—Sinkiang (or Chinese Turkestan) and Outer Mongolia (the upper portion of Mongolia adjoining Soviet Russia). Sinkiang is not of much strategic importance to Japan (though it is to Soviet Russia owing to its proximity to India, but Outer Mongolia is. With Outer Mongolia under her control, Soviet Russia can easily descend into North China. The only way to prevent this and cut off Russia permanently from China Proper is to seize Inner Mongolia (the southern part of Mongolia) and North China and thereby form a compact corridor from West to East,

separating Russian Siberia and Outer Mongolia from China proper. To annex this territory is at present Japan's objective. Once she succeeds in this effort, her next endeavour would be to build a strategic railway through this newly-acquired territory from East to West. If she is able to consolidate her position there, she may then think of moving into Outer Mongolia. What would then happen, it is difficult to predict. At present, Outer Mongolia is a Russian sphere of influence and the Soviet Government have declared very plainly that any move on the part of Japan within this territory would be tantamount to a *casus belli*.

But Japan has not given up all hope of uniting the Mongols under her suzerainty sometime in future. Hence, Japanese agents often talk of "Mengkukuo" as a worthy political ideal for all the Mongols. This plan, if it even materialises, will be a counterpart of Manchukuo. It will give the Mongols their own state, with the Gilbertian code of autonomy of course but in reality under Japanese tutelage. There are approximately five million Mongols in the Far East. Two millions live in the Hsingan province of Manchukuo. A million live in Outer Mongolia, a territory half as large as the United States, but mostly desert. Another million live in Inner Mongolia, while about a million are scattered in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), Tibet and Soviet Russia (Buriat Republic). The nucleus of the future Mongol State of "Mengkukuo" has already come into existence with a Mongolian Political Council. Among the Mongol leaders who are under Japanese influence are Li Shouhsein and Prince Teh.

But while an "autonomous" Mengkukuo may be a future project for Japan, an autonomous North China is her immediate objective.

Since the annexation of Manchukuo, Japanese influence in North China was steadily growing and this must have led them to hope that without a major conflict, another puppet state would be set up in the near future comprising the five provinces of North China. But the absorption of Canton Province within Nanking's zone in the recent past, followed by the reported understanding of Marshal Chiang with the Chinese Communist in December last must have dashed Japanese hopes to the ground. A strong and united China was, at long last rising before the world's eyes and that China would not give up her northern provinces without a fight. Since January 1937, Nanking began to assert its influence over North China officials. She interfered with the Japanese-protected smuggling through East Hopei. She dared to order the suspension of the new Tientsin Tokyo air line, established by Japan without Chinese consent. In Northern Chahar there was a small scale rebellion of Manchukuen and Mongolian troops against Japanese domination. Anti-Japanese incidents were thus occurring with increasing frequency and not settled by abject submission to Japan's demands. To crown all there was the report of an understanding between Nanking and the Chinese Communists which would bring into the field against Japan the 90,000 seasoned soldiers belonging to the latter.

. On July 3rd, 1937, the Japanese Ambassador, Shigeru, Kwagoe, started negotiations with Nanking. Japan trimmed her sails and proposed the relinquishment of Japanese political control in North China, provided Nanking would recognize Manchukuo *de jure* and undertake "economic co-operation" with Japan. Nanking is reported to have rejected this proposal and her counter proposals fell short of Japanese requirements. No further proof was needed that a new China had come into existence which would soon exercise its full

authority over the northern provinces. Therefore, Japan struck without delay and an "incident" was staged at Lukou-chaio, about 18 miles west of Peiping (Peking) when Japanese troops engaged in night manoeuvres clashed with units of the Chinese Twenty-ninth Army stationed in that area.

Looking at this incident legally, there can be no doubt that the Japanese were in the wrong. Though the Boxer Protocol of 1901 entitled them to station troops in the Peiping Legation quarter and at certain points in the Peiping-Tientsin railroad, they sent their troops outside the specified areas and obstructed rather than maintained communications with the sea—the purpose for which the protocol was designed. However, soon after the clash, Japanese Government made the following demands:—

- (1) Withdrawal of the Twenty-ninth Army from its present line west of Peiping ;
- (2) Punishment of the Chinese responsible for the conflict ;
- (3) Adequate control of all anti-Japanese activities in North China ; and
- (4) Enforcement of measures against Communism.

