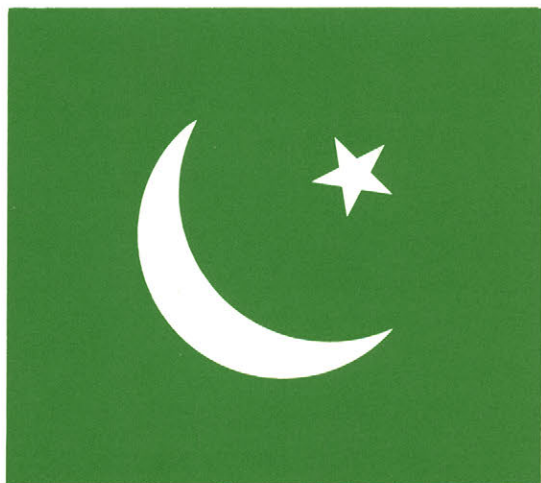


Iftikhar H. Malik

US-South Asian Relations, 1940-47

American Attitudes towards the Pakistan Movement



US-SOUTH ASIAN RELATIONS, 1940-47

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US—SOUTH ASIAN RELATIONS, 1940—47

**American Attitudes towards the
Pakistan Movement**

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To my grandparents who are no more

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Preface

The independence of the South Asian subcontinent and the emergence of the United States as a global power coincided in the late-1940s. The traditional American geo-political isolation which had lasted for many decades – with some brief exceptions – was now replaced by an ever-increasing involvement in world affairs. At the beginning of this very decisive decade, the Indian Muslims chalked out a political creed under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948). The All-India Muslim League (AIML) gradually matured into the Pakistan movement as the second largest mass-based political party after the Indian National Congress (INC) which, to many contemporary Muslims, was a predominantly Hindu organisation within the subcontinent. Due to the American entry into the Second World War, the subcontinent assumed a more geo-strategic importance for the Allies, while the declaration of the Atlantic Charter led the South Asian nationalists to look eagerly to the United States government for a more assertive stance on their behalf *vis-à-vis* the British government. Sir Winston Churchill firmly excluded India from within the purview of the Charter whereas the Roosevelt administration, without pushing too far, favoured an early amicable resolution of the Indian political stalemate. The British resisted every American initiative undertaken by emissaries like Colonel Louis Johnson and Ambassador William Phillips. Even the American interest in expanding their commercial and diplomatic ties with India generally provoked a severe reaction from the British government.

Excluding the urban-based select élites – academicians, journalists, missionaries or the South Asian expatriates – most Americans usually remained unconcerned about the Indian question. There was a serious information gap on that part of the world in the whole of North America, though in the 1940s the American media gave increased coverage to the subcontinent. Given the meagre and scattered nature of the Muslim community in the United States, there was insufficient feedback on the idea of ‘Pakistan’. On the other hand, the INC successfully monopolised American sympathies for Indian independence.

The State Department, shunning its routine correspondence with its representatives in the subcontinent, became slightly more active in 1946–7, when it began to support the cabinet mission plan for a single federal India. Subsequently, however, Pakistan was accepted as a sovereign Muslim state. The limited and partisan information on the subcontinent, further handicapped by the Gandhi–Gunga Din syndrome, caused an enigmatic attitude toward Pakistan. Jinnah (called the Quaid-i-Azam by his followers) was frequently discussed in the American press but conscious efforts to find another Gandhi in him confused the American media. The necessary result: Jinnah, to them, looked more like ‘us’ (Americans) and less like ‘them’ (Indians). Similarly, the United States Congress never went out of its way to discuss or take a definite stance on South Asia – and the few solitary voices such as Emmanuel Celler of Brooklyn were pro-INC. Nevertheless, the American factor encouraged the South Asians throughout their political struggle.

The decade before independence seems to be the threshold in the US–South Asian bilateral contacts that began in 1784, with the arrival of the first American ship, *United States*, at Calcutta. *US–South Asia Relations, 1784–1940: A Historical Perspective*, (Islamabad 1987) takes into account the commercial, diplomatic, political, intellectual, migrational, religious and media aspects of that bilateralism. The present study is an effort to study in depth the personalities, events, and institutions at the time when the Indian Muslims were pursuing their struggle for Pakistan – a country that was to enjoy a closer relationship with the USA in the subsequent decades.

It is almost impossible to acknowledge the assistance and contributions of all the individuals and institutions in the preparation of this book. Colleagues at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Columbia University, Michigan State, UC Berkeley and St Antony’s College, Oxford, have been a great source of inspiration. My gratitude is especially due to Victor Howard, Leo Rose, Rafique Afzal, Surjeet Dulai, Tappan Raychaudhuri, Gowher Rizvi, Rosemary Thorp, Noman Sattar, Aquil Nadeem and Rosemary Stewart. I am thankful to T. M. Farmiloe of Macmillan for his persistent interest in my effort; and to Judy Mabro for her painstaking editorial assistance. Last but not

least, I owe my gratitude to my wife, Nighat, and our children, Farooq and Sidra, for their patience and moral support.

Iftikhar H. Malik.
Oxford, 23 March 1990.

1 The Pakistan Movement: A Prologue

While the administrative and legal uniformity of British India appeared to be an impressive achievement, the increasing communal, religious, cultural and political diversities together with new educational and politico-economic prospects were producing a curious situation. In the post-1857 decades South Asian Muslims suffered from alienation and a deep sense of loss as the British held them mainly responsible for the outbreak of the revolt. The lack of manoeuvrability, with no real leadership and an almost complete absence of channels and opportunities available to the wider community, left them in a state of chaos.¹ The early traditions of revivalism and resistance would need many more decades and intellects to regenerate a dynamic sense of self-preservation. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Syed Ameer Ali tried to reconcile the Muslims to the new realities by stressing 'adjustment' to rather than 'rejection' of western ideas and institutions.² But it was not until a generation after them and 'the founding fathers' of the Indian National Congress (INC) that a new leaf was turned which enabled the All-India Muslim League (AIML) to emerge in Dacca in 1906.³

The pre-First World War years saw increased political activism in the subcontinent when both the Congress and the Muslim League started a new phase in their political career. Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah joined the League at a time when the reforms of 1909 had already been promulgated and the partition of Bengal had been annulled by the British – who also transferred the capital from Calcutta to Delhi.⁴ In the wake of the Balkan wars, pan-Islamism had already caused a stir among the South Asian Muslims who regarded the Ottoman caliphate as the last symbolic vestige of waning Muslim glory. With the advent of the war and the Turkish alignment with Germany, the South Asian expatriates attempted to strike a Turkish–German–Afghan axis against the British from various western capitals – including the abortive Ghadr Party ventures – and a number of South Asian Muslims went into exile. The commonality in attitudes and ideals led to a bi-polar agreement

between the two leading political parties of the subcontinent at Lucknow in 1916. When the post-war British administration began to oppress the Indian activists with legislation such as the Rowlatt Act, sedition trials and indiscriminate killings at Jallianwala in 1919, the subcontinent was already astir with the Khilafat movement. Gandhi appeared on the scene with his *Satyagraha* at a very opportune time to confront the victorious British.

At a time when the reforms of 1919 were put into effect by establishing a façade of provincial autonomy, South Asian political activity underwent a number of processes of polarisation. On one hand, the temporary alliance of the Congress and the Muslim League faltered with the publication of the Nehru report. On the other hand, a number of new regional, communal and ideological parties emerged in the subcontinent. The political impasse became more complex with heightened communal rivalries, British stubbornness, Gandhian defiance and increasing agitation among the masses. The British tried to find a way out of the crisis through the Simon commission in 1927 and the series of round table conferences in the early 1930s, yet South Asian political aspirations could no longer be contained. The India Act of 1935 produced more constitutional reforms and promised more representation to Indians in the administration, yet it was silent on two counts – the ultimate future of the minorities and the princely states. With the promulgation of the provincial part of the act in 1937, a number of Congress ministries were established in the Indian provinces. However, this created bitter feelings among Muslims who felt strongly that these provincial governments were geared to the interests of the Hindu majority. After a period of eighteen months these ministries resigned in October 1939 on the ground that the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, had declared India's participation in the war without any prior consultation with Congress.

During the period of Congress rule, the Muslim League gathered facts and data to prove that it had been inimical to Muslim interests. An eight-member committee appointed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League on 20 March 1938, collected information about partisan measures undertaken by the Congress cabinets. The committee headed by Raja Muhammad Mehdi of Pirpur submitted its famous 'Pirpur report' on 15 November 1938,⁵ followed by the 'Shareef report'⁶ and the 'Fazlul Haq report'⁷ of March and December 1939, respectively.

Partisan policies against the League and, more specifically, hostile Congress attitudes towards Urdu and the educational situation highlighted the substance of these reports which, in the words of Jinnah, suggested overall 'destruction of one and the survival of the other'.⁸ Jinnah had exchanged letters with Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose and Nehru in 1938–9 to apprise them of Muslim fears of Hindu unilateralism and to impress upon them the fact that it was the Muslim League that was the *de facto* spokesman of Muslim interests in the subcontinent. It is therefore no wonder that the Congress rule accelerated the Muslims' quest for identity and a more tangible resolution of the Indian constitutional deadlock. The resignation of the Congress ministries was celebrated as a 'deliverance day' by the Muslims as a consolidated community, in the same way that they rejoiced at the ultimate deliverance from the Raj eight years later.

It may appear rather simplistic to assume that the fifth largest state in the world came into existence just because of the Muslims' fear of the Hindu majority. It was not only the pro-Hindu policies of the Congress that caused the Muslims to 'react' by resorting to the Pakistan movement, demanding the 'partitioning' of India. In fact, Muslim 'separatism' in the socio-cultural, religio-ethnic and political-economic realms has been a persistent reality since the advent of Islam in the region. The Indus valley civilisation clearly demarcated the separateness of the areas from the rest of South Asia, both geographically and culturally.⁹ The juxtaposition of Hinduism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism – made more complex by the Persians, Greeks and other invaders from the Northwest – enhanced the distinctiveness of the whole region by adding the ethnic and cultural imprints of Central Asia and the Near East to the 'ancient' Pakistan. No single religio-ethnic group commanded any unilateral supremacy over the others and in such a segmentary situation Islam emerged as a unifying force.

Islam not only proved a vital link between the whole subcontinent and the rest of the world, it also gave it the name 'India' (Hind) which is itself a derivative from 'Indus' (Sind) – the life-line for Pakistan – since at the time of the Arab conquest it was called Mehran.¹⁰ Also, the Muslims cannot be blamed for the 'vivisection' of 'Mother India' as there never was a united, single and homogeneous India in the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious sense of the word. It has always been a multinational

subcontinent that thrived on diversity, with short-lived interludes in its history when a partial political unity was superimposed by administrative means. Under the great empire-builders like Ashoka, Kanishka, Hershah, Akbar, Aurengzeb or the British, vast areas of the subcontinent remained outside the mainstream political-administrative umbrella of the capital. Furthermore, the northern subcontinent has a political history which is quite different from that of its southern counterpart – except for a few solitary European incursions in recent times. Curiously, Afghanistan and a few republics in the present-day Soviet Union have at times been part of ‘northern Indian’ empires, sometimes for extended periods of time, yet nobody can question their ‘un-Indianness’. Similarly, Pakistan has the same religio-ethnic realities as western Asia, but remains as much a separate nation-state in relation to it as to the rest of South Asia.

In addition to geo-historical reasons, the demand for Pakistan was encouraged by the distinctness of the Muslims in a cultural sense. Their dress, food habits, living patterns, thought processes, religious heritage, literary and artistic traditions and a more international orientation (due to their strong pan-Islamic feelings) compared to the introvert affiliations of many other communities, defined them historically as a separate nation genuinely demanding a territorial definition.¹¹ The Muslims constituted a clear majority in those areas which were understood to become part and parcel of the new territorial arrangement, with minor adjustments.¹² Economically, the Muslims regarded Pakistan as a safeguard for their interests as a community in the competitive capitalist infrastructure under the British. The Muslim masses, mostly unskilled peasants, borrowed heavily from the urban Hindu moneyed class which in predominantly agrarian societies like the Punjab and Bengal had become a neo-feudal aristocracy. Attempts to help traditional agriculturalists – such as the Land Alienation Act of 1900¹³ or the pro-rural active Unionist hegemony in the Punjab – could not protect them from daily mortgages and bankruptcies.¹⁴ Likewise, the Muslim landed aristocracy felt threatened by the increasing power of the urban Hindu élites and thus had their own reasons for advocating the case for Pakistan.¹⁵ In the commercial sector, whether large urban centres like Delhi, Lahore, Dacca, Bombay or traditional Muslim power-bases like Peshawar, Kohat, Rawalpindi, Hyderabad, the business interests

were predominantly in non-Muslim hands – which increased the worries of the young Muslim middle class of entrepreneurs, bankers, traders and manufacturers. Simultaneously, the out-numbered Muslim élites were conscious of the limitations imposed upon them in the job market and civil service in the face of the long-standing Hindu dominance and foresaw a dismal future if the status quo continued.

Given all these powerful factors, the unilateral policies followed by the Congress increased Muslim grievances and worries. The experience of living under Congress rule, although for a relatively short period of time, had awakened them to the urgency of strengthening the rank and file of the Muslim League. The League attempted to provide a precise and more realistic manifesto to the Muslim masses in the form of 'Pakistan', which gave 'oneness' as well as a sense of purpose to their struggle. The Lahore resolution of 23 March 1940, adopted unanimously by hundreds of thousands of Muslims representing diverse strata and regions of the subcontinent, represented the culmination of a historical evolution. It was a collective struggle by the Muslims who persisted until they achieved their objective through a mass movement ably led by the Muslim League (AIML) and especially Jinnah.

The Lahore resolution, reflecting the growth of Muslim political ideas into a well-defined goal, suggested 'territorial adjustments' in the subcontinent or, failing this, a partition. This was a complete parting of the ways and to Gandhi, the two-nation theory was not only 'baffling' but also 'an untruth'. He hoped that the Muslims, guided by their own interests and moral ideals, would avoid 'the obvious suicide, which the partition would mean'.¹⁶ To B. R. Ambedkar, the great leader of the Untouchables, the Lahore resolution was justified as a huge, united India would be unmanageable and become a 'sickly state, ineffective, a living corpse, dead though not buried'.¹⁷ Master Tara Singh, a vocal leader of the Sikhs, opposed the idea of Pakistan for being 'based on extreme communal considerations, because its aim is not the protection of Muslims, but domination over the minorities'. Jinnah and other Muslim Leaguers tried to dispel Sikh fears and even asked them to align themselves with the Muslim League, given the requisite safeguards to their interests as a distinct community.¹⁸ The initial shock which the non-Muslims received over the Lahore resolution as the ultimate

creed of the Muslim League, gradually turned into hostility and a stubbornness which continued after independence. A few conciliatory efforts by the leaders of the Congress (INC) and the League in the 1940s were unsuccessful, for there was no meeting ground left between the two opposite ideologies. The British tried on their own to resolve the stalemate through the Cripps mission in March 1942, the Wavell plan of 1945, the elections of 1946, the cabinet mission and the establishment of an interim government of South Asians – all the gradual measures short of complete independence. Obviously the British were reluctant to withdraw from their Indian empire and were not ready to partition their civil apparatus and military establishment – both of which were considered to be the prized gains of the Raj in the subcontinent. Moreover, since Churchill was a staunch imperialist and completely against the idea of winding up the empire, as long as he was Prime Minister the South Asian demand for freedom was continuously delayed for one reason or the other. Viceroys like Linlithgow and Wavell reflected the rigidity of Whitehall in their policies but when the Labour government came to power under Attlee, the British started packing up. Lord Mountbatten was sent as the last governor-general to see through the transfer of power to the South Asians, although the new administration was not at all receptive to the idea of a separate nation-state for the Muslims.¹⁹ Thus, between 1940 and 1947, 'Pakistan' moved from being an idea to an ideal and became a reality on the world map – despite the open hostility of a number of decisive forces in the subcontinent, including the hesitation and somewhat dubious behind-the-scene dealings of the British government.

This is not to suggest that the case for an independent Muslim state was not convincing to all concerned in the subcontinent. The participation of the masses in the Muslim League and the strategic blunders made by the Congress leadership at times helped the Muslim leadership in the attainment of their goals.²⁰ By the late-1940s, it was clear that (1) the British would have to leave and, (2) a homeland for the Muslims would be created – even the autonomous princes had to accept the *fait accompli*. In a span of only four years the Muslim League, which had presented a very sorry figure in the provincial elections of 1936, had become the most representative and predominant Muslim platform. In the Punjab, a Muslim majority province, only two

Muslim Leaguers had been successful in the elections under the Unionist oligarchy. Four years later it was hosting the greatest Muslim rally of the times. Similarly, Bengal and Sind, where the League also suffered from a lack of political stability, became the forerunners in the demand for Pakistan. The situation in the Frontier was equally dismal from the Muslim League point of view, as the local Muslim parties had generally sided with the Congress. Nevertheless, the appeal for Pakistan proved to be wide-ranging and persuasive. Even though the Muslim religio-political parties in the subcontinent generally differed with the creed and leadership of the Muslim League, historical factors and the forces for 'Pakistan' were strong enough to make it a unified goal and struggle for all Muslims.

Thus, the Pakistan movement of the 1940s represented the maturing of Muslim nationalism in the subcontinent. History, religion, extra-territorial attachment, philosophical and cultural moorings had developed the sentiment of nationalism among the Muslims who were 'only kept together [along with others] by the bayonets of the Pax Britannica'.²¹ Gradually, the divergent forces and pressure groups in South Asia came to accept that 'Hindu-Muslim conflict was not merely religious. It was the clash of two civilisations, of two peoples, who had different languages, different literary roots, different ideas of education, different philosophical sources, and different concepts of arts. Such a yawning gulf was enough to destroy any affinity which the two peoples might have had and to bring to nought all efforts at unity.'²²

2 The Second World War and the Britain–USA– Subcontinent Axis

The outbreak of the Second World War heralded a new phase in Indo-British relations and the beginning of American political-military interest in the subcontinent. However, the unilateral announcement by Lord Linlithgow on 3 September 1939, of India's participation in the war – justified legally on the basis that the viceroy was empowered to decide on foreign policy issues – raised basic issues about the participatory and supposedly equal role of South Asians in the decision-making process. The provincial governments already working through the Congress ministries or similar coalitions in Muslim majority provinces had not been consulted prior to the announcement. The Indian National Congress (INC) reacted strongly to this development, feeling that it had been bypassed, though the elected assemblies of the Punjab, Bengal and Sind supported the declaration as did the princely states through their Chamber of Princes. The Congress demanded that the British government declare its policy on the political future of the subcontinent in the light of her war aims. In other words, the Congress high command wanted to establish whether Britain was fighting for democracy, and would then implement it in India after the cessation of hostilities, or would strive to maintain the status quo. The Congress urged the establishment of a duly elected constituent assembly after the war in order to frame a constitution. Meanwhile, the British were asked to instal a national government, thus making cooperation from the Congress conditional on British war-efforts. The meeting between the viceroy and the Congress high command failed to reach any conclusive agreement until the viceroy announced that Britain was willing to modify the existing Act of 1935 to make India an equal partner with the other dominions. The pledge did not, however, commit itself to the ultimate independence of the subcontinent. Congress therefore directed its provincial ministries to stand down and the provincial governors assumed control in those

provinces. On the advice of Gandhi, Congress engaged itself in the preparation of a movement to defy the government.