It is reported that the Hopei-Chahar Political Council submitted to these demands on July 19th and the terms of the settlement were published in Tokyo, on July 23rd. The expectation on the Chinese side was that both the Chinese and Japanese fighting forces would withdraw from the zone and it is extremely probable that Nanking would have reluctantly endorsed the above settlement. But when the Japanese troops did not leave the area, the subordinate officers and the rank and file of the Chinese troops refused to withdraw. On July 26th, the Japanese military commanders issued an ultimatum that the Chinese troops must withdraw by noon, on July 28th.

The latter refused to budge and the Japanese thereupon proceeded to evict them by force. Thus the war started.

Though Marshal Chiang, the Nanking Dictator, is not ready for a war, he has stood up to Japan and it is not likely that he will give in without a fight.

Japan is preparing for a long fight and the Japanese Diet has already voted large sums for the campaign. It is reported that she will spend up to £ 117,650,000 in order to carry on the war till the end of January 1938.

The latest development in the Far Eastern War is the extension of the fight to the Shanghai area. On the 9th August a fresh "incident" took place at the Hungjao aerodrome near Shanghai. The Japanese naval officers were shot dead while attempting to enter the aerodrome. Thereupon, Japanese naval forces took drastic action to avenge the shooting and the Japanese Admiral demanded, among other things, that all Chinese troops should be withdrawn to a distance not less than 30 miles from Shanghai and that all defences prepared within the area should be immediately dismantled. The Chinese response to the demand was the movement into the Shanghai area of the 88th Division from Nanking in order to reinforce the local troops. The Japanese regarded this as a flagrant breach of the 1932 Agreement—but the Chinese retorted by saying that the Japanese themselves by posting troops in Chinese territory and provocatively bringing a large fleet to the scene, had absolved China from any obligation to observe the terms of that agreement.

Thus the war is going on along two fronts—Peiping and Shanghai. A moot point in this connection is as to which party desired the extension of the war to the Shanghai front? In all probability the Japanese!

The Japanese being blocked on land, as they were when Nanking troops moved into Hopei Province, turned to the

sea. The semi-circle of armies which Marshal Chiang threw round Peiping (under Japanese occupation) based on a well-prepared line of forts, was a bold and important strategic move. The left flank of the Government Army is at Nankow, the favoured pass, where the Peiping Paotow Railway cuts through the hills. The centre of the semi-circle depends on Patoingfu, 100 miles of Tientsin, also under Japanese occupation. The task of forcing this semi-circle—this “Hindenburg” line—is a formidable one. Hence, the decision from a strategic point of view to undermine Chinese resistance by attacking Shanghai.

If China has a heart, it is the financial and commercial centre at the mouth of the Yangtse. Japan attacked this heart in order to disorganize the foreign-controlled industrial, commercial and financial centre of China with a view to imperilling the economic basis of the Central Government, demoralizing national feeling and terrifying the Chinese, bourgeoisie. Shanghai is virtually at the mercy of the Japanese Navy and an attack on this prosperous and ever-growing city is the obvious way to bring the war to a rapid conclusion. But the effectiveness of this thrust will depend on the extent of the dislocation of trade and of the material damage accruing from the war.

∴ The war will go on for sometime. Japan will try “to paralyse the heart of China in order to amputate the limbs. China must stand or fall, therefore by the war in Shanghai”—as an eminent strategist has declared. Will China be able to survive this bloodbath? If Canton remains open for the supply of armaments and the loss in revenue due to the fighting in Shanghai is not too serious, China may, perhaps, keep going sufficiently long to be able to endanger the social and economic stability of Japan. As against this consideration is the fact that the Japanese Navy is attempting a blockade of the

Chinese ports and further, that there is a war fever among the Japanese people and there does not seem to be any difference between the aims of the military and the civilians in Island Empire.