Until early-1940 the British government was talking from a position of strength, as many echelons both in Britain and the empire were confident of winning the war. But the fall of France in the summer and Italian proximity to the Suez Canal brought the war into a very critical phase and also close to the subcontinent. Gandhi emphasised pacifist resistance stripped of all violence and force, but the other leaders did not agree with him. He formally resigned from the Congress, although his influence never waned in the predominantly Hindu party. The other Congress members were still reluctant to take a declared stand and, for some period of time, followed a wait-and-see policy. Britain made another ill-conceived move through the declaration of 8 August 1940, which reaffirmed the imperial desire to eventually grant the subcontinent *free and equal partnership in the British commonwealth*. It promised the establishment of a representative legislative body to devise the constitution – including the granting of due rights to minorities – once the war was over. The Congress was not convinced by this pledge and demanded immediate measures in place of assurances. Gandhi was invited back in the Congress, which decided in favour of direct action based on peaceful defiance.¹ The government responded quickly and filled the gaols with thousands of Congressites inviting voluntary arrest. At the same time it expanded and, to some extent, ‘Indianised’ the viceroy’s executive council by including more non-party Indian members. The number on the council was increased to twelve with eight portfolios going to the Indians, though the vital positions of Defence, Home and Finance were retained by the British. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League was represented at all. Similarly, the viceroy instituted a defence council as an advisory group for the conduct of war, nominating representatives from princely states and Indians from regular British provinces.

The Muslims, already disillusioned by the unilateralism and partisanship of the Congress during its brief eighteen-month period of rule and the onslaught on the Lahore resolution (referred to as the Pakistan resolution), rallied around the Muslim League. The negation of the Muslim League by the Congress, symbolised to them the negation of Muslim nationalism in the heterogenous subcontinent. Gandhi, like other Congress

leaders such as Nehru, Azad and Bose, had reiterated time and again that the Congress was the only representative body in the subcontinent, and thus the only successor to the Raj. In other words, the Congress was trying to ignore the multinational, or communal as it was then called, reality in the subcontinent. The British government raised the issue of minorities with the Congress leadership before making any final commitment on the transfer of power. However, Gandhi considered the issue to be 'an illusion', while the others regarded it as a machination of British imperialists.² Such non-accommodating attitudes combined with a blundering strategy during the early phase of the war smeared the image of the Congress among the Muslim masses and strengthened the demand for Pakistan. The Muslim League never went to the extent of making a secret arrangement with the government during the crucial years by repudiating the political aspirations of the various communities in the subcontinent, but rather it busied itself with organisational activities. The League supported the Congress as far as the question of independence was concerned, while emphatically presenting a consistent stand on safeguards for minorities. In fact, the League even refused to send its representatives to the viceroy's defence council and the few Muslim notables taken on by the viceroy were asked by the League to resign from membership. Unlike the Congress, the League did not stage any mass movement on the streets during this period but, as mentioned above, busied itself in building up its strength and image in the South Asian political spectrum. By following a wise, non-violent and non-conformist path, it was able to impress upon the British government that the South Asian Muslims were 'a nation of hundred million . . . with our distinctive culture and civilisation, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of values and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions, in short we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law, we are a nation.'³

The South Asians of the 1940s were speaking from a vantage point of strength. Political consciousness, coupled with a tradition of activism and aided by constitutional reforms and vital party politics operated by an ambitious middle class, occurred at a time when the subcontinent itself was in a comparatively better position *vis-à-vis* Britain – now deeply engrossed in a terrible

war affecting both its morale and resources. Though the per capita income in India by the late-1930s was between 67 and 70 rupees a year (\$23 at the time) compared to \$300 of an average West European or \$40 in Bulgaria, yet India itself was the seventh industrial power in the world after the USA, Britain, USSR, Germany, Japan and France. On the one hand, India suffered from a severe population explosion with millions living well below the poverty line, a monstrous infant mortality rate and an average expectation of life of only twenty-six years. On the other hand, it boasted one of the largest railway systems in the world – larger even than that of China. The value of American agricultural produce in 1931 stood at \$3,569,000,000, while the Indian figure was almost equal at \$3,500,000,000. However, in India it counted for more than half of the national income whereas in America, it constituted ‘a fraction of American national dividend’.⁴ The difference in farming conditions is shown by the fact that more than 110 million Indians were dependent on the cultivation of 340 million acres whereas in the USA 322 million acres engaged only 32 million of the population. To sum up, less than 5 per cent of the Indian population (20 million) enjoyed a share in the wealth almost on a par with the European middle class, 150 million lived on the poverty line and the remaining 250 million in the very worst conditions. Indian industrialists, urban professionals and even a very small fraction of the educated aristocracy made up the mobile élites, whose economic and socio-psychological ambitions strengthened party politics.⁵ The Indian capitalists⁶ had their reasons for demanding a better share in competitive world markets.⁷ In 1922, India had set up her own tariff board and pursued ‘a policy of discriminating protection’.⁸ The capitalist economy had its own problems and prospects, increasing the political momentum in a highly stratified region. Besides, it gave a strong sense of self-importance to the élites who in their relationship with Britain felt that they were no more on the receiving end. This strong realisation based on self-reliance caused them to demand a better socio-political status, on a par with that of the foreign rulers.

When the Second World War broke out, Britain bought goods from her Indian possessions to the tune of \$167,000,000, against her own exports to the latter amounting to \$156,000,000. British India exported goods to the United States worth \$45,000,000

against imports of \$33,000,000. In 1942, due to the war, Indian exports to the USA stood at \$136,000,000 and her imports from America totalled \$104,000,000. India exported to Britain, her biggest trade partner, and the United States tea, jute, and some raw materials while it imported machinery, chemicals and automobiles.⁹ With the outbreak of war, British imports from the subcontinent increased at such a rate that Britain owed almost 2 billion dollars to her colony – which the South Asian nationalists were well aware of. As well as economic benefits, Britain also derived strategic benefits from India and enhanced its imperial status – which made it difficult for British imperialists to leave India. Before the Second World War, Indian armed forces had numbered a little less than 175,000 soldiers. Within two years of the outbreak of hostilities the figure rose to nearly 2 million, adding a strong military factor to the complex Indo-British relationship. South Asian nationalists rightly objected to the increasing military expenditure incurred by the colony for the safeguard of British imperial interests – which reached \$2,000,000 per day in 1942.

When India figured so prominently in the preservation of the empire, what hope was there for her own future? The nationalists wanted definite commitments from the British government before more men and material were poured into the war machinery. The British felt the strong nationalist pressure mainly from the Congress and avoided a decisive policy stand. In fact, under Winston Churchill, Leopold Amery and Lord Linlithgow, the Raj developed a severe sense of hatred towards the Congress which, in their view, was opportunistically trying to exploit the critical situation in the war. These three pillars of the Raj consistently took a tough stand against the Congress, pursuing a policy of maintaining the status quo and on occasions undertaking harsh measures which caused confrontation with the Congress. The British prime minister was vocal in his stand of maintaining indefinitely the existing situation *vis-à-vis* India and Amery, the Secretary of State for India, upheld the position taken by Churchill.¹⁰ Lord Linlithgow was the 'crown's representative' in the subcontinent, responsible for the implementation of policies emanating from Whitehall and the India Office as well as dealing with the increasingly compound stalemate in the subcontinent. The viceroy was represented by the provincial governors, or political agents and residents in the autonomous

princely states. The British administration both at the centre and in the provinces was heavily dependent on the Indian Civil Service (ICS), although the British Indian Army was solely responsible for defence. Churchill's views on the future of the empire were all too well-known, emanating both from his own conservative and imperialist background and explicit British war needs. However, it has been maintained by a fairly large cross-section of opinion both in Britain and the subcontinent that the British were determined 'to hand over power to a strong and united Indian government as soon as practicable'.¹¹ Indian authors have differed with this British view, as to them the acceptance of 'partition' was the British negation of 'united Indian government'. For instance, B. R. Nanda believed that the British supported the League in the 1940s in order to counter the Congress, and that the 'loyalty' of the Muslim League 'had never been in doubt', as the British could relate with it on friendly terms.¹² Humayun Kabir also considered the British to have been 'frankly partisan' for they 'did not allow any personal considerations to stand in their way of utilizing Jinnah and the League against the Congress'.¹³ However, to characterise the political creed of millions of South Asian Muslims merely as an offshoot of a partisan policy is an over-simplification. In the words of two British historians: 'The outstanding political development in India in the ten years before the British decision to transfer power in 1947 was the emergence of and exploitation of Muslim nationalism.'¹⁴ It is not the case that 'Pakistan' was simply a convenient term to obtain some temporary gains. Rather it was 'the national manifesto and the national ideal of the Muslims. It was the symbol of Muslim nationalism and their ultimate destiny.'¹⁵ This position is further strengthened by the view that the British, in many cases, leaned too heavily on the Congress and, more particularly under Lord Wavell and Lord Mountbatten, 'the British and the Hindus were strongly opposed to the emergence of Pakistan.'¹⁶

Lord Linlithgow, the viceroy, who was sent to the subcontinent to implement the India Act of 1935, spent a very busy period of tenure at a time of crucial developments. He was in office when, after the elections of 1936-7, provincial ministries were established by various political parties. Muslim India saw the development of increased party politics leading to more vocal, massive and strengthened programmes like the League's

struggle for Pakistan. The Indian National Congress boasted a membership totalling 4,512,038 in 1938, 1,543,295 in 1940-41 and about 2 million in 1942-3. The Congress had successfully taken a number of seats from Muslim constituencies in 1937, but with the adoption of the Pakistan resolution by the League and the wise leadership of Jinnah, the Muslim League registered an unprecedented increase in its membership. In 1939, the figure was 590,919 but by 1941 the League had a registered membership of 1,089,881, which gave it 'a slightly better claim to speak on behalf of all Mohammedans in India than the Congress has to represent the whole country'.¹⁷ Such a wide division between the two main political parties, representing creeds and cultures worlds apart, put Linlithgow in a difficult position. Rather than take decisions to resolve the stalemate, he opted for the status quo until the end of the war. Thus, while the subcontinent demanded independence, the British government found it convenient to follow a policy of postponement. The August offer and the Cripps mission both fell short of the nationalists' demand, and were therefore rejected.¹⁸ Even when Wavell took over as Linlithgow's successor, he followed the same policy despite the fact that the war was almost over. In the event, it was the Labour Party which took a final decision on the destiny of the millions in the subcontinent.