China has appealed once again to the League of Nations, as she did in 1931. But what is the value of this moribund League in such an emergency? World opinion is, of course, on the side of China—but world opinion is not of much value when pitted against machine guns. The outlook for China is gloomy indeed. The mellow view that time is on China's side is not correct any longer. To-day China is fighting against time. God grant that she may succeed.

Japan has done great things for herself and for Asia. Her reawakening at the dawn of the present century sent a thrill throughout our Continent. Japan has shattered the white man's prestige in the Far East and has put all the Western imperialist powers on the defensive—not only in the military but also in the economic spheres. She is extremely sensitive—and rightly so—about her self-respect as an Asiatic race. She is determined to drive out the Western Powers from the Far East. But could not all this have been achieved without Imperialism, without humiliating another proud, cultured and ancient race? No, with all our admiration for Japan where such admiration is due, our whole heart goes to China in her hour of trial. China must still live for her own sake and for humanity. Out of the ashes of the conflict she will once again rise Phoenix-like as she has so often done in the past.

Let us learn the lessons of this Far-Eastern conflict. Standing at the threshold of a new era, let India resolve to aspire after national self-fulfilment in every direction—but not at the expense of other nations and not through the bloody path of self-aggrandisement and imperialism.

APPENDIX

Dhillon-Subhas Bose Correspondence

“Not words, only tears could express my feelings.” This is what Col. Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon of the I.N.A. wrote to the “beloved Netaji” while acknowledging a letter from the I.N.A. Supreme Commander, Subhas Chandra Bose. The following two documents, which were produced as exhibits in the Court-Martial trial at Delhi of Shah Nawaz, Major-General of the I.N.A. ; Prem Saighal, Colonel of the I.N.A. ; and G.S. Dhillon, Colonel of the I. N. A., are reproduced in full :—

Exhibit “ OOO ”

SADAR DAFTAR ALA KAMAN

AZAD HIND FAUJ

(Headquarters, Supreme Command,
Indian National Army).

Rangoon.

12th March, 1945.

Major G. S. Dhillon,

Jai Hind,

I have been following the work of your Regiment and of yourself with the closest interest and I want to congratulate you on the manner in which you have stood up to face bravely the situation that is difficult. I want to express my complete confidence in you and in all those who are standing by you in the present crisis.

Whatever happens to us individually in the course of this historic struggle, there is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved any longer. Whether we live and work, or whether we die fighting, we must, under all circumstances, have complete confidence that the cause for which we are striving is bound to triumph. It is the finger of God that is pointing the way towards India's freedom. We have only to do our duty and to pay the price of India's liberty. Our hearts are with you and with all who are with you in the present struggle, which is paving the way to our national salvation. Please convey my warmest greetings to all the officers and men under you and accept same yourself. May God bless you and crown your efforts with success.

“Jai Hind.”

(Sd.) Subhas Chandra Bose.

Exhibit “QQQ.”

Burma.

20th March 1945.

Beloved Netaji,
Jai Hind.

I have received your letter of 12th March 1945. Not words, only tears could express my feelings.

I thank you with all my heart for expressing your complete confidence in me and in those who are with me. I assure you, our Netaji, on behalf of the Regiment that it does not matter what may come our way, we will continue the struggle according to your ideas and wishes to earn our Motherland's Freedom as long as a single soldier of this regiment is alive.

As for myself, my last words to you at Rangoon, “*Main ap ki ankhen kisi ki samne nichhi na hone dunga,*” have been ringing in my ears ever since I left you, and specially so after

I have come back from Nyaungu. I fully realize that in spite of reasons which may be produced, I have not only failed to do what I voluntarily promised, but have been the only Regimental Commander to bring humiliation to you and to the Azad Hind Fauj. I have no face to promise again, only my actions will do so.

Your letter has put a new spirit into us.

All the officers and men present here and I humbly and with warmest hearts have accepted your greetings. We are confident that with God's grace and your blessings it will not be difficult to achieve success.

We all pray for your long life and health to guide us through this Holy War.

Jai Hind.

Your Excellency's obediently,
(Sd.) G. S. DHILLON.

The following is another exhibit produced by the prosecution in the trial. It is a report of an action written by G. S. Dhillon, Colonel of the I. N. A.

Exhibit "PPP"

SECRET

Unit No. 450

Burma, 18th March 1945.

To Unit No. 531.

Subject :—BATTLE REPORT No. 4.

Ref. attached Sketch.

As per Operation Order No. 3 of 14th March 1945 of Unit No. 450 timed 20-37 hours, Unit No. 451 was occupying a defensive position on 11th March 1945 as under :—

A company commanded by Lieut. Kartar Singh in Nagling vicinity and 'B' Coy. commanded by 2-Lt. Gian

Singh on north-east of KaNzaung, with Bn. Headquarters South of ' B ' Coy. near a Nippon Coy. commanded by Capt. Midori Kawa.

At 10—0 hrs. enemy artillery from north-western direction started shelling heavily these positions. At that time a patrol from ' A ' Coy. commanded by Hav. Nazar Singh, was out in the direction of Nyaungu about one mile ahead of Coy. Headquarters. This patrol was fired at by an enemy about a platoon strong coming from Nyaungu direction on the western side of the main road.

Our patrol took up position at point ' A ' and exchanged fire, thereby killing seven of the enemy. A message from this patrol was sent back to Coy. Headquarters as to the enemy advance. ' A ' Coy. Commander sent forward another party of 10 men under 2-Lt. Dittu Ram to check the advance of that platoon. 2-Lt. Dittu Ram went forward and took up a position between the road and ' A ' point, *i.e.*, point ' B '. He was also engaged and the enemy was held up.

At about 12-30 hours 15 enemy tanks, 11 armoured cars and ten trucks came advancing by the main road, and started shelling and firing at point ' A '. Our men replied this fire with rifle and a Bren Gun. The enemy column changed its direction towards ' B ' Coy. and directed itself into two halves. One went towards ' B ' Coy. and the other towards ' B ' Coy. and then to ' A ' Coy.

' B ' Coy. was given warning by the Bn. Headquarters through a runner. Soon the Coy. gained contact as the enemy A.F.Vs. came right into the Coy. locality and wanted to crush our men in the trenches. They started shelling and throwing hand grenades into the trenches from inside their vehicles. The Coy. felt helpless against the superiorly-equipped enemy. Two mines which were with the Coy. were used but unluckily both went missed. No. 5 and 6 platoons got out of the

trenches and with bayonets fixed charged on to the A. F. Vs. with shouting slogans of *Neta ji ki Jai! Inqilab Zindabad!* and *Chalo Delhi*. The A. F. Vs. came to a standstill, enemy jumped out of them and the trucks and a hand-to-hand fighting began which lasted for over one hour. 2/Lt. Gian Singh, Coy. Comdr. amidst men, was charging and inspiring them. No. 5 Platoon Commander his 2-Lt. Mangu Ram was killed and only about one-tenth of the two platoons were left when 2-Lt. Gian Singh called for No. 4 Platoon Commander 2-Lt. Ram Singh and was issuing orders for a withdrawal from a standing position, when a bullet hit him in the head and he fell down. His death caused a little bit of disturbance but 2/Lt. Ram Singh got hold of the situation by withdrawing the remnants of the Coy. to a rear position. At the same time the enemy also got into their vehicles after collecting weapons of the dead and withdrew. This engagement lasted from 14.00 hours to 16.00 hours approximately. The enemy lost about 50 killed and many wounded. We lost about 40 killed. Some of the seriously wounded—about ten—were captured by the enemy and taken back.

The enemy which had come towards 'A' Coy. side, started first by shelling the village and then approached the Coy. position. The A. F. Vs. entered the village. Enemy automatic from the ground also opened fire. Fire was also opened from our Coy. At about 18-00 hrs. the enemy charged with bayonets and tommy guns. The Japanese set the village on fire thus making it a tank obstacle. The tanks could not approach and the enemy had to withdraw leaving back three dead. 'A' Coy. also lost three killed.