AMERICAN INTEREST IN THE SUBCONTINENT

American official interest in the subcontinent was never a priority in the pre-1940 era – a few consulates based in port cities reported sporadically on South Asian affairs. It was mainly through missionaries and the media that the United States was represented in the subcontinent. Similarly, general information on America in the region was as limited and confined to a few élitist circles. When Indians went abroad for higher studies they traditionally went to England, and Indo-British bilateralism was stronger than Indo-American interaction. President Franklin D. Roosevelt (hereafter FDR) was known to many literate South Asians through his policies dealing with the Great Depression. New Deal reforms had created a healthy image of FDR and the USA.¹⁹ Actually, throughout the 1930s the United States was generally preoccupied with its internal economic crisis and

maintained an isolationist attitude toward the outside world. India was not only the most distant region from the USA but also a colonial possession of Britain. It did not, therefore, figure prominently in American private or public quarters. In 1936, Margaret Woodrow Wilson recommended FDR to send greetings to India on the centenary celebrations of Ramakrishna's birthday so as to express American goodwill toward the South Asian Hindus.²⁰ FDR referred the suggestion to Stephen Early with the comment: 'Take this up with the State Department. Because he was a very great saint [and] this would have a very great effect all through the East. P.S. If you do not know about him – go and find out.'²¹ But the US Department of State decided against sending such a message, which could have created misunderstandings with the British who might resent the venture.²² FDR avoided seeing Yusuf Mehr Ali, Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party, who was visiting the USA in 1938 on a political mission to win American support against the British.²³ FDR consistently reflected the contemporary American attitude of 'aloofness' on crucial matters like the independence of the subcontinent. Moreover, his precaution avoided any strain on US–British relations.

A few Americans argued on an individual basis for a more assertive American stand on the side of the nationalists. But traditional friendly relations with the British persuaded FDR to avoid taking sides on the issue. American interest in South Asian affairs at non-executive levels was limited to two main categories – the select few Americans of diversified interests, and the South Asians residing in the USA. Some of the leading American supporters of the South Asian nationalists were missionaries.²⁴ The American missionary enterprise in the subcontinent was still considered valuable and highly constructive by people like Lord Curzon who felt that the missionaries were engaged in creating an atmosphere conducive to peace, orderliness, and moderation.²⁵ Popular books like *India in Ferment*²⁶ and *Mother India*,²⁷ written by non-missionary authors, supported British policies in India by criticising the South Asian cultures and peoples. Claude Van Tyne based his *India in Ferment* on an extensive tour of the subcontinent and frowned upon the Hindu caste system, Indian communal conflicts and the antagonism on the part of the Indians toward historic monuments. He felt that a western-type democracy would fail in the subcontinent because

of socio-religious conflicts. His paunchy remarks did not make headlines in the contemporary press – unlike Katherine Mayo's *Mother India* which went into many quick printings and raised quite a storm of protest both in the subcontinent and the United States. Nevertheless, this highly critical yet influential work hastened the passage of the Hindu Child Marriage Restraint Bill in 1930. In the second volume of the book published in 1930 she criticised the over-mild provisions of the bill. South Asian notables such as Gandhi²⁸ and Lajpat Rai²⁹ and some of their foreign friends³⁰ published works challenging the generalisations made by Mayo in *Mother India*. Nevertheless, such controversies did not raise general American interest in or consciousness of the subcontinent.³¹ With so little information,³² Hollywood tried to refurbish the 'exotica' through its portrayals on the screen. American missionaries remained the most consistent reporters on India. In the 1930s, they made up one-third of the entire foreign missionary strength in the subcontinent and belonged to seventeen different societies, with 4,357 educational institutions enrolling 182,690 students. In addition, the number of hospitals, clinics, orphanages and printing presses placed American missionary enterprise in the subcontinent at an advanced stage.³³

There were some leading exponents of South Asian freedom among American religious circles, prominent amongst whom was Dr John Haynes Holmes, the pastor of the Community Church in New York, who through his writings, sermons and all other means available tried to 'educate' the American people and government on Indian affairs. In a sermon in 1921 he called Gandhi 'the greatest man in the world today' and became a leading sponsor of lecturers and publicists spearheading the nationalist cause in the subcontinent. Similarly, the Revd Joy Holmes Smith, with an active career in India as a Methodist missionary, was a vocal American spokesman of Indian freedom. He organised an inter-social *ashram* in Harlem as a study group 'to bring together the interests of Negro Americans and the Indians'.³⁴ The Revd J. T. Sunderland must be given credit for his life-time efforts to create a healthy image of the subcontinent in America, besides using every available platform to promote the cause of Indian independence from the Raj. A Canadian-born Unitarian, the Revd Sunderland had settled in the USA after a missionary sojourn in the subcontinent. In New York, he helped Lajpat Rai in the publication of his *Young India* after the

First World War and was the co-founder of Rai's India Home Rule League of America. He was a great admirer of the South Asian cultural heritage and through his articles on Gandhi and Tagore tried to give a respectable picture of the subcontinent. He published his *India in Ferment* in the late-1920s in the USA and India simultaneously, as a critique of British policies in the subcontinent. Although the book was banned in India it was widely read in the United States and dispelled many 'misimages' of India presented by Mayo and the Anglophile American press.

Other influential American missionary organisations were also perturbed over the British restrictions placed on their shipments to India and Burma. At the insistence of the State Department, American consulates in Calcutta and Rangoon raised the issue with the British authorities, pleading that such shipments consisted of philanthropic goods and were in no way intended to create any financial or logistic problems or competition for the British. The highly influential United Lutheran Church bore the brunt of British fury when in 1941 their financial transactions were impeded because the British suspected some pro-German connection. The Lutherans pleaded that they had operated in India for almost a century and had maintained strictly apolitical policies. The British were evasive in their diplomatic correspondence with their American counterparts and generally looked for scapegoats, either by blaming the India Office for mishandling or accusing the Lutheran press in Philadelphia of carrying anti-British material.³⁵ However, the issue of the financial ban was personally taken up by Secretary Cordell Hull with Lord Halifax, the British ambassador and a former viceroy. Such incidents of discrimination and incrimination of the American missionaries increased anti-British and pro-Indian feelings among concerned Americans.

Some American missionaries assumed additional responsibilities as strategists and advisers to the US government, more so after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Dr Frank Laubach, a leader of the World Literacy Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and a recent traveller to India, had predicted an imminent Japanese attack on India and suggested a rapprochement with Gandhi and Nehru to intensify the war efforts. He suggested the establishment of an interim national government in the subcontinent through conciliatory British ventures, so as to allow 500,000

Chinese soldiers to use Assam as a front against the would-be Japanese incursion.³⁶ Similarly, in 1942, the American Round Table on India was created, an organisation 'to promote the development of an informal opinion on India and its relation to the war efforts of the United Nations'. It recommended reconciliation among the various parties involved in the stalemate, under an American initiative, on the ground that it would lead to well-coordinated and concerted war efforts. The American Round Table was predominantly a church-based organisation and included amongst others the following notables: Revd Roscoe T. Foust, Revd Raymond Cunningham, Revd James A. Mitchell, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Bishop A. J. Walls, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, Adam Clayton Power Jun. and Dr Reinhold Niebuhr.³⁷

A limited number of American academics also showed their concern over British rigidity and tried to persuade FDR to put pressure on Prime Minister Churchill to grant dominion status to the subcontinent. A Professor of Philosophy from Arkansas asked FDR to remind the British of their moral commitment to the 360 million Indian people who had their own political history and centuries of literary and artistic achievements to their credit. The State Department replied evasively that the USA strictly 'adhered to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states'.³⁸ Ninety-nine students from Ohio's Miami University sent a petition to Secretary of State Hull asking the State Department to mediate between British and Indian politicians and to seek support from China and the Soviet Union. In another attempt, a few prominent faculty members from the University of Chicago attempted to persuade the State Department to intervene in the Indian conflict on the side of the INC. Professor T. P. Sinha, a representative of the Congress, approached Professor Malcolm Sharp with a request to help arrange a meeting with a State Department strategist. Dr Sharp referred him to Professor Carl J. Friedrich in New York who organised a meeting between Assistant Secretary of State Berle and T. P. Sinha. They met in early 1941 and Sinha assured the Congress party's cooperation with the British in the war on condition that the Congress leaders were freed from gaol. FDR was to initiate the mediation with Churchill through Lord Halifax, the new British ambassador to the United States. The meeting was followed by a memorandum 'India and the Present

War' signed by seven faculty members from the University of Chicago, who forwarded a copy of it to Ambassador Winant in London accompanied by an appeal from Sinha.

Another meeting took place between Sinha and Assistant Secretary of State Berle in which the former reiterated his plea for American arbitration. Sinha tried to give a malignant portrayal of the Muslim role in South Asian politics. While representing a partisan Hindu view, Sinha attempted to present the Muslims of South Asia and the Near East as the stooges of Nazism, and thus sought American support for the Congress. He presented himself as an emissary of the Indian National Congress, and operating as a cunning diplomat tried to gain American support for his party which, through its own strategic blunder, felt squeezed out of mainstream political events. Through American help Sinha sought to restore the Congress to its old glory, at the expense of the Muslims and the League. Ironically, he overlooked the millions of Muslims fighting the war for the Allies. Sinha also urged Berle to invite Jawaharlal Nehru to America as 'a true representative of India in the United States'. Berle, however, wisely refused to make any pledge on such a sensitive issue and met Sinha again in 1943 – though the meetings all proved inconclusive.³⁹

Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles received similar petitions from the American Defense Harvard Group led by Ralph Barton Perry, who accused the State Department of siding with the British. The group was bitterly critical of the State Department for turning a deaf ear to Indian nationalism. When Welles replied through press statements they were somehow misreported in the South Asian press, much to the discomfort of Ambassador William Phillips in Delhi. The group, comprising distinguished academics like Arthur M. Schlesinger Jun., Carl J. Friedrich and Talcott Parsons, kept up its pressure on the State Department to take a non-evasive stand on the future of the subcontinent. In addition, a few other Americans such as Kate A. Mitchell, Drew Pearson, Louis Fischer, Pearl Buck and liberals like Roger Baldwin openly supported the cause of independence.