Towards the dark Taungzin was still in our hands and the enemy withdrew. 'B' unit 551 then came back to a position near Kwebyok for reorganization.

LETTER TO COLONEL SHAH NAWAZ KHAN 265

Recommending awards for 2 Lt. Gain Singh and 2-Lt. Mangu Ram, Dhillon wrote :—Regarding these two officers, I strongly recommend for a posthumous reward and decorations. Their bravery is unparalleled in the history of War. Attacking of tanks and A.F.Vs. may seem impossible, had these heroes not preferred to die fighting than to hand up or show their backs.

Here is another exhibit produced by the prosecution in the trial of three I.N A. Officers.

EXHIBIT 'TTT'

No. D. 5

Dated 2nd April 1945.

To

COLONEL SHAH NAWAZ KHAN

From

LT. COL. G. S. DHILLON.

Captain Mohammad Hussain's absence has not affected the spirit or morale of the troops at all. We are prepared to continue fighting in the front line. No need of rest unless objective is achieved. We will sacrifice our lives to maintain the honour of Azad Hind Fauj. Water or no water, rations or no rations, will not affect our fighting capacity. Captain Chander Bhan, Lieut. Khan Mohammad and Lieut. Kartar Singh along with my staff join me in assuring you that we will fight up to the last.

JAI HIND.

(Sd.) G. S. Dhillon,

Lt. Colonel,

Commander, 450 Unit A. H. F.

Time 21-05 hour.

The following is another exhibit produced :—

EXHIBIT " UUU "

THE CHARGE OF THE IMMORTALS

It was a flat stretch of land without and cover either from view or from fire, except a shallow dry pond near which three roads of great tactical importance met. Four miles north-west of this point was a hill 1,423 feet high behind which the enemy Artillery was located so as to cover the road junction and the area south of it, the occupation of which would affect the entire plan of operations.

At a key-point like this was placed a Company of Azad Hind Fauj under the command of 2-Lt. Gian Singh Bisht. trained at the Officers Training School, Azad Hind Fauj. The Company was only ninety-eight strong. They had no Machine-Guns or even Light Machine-Guns. Good old Rifles were their only weapon of defence or offence apart from two A/Tk. Mines. Their orders were to check any enemy advance at all costs.

They remained in the position for two days, but the enemy dare not advance. Then on 16th of March, 1945 starting early morning hostile Fighting Planes bombed and machine-gunned their positions until about 11 a.m. Having got rid of all the load they had, aeroplanes went away. Then the enemy Guns from behind the hill started registering, and behind this barrage of Artillery fire advanced a column of Motorised Infantry consisting of 13 tanks, 11 armoured cars and 10 trucks. Half of this column made its way straight towards the Pond where two Forward Platoons of the Company were in position. Lead and explosives were being thrown out of the Armoured Fighting Vehicles, but this would not

frighten our boys, they waited in their trenches for infantry to debus. Tanks and Armoured Cars like steel monsters creating hell with their fire-power approached so close that they started charging on to our trenches so as to crush and cripple our men under their heavy weight. Two mines were thrown in their way which unluckily did not burst, but they caused monsters to stop, which having stopped became stationary pill boxes oozing out most inhuman forms of killing materials.

There was no communication between this Post and the Battalion H. Qrs. When 2-Lieut. Gain Singh appreciated, that their Rifles Fire was no match to the enemys' Mortars, Machine-Guns, Light Automatics and Hand Grenades and their staying in trenches meant certain death or captivity with no loss to the enemy, he ordered "Charge." Leading the assault he shouted slogans of "Netaji Ki Jai," "Inqailab Zindabad," "Azad Hindustan Zindabad" and "Chalo Delhi." All the men responded to slogans which echoed above the enemy fire. This was the only support which these heroes had against the superior armament of the enemy. In the name of India and Indian Independence they charged into the enemy trucks. The enemy immediately debused. Hand-to-hand fighting ensued which lasted for full two hours, but our heroes would not give in, forty of them sacrificed their lives after killing more than equal number of the enemy. Their unconquerable spirit harassed the enemy so much that he started retreating.

Just then 2-Lieut. Gian Singh called forward his Third Platoon Commander 2-Lieut. Ram Singh and was giving out orders when a bullet struck on his head and he fell down never to give out orders again. 2-Lieut. Ram Singh then collected the remnants of the company and re-organized.

2-Lieut. Gain Singh Bisht used to tell his men that he would die with them, he fulfilled his promise and remained

their comrade in life and death. This was a glorious deed of which the history will remain witness as long as there is world. 2-Lieut. Gian Singh and his men lived up to the ideals of our Great Leader—the Netaji—and have laid down their lives fighting by their posts to build up a tradition for us to follow. In Free India the spirit of these heroes who knew no defeat will be worshipped for generations to come and will inspire the future Sons of India to live up to such high ideals.

(Sd.) G. S. DHILLON

Lt. Col.,

Dated 9th April 1945.

Commander, 801 Unit.

The Topmost Figure

(By KALI NATH RAY)

The reported death of Babu Subhas Chandra Bose in a Japanese hospital from injuries received in an air crash removes one of the topmost and most striking figures from India's contemporary public life. For four years Mr. Bose had been engaged in activities with which political India had no sympathy and which the overwhelming majority of his countrymen, irrespective of their party affiliations thoroughly condemned even though they fully shared the view of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that his major motive was the same as theirs, the attainment of his country's freedom. He certainly laboured under a grave delusion, almost incredible in a person of his great intelligence and clear-headedness, when he persuaded himself to believe that the freedom of his country could ever be won with the help of a foreign country, and that country which had in the past forcibly deprived so many countries of their freedom and which in the present war itself was undoubtedly striving to put down both freedom and

democracy in the world. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was perfectly right when he declared in Calcutta some years ago that if Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's idea materialised and he ever came to India with a Japanese force, his countrymen, including his former associates and lieutenants, would fight him as stoutly and determinedly as they would fight an external invader.'

But the fact that Mr. Bose was completely misguided in this matter cannot make his country oblivious of the great and distinguished services rendered by him to the cause of India's political freedom for a period of more than two decades, and, indeed, right up to the day when he mysteriously disappeared from his country soon after the outbreak of the war. The very fact that he was regarded by Deshbandhu Das as his right hand man at a time when he was at the height of his influence and authority, that in his own province he along with the late Mr. J. M. Sengupta was, after Deshbandhu's death immediately and universally accepted as his worthy successor and that within a few years the country as a whole, specially the younger generation, acclaimed him as a leader of conspicuous ability shows the stuff of which he was made. He proved his political mettle still more decisively when he was elected President of the Congress, and when on the expiry of his first term of office as President he offered himself for re-election and succeeded in getting himself elected by a substantial majority of votes in the teeth of opposition by the high and the mighty in the Congress. Our views regarding the controversy to which his candidature for re-election as President led and the circumstances under which he was forced to resign his office as President are well known, and this is hardly the place to repeat them at length. Suffice it to say that down to the Calcutta Session of the A. I. C. C. Mr. Bose was absolutely in the right and his opponents were absolutely in the wrong, and that the manner in which he was literally hounded out of an

Office to which he had been called by the suffrage of his people reflected no great credit upon those concerned ; but that thereafter Mr. Bose made one mistake after another, until his course of conduct seemed almost to put in the right those who had originally been wholly in the wrong. How far these mistakes were due to ' the sense of resentment and frustration caused by his forcible deposition ' from the presidential chair is one of those matters in respect of which opinion is bound to differ. But on the main issues history will, we feel sure, ratify the verdict of dispassionate contemporaries.