The Indian question raised race-related issues in connection with American society. While writers like Tagore and Lajpat Rai were critical of the racism faced by Afro-Americans, some Americans tried to find a parallel in the treatment of the South Asians

by the Raj.⁴⁰ In the 1940s many Americans were naïvely aware of the criticism levelled against them from across the Atlantic and the Pacific over the sub-human treatment of Afro-Americans. In the era before the civil rights movement, many Afro-Asian élites were aware of the plight of the Afro-Americans and sympathised with them. Such individuals, despite their western upbringing, represented strong anti-colonial organisations which denounced racism as an integral part of western imperialism. Their own struggle against European colonialism synchronised with the grievances of minorities in a plural yet WASP-dominated American society. South Asians had already been barred from entry into the USA and the small number settled in North America did not enjoy any citizenry rights till well after the Second World War. Tagore, Rai, Gandhi, Nehru, and South Asians settled in the United States felt uneasy about this.⁴¹ Similarly, the British government could not be reminded of her 'moral obligations' toward her colonies without incurring a retort in return. This situation added to American official hesitancy in taking a more assertive stand against European colonialism, though FDR had personally committed himself to the eventual independence of the Philippines.

Urban-based American ethnic interest in the political affairs of the subcontinent came first from groups like the Irish-Americans and later from Afro-Americans. On the whole, New Yorkers took the lead in pressing the US government to take up the issue with its British counterpart. Harlem, the social and spiritual centre of the Afro-Americans, had witnessed a growing political awareness of national and international affairs among the generations of Afro-Americans imbued with a new activism. The Black Muslim Movement began in Detroit, but found most of its adherents in Harlem, which had the largest urban concentration of blacks outside Africa. In the wake of the great migration, Harlem had become the focal point for the political, literary and cultural resurgence of Black America. W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Langston Hughes and Elijah Muhammad represented a new generation of Afro-Americans challenging the erstwhile docile policies of Booker T. Washington. The jazz age had seen the birth of the 'new negros' who confidently demanded their rights and expressed their opinion rather more assertively from the platforms of the NAACP and Back to Africa Movement. In the 1940s, there were still more vocal Harlem-based

organisations, such as the Harlem Young Communists who advocated the abolition of the British Raj in the subcontinent.⁴²

The NAACP took up the issue of South Asian independence through its secretary, Walter White, who met Lord Halifax in 1942. White believed that South Asian cooperation in the war had become an urgent need because of the Japanese victories in the Far East. To him, both China and India figured very prominently in the defence strategy of the Allies as their fall could mean defeat for the United Nations. Halifax agreed with White on the delicacy of the situation, but made no final assurance on the future of the subcontinent. White sought a meeting with Under-Secretary of State Welles through Eleanor Roosevelt and suggested the formation of an American commission to be sent to the subcontinent to demonstrate American goodwill towards the South Asians. Walter White further recommended that the presidential commission must have at least one black American along with Republican Wendell Willkie and Justice Felix Frankfurter. White, in his earlier meeting with Halifax, had explored the possibility of sending a three-member American commission to the subcontinent, to which the latter had expressed his willingness.⁴³ White had insisted on sending an Afro-American on the commission since he believed that the American blacks were frequently referred to in the South Asian press. In their broadcasts to South and South-eastern Asia the Japanese made the condition of American blacks a main propaganda item against the United States. The US Department of State was not enthusiastic about sending such an American mission and did not agree with White about India's concern for the American blacks. Welles, basing his arguments on a memorandum prepared by political adviser Murray, suggested to Secretary of State Hull that it was 'not an appropriate moment for any individual effort of this character to be undertaken by the United States, and that the composition of the proposed mission . . . would not be conducive to favorable results in India on account of well-recognized racial prejudices on the part of Indian leaders themselves.'⁴⁴ It is interesting that the State Department did not have a high opinion of race relations in the subcontinent and that stereotypes already in currency had influenced its attitude toward the Indian stalemate.

Walter White also proposed another more direct American initiative to bring about the resolution of the Indian crisis. He

suggested that FDR should convene a meeting somewhere in the Pacific inviting Churchill, Nehru, Azad, Gandhi, Chiang Kai-shek and Rajgopalachari to deliberate on a 'Pacific Charter' along the lines of the Atlantic Charter. White further recommended that such a meeting should be preceded by an informal statement to this effect by FDR in his routine fireside chats. Such an American attempt at arbitration, White believed, would not only help the Allies in their war aims but would also lead to healthy black-white relations. He did not agree with the reservations of the State Department about the idea and composition of the commission and sided with the Indians on the issue of race relations in the subcontinent. He pursued the State Department to take up either of his proposals with FDR, but eventually received a curt reply telling him to carry on the discussion with competent individuals in the field.

The interest shown by the NAACP in the constitutional deadlock prevailing in the subcontinent pinpoints its concern for colonised people during the war, for whom the Atlantic Charter had raised new hopes. It also indicates the undue hesitation on the part of the State Department to assume any kind of role that could eventually have hastened the resolution of the deadlock. Such concern over race-related issues, at a time when even Lord Halifax, the British ambassador to the USA, had welcomed White's proposal, seems to have been quite unwarranted.

In the 1940s the South Asian expatriate community in the USA became more vocal in denunciation of the Raj. Placing great hopes on American constitutional traditions, a number of South Asian-Americans engaged in lobbying for the independence of the subcontinent. They tried to court the favour of US congressmen, the presidency and State Department and were greatly supported by a number of Americans from academia, the press,⁴⁵ political circles and missionary organisations. The American press carried frequent items of general interest dealing with the subcontinent during the war and more so after the landing of the American troops in South Asia. To a number of Americans admiration of Gandhi was almost a cult and, to a large extent, he personified the Indian National Congress at the expense of Nehru, Azad, Patel or Jinnah, Ispahani and Liaquat Ali Khan of the Muslim League. The All-India Muslim League (AIML) was an unknown entity for the average American for a long period of time. On the whole, the Congress was the only

familiar name and largely through an ascetic and charismatic figure like Gandhi and to a limited extent through Nehru. Thus, the idea of 'Pakistan' as the Muslim creed in the subcontinent was not familiar in America. Moreover, the South Asian community in North America mainly consisted of Hindus and representation of the Muslim League was minimal. Given the traditional American lack of interest in a distant, colonised, not-so-vital region – both commercially and politically from the US viewpoint – the intricate South Asian political-ideological realities remained largely alien and unknown.

South Asian expatriates in the USA were small in number and their scattered presence did not produce a feeling of harmony. Since the second decade of the twentieth century and particularly after 1924, strict immigration restrictions had deprived them of their right to US citizenship. Prejudice at both the private and public level added to the dismal experience of the small community. The Ghadr experiences had made it clear that it was through non-offensive lobbying that South Asians could make Americans more politically conscious of the subcontinent. In the 1940s, South Asians in the United States were directing their energies towards (a) the restoration of their right to US citizenship, and (b) increased American interest in the political affairs of the subcontinent. There were a number of groups and individuals engaged in lobbying, publishing or petitioning in order to achieve the two objectives.

South Asians in the USA at the beginning of the Second World War could be grouped into three categories – visitors, academics and farmers. The visitors were usually from the religious classes, along with a few native officials, while the academics included students and faculty members. Most of the faculty members actually went as students at a time when many contemporary South Asians were seeking admission in British universities.⁴⁶ The farmers, many from the Punjab, were the bulk of the community and lived on the Pacific Coast. Quite a few had been members of the Ghadr Party and thus maintained a prominent tradition in political activism. However, it was from the urban group of academics and businessmen that the leadership in ideas and organisational matters was provided. Taraknath Das provides an example of this. While pursuing his studies he was engaged in a number of activities on the Pacific Coast until he became implicated in the San Francisco trial. After his release

– with the help of Salindra Ghose, B. K. Roy and American sympathisers of the South Asian nationalists such as Roger Baldwin, Robert Lovett, Norman Thomas, Agnes Smedley and Eleanor Guy – Das established the Friends of Freedom of India to defend the former Ghadriles from deportation. After Das left for Washington DC to complete his doctoral studies at the Catholic University, Ghose established the India Freedom Foundation, functioning on the lines of Lajpat Rai's India Home League of America. Haridas Muzumdar, a chronicler of South Asian activists in the United States and himself a champion of India's freedom, came to the USA in 1920 after a brief stay in London where he was affiliated with the Indian National Congress. He was followed by Syud Hossain, a Muslim Congressite from Bombay and later the first Indian ambassador to Egypt. Both Muzumdar and Hossain had worked on the *Bombay Chronicle* and while in the USA they represented the INC on every available platform. During the Second World War, Hossain planned *The New Orient* to espouse Gandhian views on the subcontinent but lack of funds prevented the idea from being implemented. Soon after the war, Syud Hossain established the National Committee for India's Independence in Washington DC and acted as president with Dr Muzumdar and Dr Krishnalal Shridharani as vice-presidents. Dr Anup Singh, a prolific writer and pro-Congress nationalist in America, held the position of secretary. Hossain was 'polished in manners, brilliant in oratory . . . enjoyed living in style and always made the most favorable impression'.⁴⁷

By doing odd jobs in New York, Muzumdar was able to develop relations with other South Asian activists and their American sympathisers and also wrote a number of books on India. He later moved to Chicago to establish his Universal Publishing Company and brought out his *Gandhi The Apostle* in 1923 – a year before Rolland's biography of Gandhi. He pursued his doctoral training in sociology in the Midwest and returned to New York to publish more books on the subcontinent. On 26 January 1931, he led a caravan of South Asians and American sympathisers to Philadelphia, where by the Liberty Bell he read the Indian Declaration of Independence, originally drafted by Gandhi and announced by Nehru. Muzumdar toured the USA as an unofficial ambassador of good will from India and during the Second World War cooperated in a number of

activities with Shridharani, Hossain, Anup Singh and others. He was naturalised as a US citizen in July 1947.