In noticing the career which has just come to a tragic end under circumstances which will be universally regretted by friends and foes alike what strikes one more forcibly than anything else is that at almost every stage of it something or other happened to turn him aside from the course which he had chalked out for himself. He was appointed a member of the Indian Civil Service, but he resigned in 1921 to join the non-co-operation movement. He was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation, but he had scarcely held the office for some months when he was arrested under Regulation III of 1918. He was elected a member of the Bengal Legislative Council while under detention, but he was not able to do any substantial work in that capacity, because he was again interned as a State prisoner on account of the part he took in the *Satyagraha* movement, and was later released only that he might be able to proceed to Europe for medical treatment. His first term of office as President of the Congress synchronised with an event in which he is believed to have in the main carried out the wishes of the Congress High Command, instead of following his own inclination—the Khare incident. His second term of office as President was cut short prematurely by circumstances over which he had no control. He founded the Forward Bloc in the Congress in 1939, but the bloc

had hardly been able to make its mark when his leadership was withdrawn from it by his sudden disappearance from India. Similarly the Youth Movement in India and the movement against the Communal Award, of both of which he was one of the strongest pillars, were not destined to derive full benefit from his leadership because he was never able to devote his whole time and energy to them.

It seems, indeed, that an evil destiny dogged his steps in all these cases and strove perpetually to baffle his purpose and to prevent him from making the best use of his great and rare gifts. There is, however, this difference between the last four years and the rest of his life that while in all earlier cases he had a substantial body of Indian opinion with him and in many of them a large majority of his countrymen were behind him, for the first time during these years he found himself in a position in which the sympathies of all sections of responsible opinion in India were against the activities in which he was engaged. For a political leader of his potent stamp no position could be more incongruous ; Mr. Bose must himself have felt in an increasing measure the loneliness of his position, as the war in the Far East proceeded along its predestined course. Now, however, that the curtain has been rung down upon a life filled in its earlier stages with great performances and still greater promise, his countrymen would fain draw a veil over the concluding part of his life, except for the purpose of laying to heart the melancholy lessons it so impressively teaches, and would remember nothing except the good and great work that he accomplished or attempted to accomplish as a political leader of great ability and singular dynamic force. It is, indeed, impossible to suppress the poignant reflection that but for the deplorable circumstances leading to the premature end of what only a short time ago was universally regarded as a great and glorious career, Mr. Bose, who was only 48 years old at

the time of his death, might have lived to a good old age and crowned his past achievements by still greater achievements in a Free India. While deeply mourning his death and the tragic circumstances in which it occurred, we offer our sincere condolence to the bereaved family.

The Illustrious Patriot

(BY MR YUSUF MEHERALLY)

Subhas Bose is once again reported to be dead—patriot or traitor, Fascist quisling or a redoubtable lover of his country's freedom. What will the verdict of history be on him, time alone can give the most fitting reply, but if the position he occupies to-day in the affections of his countrymen be any index, then his place is assured in the calendar of national heroes, for, outside perhaps a handful, Indians never lost faith in his integrity even during the darkest days. To them he has always been an illustrious patriot, not inferior in his love of the country to Gandhi or Azad, Jawaharlal or Vallabhbhai.

Friends and enemies he always had in plenty and friends as well as enemies often disagreed with his ideas and projects. There were many in India who were opposed to his mix-up with the Axis powers and openly said so but very few indeed believed that he had become a Fascist. He was only following the strategy, so well-known in the West, and so successfully practised by Great Britain as well as her Allies that the enemy of our enemy may under certain circumstances be considered friend. Most Indians refused to believe that Subhas had sacrificed everything in resisting the British, only to exchange them for a new set of masters.

In a book of broadcasts by eminent Britishers and others, entitled "Talking to India", edited by George Orwell and published by Allen and Unwin in 1943, there has been reserved for us a radio talk given by Subhas Bose from Berlin in

May 1942. "I am not," declared Subhas, "an apologist of the tripartite powers. That is not my task. Britain's paid propagandists have been calling me an enemy agent. My whole life is one long precedent of an uncompromising struggle against British imperialism. All my life I have been the servant of India and until the last hour of my life I shall remain one. My allegiance and loyalty has ever been and will ever be to India alone, no matter in what part of the world I may live."