Dr Anup Singh, held a Ph.D. from Harvard University, contributed articles to *Asia* and *Harper's Magazine*, and was encouraged to write a biography of Nehru by Richard J. Walsh of Day Publishing Company. In 1939, Singh produced his *Nehru: The Rising Star of India*, which 'overwhelmed the American public with its brilliance and human interest story'.⁴⁸ Dr Krishnalal Shridharani, a beneficiary of the *ashrams* established by Tagore and Gandhi, studied for his Ph.D. in sociology at Columbia University and submitted his dissertation 'War Without Violence' in 1939, emphasising Gandhian pacifism. His next book, *My India, My America* appearing in 1941 almost became a best-seller, and introduced the subcontinent to Americans in a more respectable way. Similarly, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab of The Caravan of East and West and editor of *The Bible of Mankind* sympathised with South Asian activists on the East Coast. Hamid Ghorri assisted Muzumdar in New York while another Muslim expatriate, T. H. K. Rezmie, a Pushtun living in New York, distributed South Asian political literature among the Americans. K. Y. Kira, J. Vijayatunga, Gobind Bihari Lal, Sunder Joshi and Dr Sundhindra Nath Bose were also South Asians in America with strong nationalist leanings. On the West Coast, organisations like the Khalsa Diwan Society, Muslim Students Association and Hindustan Students Association actively supported the cause of Indian freedom. Dr Aureng Shah and Dr Dalip Singh Saund had been known activists in California since the 1920s when the Ghadr Movement had become a thing of the past – though the South Asian farmers on the West Coast generously supported Indian revolutionaries like Mahendra Pratap even long after Barkatullah's death in Sacramento in 1927. Dr Saund had a Ph.D. from Berkeley and defended his native India in *My Mother India* which was published in 1930 under the auspices of the Khalsa Diwan Society of Stockton, California, in response to Mayo's *Mother India*. Saund's own autobiography, *Congressman From India*, which appeared in 1960, is a record of the historic struggle by South Asians for their right to US citizenship, through the Luce-Celler Bill of 1946. It is also the life-story of a Congressman from California who was the first Asian-American to be elected to the US Congress.⁴⁹

Organisations of South Asians were found mostly in New

York and Washington DC. The Hindustan Welfare Association came into existence in a Muslim restaurant in Harlem, with Mubarak Ali as president and Muzumdar the secretary. They presented before the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalisation a petition for the restoration of citizenship to South Asian immigrants. The Association worked in cooperation with the India Chamber of Commerce, India League of America and the National Committee. Along with Mubarak Ali, Hossain and Muzumdar, J. J. Singh made an impressive contribution to the introduction of the Luce-Celler Bill. Singh represented the India Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1937 by Magan S. Dave, N. R. Checker, S. S. Sarna and Singh as the moving spirit. J. J. Singh was a dealer in the cloth business in New York and president of the Chamber until he joined the India League of America in 1939. Magan S. Dave, a New York-based jeweller, succeeded Singh as the president of the Chamber and held the office for the next twelve years. The India League of America was the result of the joint efforts of Hossain, Anup Singh, Muzumdar and Shridharani and had the support of leading American Bahais who allowed it to hold its sessions in their Caravan Hall. The League, with N. R. Checker as its founding president, worked on the lines of a sister organisation in London under V. K. Krishna Menon. When Singh succeeded Checker, he activated the League and introduced the *India Bulletin* as its official publication. He engaged Anup Singh and Muzumdar for lecturing and publications and sought the goodwill of influential Americans like William D. Allen. After a long and successful career in the United States, J. J. Singh – who was a personal friend of Nehru – wound up his business and left for India in 1959. After independence, activists such as Shridharani, J. J. Singh, Syud Hossain, Anup Singh and Muzumdar opted to go to India where they assumed important positions in the young republic.

These individuals and the organisations they represented did their utmost to raise American political awareness of the sub-continent. However, they confronted obstacles, such as the geographical distance between the two regions, limited direct bilateral channels in commerce and media, an almost invisible and scattered South Asian immigrant community and a host of stereotypes. Moreover, the American media depended on its British counterpart for information about the colonised world

and the British government saw to it that, during the war years, the Americans received information from them.⁵⁰ Generally, the few concerned Americans supported the viewpoint of the INC and the League's viewpoint was not well known. The struggle for Pakistan did not have many supporters in the USA, due to the fact that the South Asian-American community did not include many Muslim members at the time and knowledge about Islam was very limited in the USA. Moreover, the idea of 'Pakistan' was a recent development in the international context. Most Americans, living in an isolationist society, had not been exposed to this definition and articulation of the Muslim political creed in the subcontinent.

3 America Encounters the Subcontinent: Bilateralism and Tripolar Diplomacy

The evolution of the Muslim League's Lahore resolution of 1940 to become the creed of Muslim nationalism in the subcontinent coincided with unprecedented and rapid developments in the West. In Europe the Nazis were occupying one state after another, the United Kingdom was in a very precarious situation and America was moving quickly toward active involvement on the side of the Allies – forsaking her early postures of 'neutrality' and 'isolationism'. Pro-British sentiments increased in the USA and Roosevelt vigorously prepared the nation for more open involvement. Japanese exploits in the Far East at the expense of the Allies made Asia the second most vital war theatre for America, which had many possessions and interests in the Pacific from Hawaii to the Philippines. In addition to these strategic interests, FDR had a sentimental attachment to China where the Americans had the largest missionary enterprise and visible economic interests.¹ In such a geo-political situation, Britain and her empire in the subcontinent received prompt attention from the White House, State Department, Pentagon and other defence-related agencies. American 'political' interest in the subcontinent arose largely from geo-strategic factors, although other factors played some part. Official interest in the internal situation of the subcontinent was a natural outcome of America's global perspective, yet it was formal, restrained, indirect and non-assertive and caused no embarrassment to Churchill or Linlithgow – even after the signing of the Atlantic Charter. Subsequently, a more visible increase in the American military presence in the subcontinent, her involvement in the nearby region and a more pivotal American role in the war raised new hopes among the South Asian nationalists. However, they were quickly disappointed by the US reluctance to assume an assertive role on the side of the nationalists.

FDR's main preoccupation in the pre-1940 years was to build up the US economy through the New Deal and to raise the

nation's morale by a number of steps, including his famous fire-side chats. In other words, he did not take a strong position on nationalism *vis-à-vis* European colonialism and stood aloof from such international issues. Culturally and economically, the USA in the 1930s looked toward Western Europe but avoided undertaking any responsibility that could embroil it in a ideological and strategic polarisation.² Setting their own house in order was the main concern of FDR and his administration. Because of his physical disability, he avoided travelling even within the USA, and left this to his wife and other colleagues.³ He depended heavily on the feedback from his advisers, ambassadors and colleagues, and made extensive use of a cooperative Congress, receptive media and personal charisma in the formulation and promulgation of his policies. FDR viewed the totalitarianism of Germany, Japan and Italy as a great threat to American security and felt an obligation to help the United Kingdom in her ordeal. Thus, whenever pressure was exerted on him from inside or outside the USA to take a stand against British colonialism, he withstood it and avoided openly denouncing the imperial policies of the British.

Despite this ambiguous foreign policy, FDR had realised long before the war that the United States would have to play a decisive role in subsequent developments in Europe as an ally of Britain. His ambassador to Britain, Robert W. Bingham, had already informed him in 1937 that the British, for their own geo-political reasons, regarded America as 'the great democratic country of the West' and 'the frontier of democracy'.⁴ This British pressure enlisted American aid, in men and material, for the approaching war. Bingham's successor in London, Joseph Kennedy, had warned the president in 1939 that the United Kingdom was fighting for her own possessions and that 'England never will be the England that she was and no one can help her to be.' He further cautioned FDR to take a more realistic stand in view of America's own future interests as a global power: 'But, whatever we do or don't do, we shall have to face it. Neither we nor any other power can recreate what has disappeared, and the leadership of the English-speaking world will, willy-nilly, be ours.'⁵ Eleanor Roosevelt showed a keen interest in the stalemate in the subcontinent and tried to probe FDR on it, particularly after the Atlantic Charter. Many South Asian nationalists and their foreign sympathisers tried to

approach Eleanor Roosevelt, requesting her to use her offices to persuade FDR to take a strong position on the side of the nationalists. When FDR returned after signing the Atlantic Charter, the First Lady, in reference to a letter received from an English woman, sought his opinion *vis-à-vis* the Indian deadlock: 'F.D.R. what is your feeling?' He responded rather ambiguously to this: 'I cannot have probable feelings on India.'⁶ FDR refused to be committed even when distinguished writers like Pearl Buck tried to probe him about his feelings towards Indian freedom and the imprisonment of Nehru. She had questioned the British claims to be championing democracy when this was denied to the South Asians: 'I assure you it confuses the minds and chills the hearts of many who long to see the cause of democracy clear and unimpeachable, so that they give themselves to it wholly.' In his reply FDR expressed his 'real interest' in the resolution of the Indian question along with his own 'ability' to convince Churchill of its urgency.⁷

Until the mid-1930s the US Department of State received routine dispatches from its consulates in the subcontinent, which casually touched upon political realities and personalities. Given the fact that it was not a priority region for the USA at this period, more frequent and analytical reports were not requested from American diplomats in the region. The American government was not interested in playing any kind of role in the subcontinent, so whatever was reported to Washington was filed in the records without being sent to the highest-ranking officials in the State Department or the White House.⁸ It was Wallace Murray, chief of the Near Eastern Division in the State Department, who in 1937 suggested to J. C. White, the US consul-general in Calcutta, that more regular reports should be submitted on the political developments in the subcontinent. White did not believe this was necessary for to him American relations with the region were basically in the missionary, cultural and economic spheres – thus obviating the need for political reports. Murray, however, insisted on knowing the future of 'India's teeming millions' and their strategy 'to work it out'. Again, White was reluctant: 'As long as our missionaries are able to continue their work of teaching, curing and enlightenment . . . and as long as we can sell goods the political events in India seem to me of very secondary importance from our point of view.'⁹

However, increased economic activity between the USA and

the subcontinent accompanied more frequent reporting on Indian internal affairs by the American consuls stationed there. For instance, on an inquiry by the State Department about the probable response of the South Asian political parties in the event 'of a general European war', the US counsel-in-charge at Calcutta observed in his dispatch: 'Opinion in Calcutta is to the effect that the conservative element in Congress would support but only on the immediate fulfillment of promises which would be exacted leading to greater self-government [of] a full Dominion status. The left wing of the Congress it is expected might endeavour to cause disturbances but these it is felt would not be long lived . . . The Moslem League has offered its support as has the Premier [*sic*] of the Punjab from which Moslem province over 70% of the Indian army is recruited.' It was further observed that in the case of an emergency there would be no special problems regarding the protection of American citizens in the subcontinent.¹⁰ White, the US consul-general, added further information in a telegraph from Simla:

Reply to the Department's circular. India to take (omission?) participation which is likely to consist of supplies more than of troops, may be jeopardized by subversive Nationalist activity and possibly Japanese submarines, et cetera. Nationalists confident war will effect rapid autonomy. Congress Party leaders plan of action not known, they do not have the support of either Moslems or Princes. Troops loyal to the Government of India which is confident of maintaining order. If advisable constitution will be suspended in disloyal provinces.

In the last war high price of raw materials brought prosperity in which American business shared. I foresee no special difficulties for American citizens except suspected Germanophiles.¹¹

FDR's cabinet in 1940–41 mainly consisted of the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau; the Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, and the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson. Except Hull, no other secretary showed any open interest in the Indian crisis or expressed any views on its 'hows' and 'whys'. They were not usually concerned with such foreign affairs and worked in close cooperation with the president, who had his own personal style of conducting business – as any other powerful executive in US history. FDR

expected conformity and loyalty from his cabinet, which placed Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, in a difficult situation. While he was careful to avoid taking sides with the South Asian nationalists despite some suggestions to that effect from his subordinates in the department, the priority of maintaining the Anglo-American alliance made him appear as an advocate of the status quo in the British empire in the subcontinent.

Cordell Hull, born in 1871 in Overton, Tennessee, initially became a lawyer and then decided to stand for the state legislature. He led an infantry brigade during the Spanish-American war and in 1906 was elected to the US House of Representatives, where he served until 1931, with a brief intermission in 1921-3. In Congress, Hull established himself as an expert on fiscal matters and in 1913 he sponsored Federal Income Tax Legislation. From 1921 to 1924, Hull was the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. He was elected to the Senate in 1930 but resigned from his seat in 1933 to become the Secretary of State, an office that he held until 1944, when he resigned on health grounds.¹² During his tenure as the head of the State Department, Hull firmly supported the Trade Agreement Act of 1934 and campaigned for the cancellation of the Platt Amendment which gave the USA the right to intervene in Cuba. As an avowed New Dealer, he supported FDR's policies and advocated the cause of stronger ties with Britain. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, he worked hard for closer cooperation with the British and became an ardent supporter of the United Nations. It was due to his pioneering efforts for the United Nations that he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1945.

Secretary Hull, with a long and active career as a southern legislator, fiscal expert and diplomat was respected by FDR, though Hull had his own limitations on foreign policy issues. According to Venkataramani and Shrivastava, he was merely a 'front man' for FDR, who 'treated him, in public and private, with deference, appreciative of the service that Hull performed by presenting before Congress and the public the image of a rugged, honest, no-nonsense American, serving as the vigilant watchdog of the nation's interests.'¹³ Undoubtedly, Sumner Welles, the Under-Secretary of State was a closer confidant of FDR since they had been friends from childhood. Hull was not

included in the president's entourage to the Atlantic summit, neither was he informed of the place where the meeting took place between FDR and Churchill.¹⁴ Despite this presidential preference for Welles over Hull, the Secretary of State faithfully served both FDR and Truman through the turbulent war-years. In his book *America and Swaraj*, A. Guy Hope tried to come to the rescue of Hull by suggesting that he, like other top US functionaries, was 'particularly torn between what his political intuition told him was the right course for Asia and the exigencies of the Anglo-American alliance'.¹⁵ In the minutes prepared by Hull in August 1942 for FDR in response to deputy prime minister Clement Attlee's message (to which he suggested 'no response'), he went over the early US efforts for 'a mutually satisfactory settlement' between the British and the nationalists.¹⁶ Similarly, in a telegram to William Phillips, the personal envoy of FDR to the subcontinent, Hull outlined US official policy on the region and keeping in mind the accusation of 'inactivity' on the part of the administration observed: 'In the light of the foregoing, I think it can be truthfully said that with respect to the British-Indian relationship, the President and I have given constant attention to the most difficult question, that is the freedom of India, and we have observed all developments from week to week and endeavored to give the fullest attention feasible to the situation.'¹⁷

As mentioned earlier, Sumner Welles enjoyed a less formal friendship with FDR – much to the consternation of Hull. Welles (1892–1961) was a generation younger than Hull, a native New Yorker who attended Groton and Harvard before joining the US Foreign Service in 1915 where he soon became an expert on Latin America. He served as Assistant Secretary of State in 1933–7 and helped FDR in the formulation of the Good Neighbor Policy towards South America. In 1937–43, he worked as Deputy Secretary of State, and, as a confidant of the president, attended the summit in August 1941 held on a ship off Newfoundland. Earlier, in 1940, he had been sent to Europe on a fact-finding mission and became a supporter of the Allies. He left the State Department in 1943 because of policy differences with Hull and pursued a career of journalist and author. While in office, he was never forthcoming in his views against imperialism. After his resignation, he favoured the early resolution of the

Indian deadlock, but rebuked the 'ultraliberals', who were asking for an immediate British decision on freedom, and also criticised British 'diehardism'.¹⁸

Adolph A. Berle Jun. (1895-1971), Assistant Secretary of State in the Roosevelt administration and subsequently adviser to Truman, Kennedy and Johnson was a Bostonian and a graduate from Harvard Law School. After a brief career as a military intelligence officer during the First World War, Berle participated in the Paris Peace Conference as a member of the American delegation. During the 1920s, he taught corporate law at Columbia University where through his articles he commended official regulation of business. His advocacy of public intervention in the economy led FDR to take him into his administration, where he was able to win the confidence of the president and become one of his brains trust. FDR appointed him as Assistant Secretary in the State Department in 1938, an office that he held until 1944. During the Second World War, Berle was largely instrumental in winning Latin American support for America's war efforts. Unlike his immediate bosses in the State Department, he was more vocal in his views on Dominion status for the subcontinent. He believed that the war situation in the Near East and the Far East demanded that the American Government push for 'a provisional settlement of the Indian problem'. In 1941, he suggested to his superiors that the president should make the British realise the urgency of equal partnership for colonised peoples on the side of the Allies. He further recommended that a full-fledged direct ambassadorial relationship be established between the USA and India. However, he did not make any headway against the cautious policy of Hull.¹⁹ A few days later, Berle forwarded another memorandum to Hull from the Near Eastern Division, suggesting the declaration of Dominion status for India. In his own comments he expressed his apprehensions that the deteriorating situation in the subcontinent would affect the Allies' war stance because of 'the extreme conservative policy of old-fashioned imperialism towards India maintained by Churchill, by Halifax, and by Mr. Amery'. Hull replied in a handwritten note: 'Postpone for moment. But keep in mind. CH.'²⁰

In the order of protocol in the hierarchy of the State Department, Wallace Murray, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, was the official of most significance as the majority of

recommendations for American initiatives originated from his office. He showed some sympathy for the South Asian nationalists but was held back by official constraints, including the policy filtered down from his superiors in the department. Neither Berle nor Murray were in a position to push their viewpoint vigorously and were handicapped by the non-assertiveness of their seniors.