Most of the Indians would be inclined to accept this statement. This has seemed surprising to many non-Indians and many well-known foreigners have felt intrigued at this. What is the source of Subhas's hold over the mind and imagination of his countrymen? The reply is his whole life. When still an undergraduate he slapped an English professor in an open class who was bent upon making insulting remarks about India. The result was rustication from his college. Two precious years were thus lost but when the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, the great Mr. Ashutosh Mukherji, permitted him to re-join college, he had little difficulty in obtaining a first class. He passed the I.C.S. Examination and returned to India on the eve of the non-co-operation movement. The atmosphere was tense. To the astonishment of relatives and friends alike he resigned from the I.C.S. and threw in his lot with Mr. C. R. Das whose indispensable lieutenant he became.

When Mr. Das organised the National College, Subhas was designated its Principal; when Das resigned the presidency of the Congress and started the Swaraj Party, together with the Elder Nehru, Subhas supported his leader's fight for carrying the war against Britain inside the sham legislatures which had so far been boycotted. When the new daily "Forward" was floated by Mr. Das, Subhas was installed in the

editorial chair ; when Mr. Desh Bandhu became Mayor of Calcutta in 1924, Subhas as his right-hand man was made the Chief Executive. This beautiful comradeship only ended with the death of the great leader while Subhas was in the Mandalay Jail in Burma, a prison of the British. He was kept in prison without a trial and without any charges being brought against him for a long time. No wonder Subhas did not feel very pro-British in between the successive terms of imprisonment.

He has held almost every important post open to any Indian. He has been President of the All-India Union Congress, Youth Congress and other important organisations. In 1938 he succeeded Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru as the President of the Indian National Congress amid the plaudits of the whole country. The following year he stood for re-election. It turned out to be the most controversial and the most closely contested election in the entire history of the Congress. Despite the opposition of the stalwarts of the Working Committee, Subhas was re-elected. Gandhiji declared that he considered Subhas's victory as his own personal defeat. Sensation followed upon sensation. At Tripuri the Congress President, with a temperature of 104 degrees resigned, not being able to carry the All-India Congress with him.

With his flair for organization, he started the Forward Bloc some time after. For organising a protest against a resolution of the A.-I. C. C., he was debarred from Congress membership for three years. Simultaneously the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee of which he was the President, was suspended. Subhas had charged that a number of senior Congress leaders were planning with Britain. At Ramgarh, where the Congress was holding its annual Session in 1940, he organised an anti-compromise conference. Before many months had passed all the Congress leaders as well as Subhas were in jail again while the individual civil disobedience movement was on.

The country was electrified to learn one day that Subhas had disappeared and no one knew where he was. Some said that he had renounced the world and retired to the Himalayas as he had done once before in his early youth, others said that he had gone underground, while still others maintained that he had escaped to some foreign country. At the same time a new Subhas was created by Reuter who declared that when Subhas met Hitler in Berlin, the latter greeted him as the Fuehrer of India. Later we learnt that Subhas had organised an "Indian National Army" and would march at the head of it to free India. In a broadcast talk, he was quoted to have declared: "I have studied very closely the foreign history for the last hundred years, in particular the history of all fights for freedom. I have not found one single instance where freedom has been won without foreign aid and Britain herself has been asking for help not only from the free nations of the world but also from enslaved countries like India. If there is nothing wrong in Britain begging for help there can be nothing wrong in India accepting an offer of assistance which she needs and we shall welcome any help in India's last struggle against British imperialism."

Subhas evidently had put his faith in Japan's promise. His countrymen did not share his optimism with China's example before them.

When Sir Stafford Cripps was in India in the spring of 1942, with his proposals, Reuter flashed the news of Subhas's death in an aeroplane accident. The whole country was shaken with grief and the British rulers were astounded at this demonstration of affection and now, when after the "Quit India" movement the Congress leaders have again been set free after nearly three years of detention to consider another offer—the Wavell Plan—comes the self-same news once again

of the death of Subhas in a Tokyo hospital following an aeroplane accident. Is the news of his death true? this time we can only hope that it is not.

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