In addition to these notables in the US Foreign Service, FDR depended heavily on his advisers outside the regular departments who sometimes operated as his special emissaries. The most important was Harry Hopkins, who figured prominently in Anglo-American relations. Harry L. Hopkins was from Iowa and specialised in corporate law. He started as a paid social worker in New York for the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and, in 1924, he became the executive director of the New York Tuberculosis Association. Under FDR, who was then the Governor of New York, Harry Hopkins rose to head the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration. Actually, it was Eleanor Roosevelt 'who brought to her husband's attention a hard-driving, militant social worker named Harry L. Hopkins, whom Roosevelt selected to head up the state's program of unemployment relief'.²¹ Due to his untiring efforts as an administrator, fund raiser and organiser Hopkins emerged as a close confidant of FDR. During his presidential campaign, Hopkins played a key role and once in the White House in 1933 the president appointed him as the Federal Emergency Relief Administrator. Here, Hopkins came very close to FDR, as even Eleanor Roosevelt opted to work for the Relief Administration under him. By 1940, Hopkins was FDR's closest aide – dealing with national as well as international issues.²² Hopkins had rivals in Washington, but Eleanor Roosevelt strengthened both his image and stature in the White House.²³ She 'had arranged occasions for the President to get to know him by having him and his wife Barbara, of whom Eleanor was very fond, visit Hyde Park and Campobello when the President was there. He was flattered by her constant calls.'²⁴ Harry Hopkins did not enjoy good health in the late-1930s, particularly after the death of his first wife. In 1939, he almost collapsed and was hospitalised for a long period. After leaving hospital he was confined to his house in Georgetown for a further eight months when Eleanor Roosevelt kept him posted with all the latest news. Hopkins thought of

running for the presidency though Eleanor Roosevelt tried to dissuade him. Finally, the Roosevelts invited the ailing Hopkins to a dinner at the White House in May, 1940, when 'Roosevelt prevailed upon him to stay overnight. He remained, living in what had been Lincoln's study, for three and a half years.'²⁵ Harry Hopkins became the president's man by switching his loyalties from Eleanor Roosevelt. He masterminded FDR's presidential campaign in 1940 and subsequently undertook many other important assignments. He became the favourite of FDR who 'found some of the companionship and loyalty Louis [Howe] had given him, but not the political wisdom and careful analysis of each situation'.²⁶ Harry Hopkins was more of a liberal in his outlook and very outgoing in his dress and socialising, a fact that annoyed Eleanor Roosevelt, who feared that such a life-style might encourage the 'playboy' in FDR. Increasingly, she 'found in Harry an adversary and critic. And the vestigial puritan in her identified the shift in Harry's point of view with his taste for the elegant life and smart society – the parties on Long Island, the race tracks, the night clubs.'²⁷

Unlike Eleanor Roosevelt, Harry Hopkins did not have sufficient exposure to contemporary world politics. He did not hold any specific views on international conflicts, colonialism and nationalism – he was just a loyal 'jobman' for FDR.²⁸ It was Hopkins who managed the third-term nomination for FDR in 1940 at the Chicago convention. FDR always defended Hopkins – for instance, during a conversation with Wendell Willkie, FDR once described Hopkins as somebody 'who asks for nothing except to serve you'.²⁹ Hopkins was sent by FDR as a trustworthy envoy to Churchill and Stalin but he never went to the extent of moving or annoying his hosts with his personal views on the future of the colonised world. As he himself put it, he was 'the office boy' who by frequently replacing the career diplomats and bureaucrats on such missions became the target of their jealousy.³⁰

BILATERALISM BEGINS

When Europe came to the brink of war, FDR quickly tried to allay the fears of the isolationists by assuring Americans of US neutrality in his famous 'quarantine speech' in Chicago. Never-

theless, he was fully conscious of the fact that America, one way or the other, would be dragged into a 'foreign war'. He condemned the fascist invasion of France in strong words and by late-1940 had entered into a 'destroyer deal' with Britain on a cash-and-carry basis. Subsequently, when Britain stated her inability to procure American weapons under the arrangement, FDR was able to prevail upon the Congress to approve the Lend-Lease Act in 1941, which aligned the USA with the Allies as 'the arsenal of democracy'. Such a close Anglo-American alliance without the USA formally declaring her entry into the war strengthened the British position. The American economy received a boost due to the large demand for American goods, hardware and weapons and this gradually decreased US isolation. The American government came into direct contact with the British government in the subcontinent and a sort of informal bilateralism was established. The issue of German-Americans stranded in the subcontinent,³¹ more frequent consular reporting on the war in the Far East as well as the political developments in the subcontinent all demanded the establishment of more formal and direct diplomatic channels between the USA and the subcontinent.

In fact, a new phase in bilateralism between the US government and the British government in India had already started in 1938, when R. C. Lindsay, the British ambassador in Washington wrote to Moffat, chief of the Division of European Affairs about the resumption of a treaty of commerce and navigation between the USA and India. In his letter he raised the issue of extending visas for a longer period for visiting Indian businessmen, in line with the treatment enjoyed by their American counterparts visiting India: 'As the law at present stands it is thus impossible for Indians to make a prolonged residence in this country to conduct business or carry on trade. The Government of India have been contrasting this position with the freedom enjoyed by American merchants and businessmen in India.' The ambassador hinted about the possibility of an Indo-USA treaty on the lines of a similar treaty already existing between Australia and the USA.³² In his reply Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, welcomed the idea of a commercial treaty 'to accomplish the dual objective of providing for the admission and sojourn of businessmen of each country in the territories of the other and of establishing modern sales relating to the treatment to be

accorded to the growing trade between the two countries'. Hull offered to submit a draft treaty for the approval of the Government of India,³³ which was welcomed by V. A. L. Mallet, the British chargé in Washington.³⁴ It was almost a year later when a draft consisting of eighteen clauses was sent to the British embassy stipulating the rules governing mutual trade and visa facilities for authorised merchants.³⁵ The negotiations lingered on and were superseded by the outbreak of war and the wave of agitation by the INC in the subcontinent.

The matter was again taken up by the Secretary of State with Lothian, the new British ambassador, a few months later when he expressed his willingness to revise and expand the draft of the Treaty of Establishment, Commerce, Navigation, and Consular Rights between the USA and India. As well as submitting as a model the text of a similar treaty already signed between Siam and the USA, the Secretary of State suggested a few amendments to be incorporated in the draft – such as the exemption of US and Indian nationals from military service in the territories of the other country. Another important amendment was suggested in paragraph I, article V which originally read as follows: 'Vessels of the United States of America shall enjoy in the United States of America the same treatment as national vessels or vessels of the most favored third country.' Moore, on behalf of Hull, and 'in the interest of precision and clarity' suggested the following text instead: 'Vessels of the United States of America shall enjoy in India and Indian vessels shall enjoy in the United States of America the same treatment as national vessels. In no case shall vessels of either country be accorded treatment less favourable than the vessels of the most favored third country.' The letter included three new terms regarding the inviolability of consular offices in each country, which were to be exempted from all kinds of taxation by the host country, and concluded on the note: 'While my Government desires to proceed to the conclusion of the treaty with India as soon as may be practicable, it is of the opinion that the time required for the negotiation of the three additional articles would not materially delay the successful negotiations.'³⁶

It seems that the matter dragged on endlessly through official dispatches and reports between the State Department and the British ambassador, the latter on behalf of the Government of India. Actually, it was the British ambassador who took up the

issue of visa restrictions governing Indian businessmen visiting the USA in view of the US Immigration Act of 1924 that had banned South Asians from acquiring American citizenship. American consular offices in the subcontinent had been reporting growing Indian resentment of this policy and, in order to safeguard American economic interests, the State Department proposed the treaty instead. Because of South Asian pressure from inside the USA as well from the subcontinent, the department felt it was pertinent to 'institutionalize' its commercial relations with India through such an official arrangement at a time when the British were in crucial need of American help. The British, for their part, tried to pacify the South Asians by sending a delegation to Washington headed by Sir Firoz Khan Noon, High Commissioner of the Government of India in London. Noon, a veteran Unionist from the Punjab, belonged to the landed aristocracy who held pro-British views in those days.³⁷ He was accompanied by W. H. Mathur of his office and Sir Neville Butler of the British embassy when he called on Wallace Murray of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs on 30 March 1941. According to Murray:

The purpose of the visit of Sir Firoz Khan, who arrived in the United States a little over a week ago, is to submit the proposals of the Government of India for changes in the draft. Although most of these proposals present only minor problems for which it is believed solutions can be found, two issues have been raised which concern matters relating to the general foreign policy of the Government.

Murray dwelt in detail on two issues raised by Noon: firstly, the clause dealing with the exploration of mineral resources in Baluchistan by the Americans and secondly, the definition of the 'Most-favored Nation Clause' in the light of the Anglo-American trade agreement of 1938.³⁸

In a similar memorandum based on his conversation with Firoz Khan Noon and his associates regarding the draft, Hawkins, the chief of the Division of Trade Agreements, was more explicit on the points already put by Murray. According to Hawkins, Firoz Khan wanted to expedite the conclusion of the treaty and explored the possibility of the American government granting Indian businessmen the status of 'treaty merchant' under the Immigration Act. However, he recorded the reluctance

of the British government, as expressed by Firoz Khan Noon, to grant exploratory rights to the American petroleum companies in Baluchistan – which they were keen to acquire after their successful ventures in Iran and Iraq. Although the American government, in line with American business interests, was pressing hard to acquire these rights in Baluchistan, Hawkins reported that Noon was:

less explicit with respect to the difficulties from India's standpoint but indicated that the granting of privileges for the exploitation of petroleum and other mineral resources, in Baluchistan, would be very difficult for the Government of India to accord and it is in this area that American interests particularly desire to operate. With respect to other parts of India he said there is nothing to interfere with American enterprise. Mr. Acheson pointed out that as matters now stand there is a notable absence of reciprocity as between British and American interests; that the British enjoy rights of exploitation in the United States and while reciprocal rights are accorded American citizens in the United Kingdom these rights are of little practical value, that in India, where opportunities for mineral development exist, American enterprise is excluded; and that accordingly he felt that American nationals in all fairness should be permitted to share with the British in India opportunities such as the British share with American nationals in this country.³⁹

The parleys at Washington continued inconclusively between the Noon delegation and the State Department, with Dean Acheson demanding British approval of American exploratory rights in Baluchistan. Firoz Khan Noon wanted a simpler trade treaty to be signed immediately, while his American counterparts requested more time to deliberate. Noon left for New York willing to resume negotiations if so desired and stayed on in the USA during the summer of 1941, when he remained in touch with the State Department.

In a letter to Lord Halifax in June, Sumner Welles expressed the American desire to resume the negotiations, emphasising the official interest in acquiring permission to carry on exploratory work in Baluchistan: 'This Government is of the opinion that the article concerning mineral resources is of considerable importance in the proposed treaty with India and requests that further

consideration be given to its inclusion as originally drafted.' He also raised the issue of British exclusion of the Indian States from the purview of the treaty and quoted from the original American draft stipulating: 'The present treaty shall apply on the part of India, to India, including the Indian States.' In conclusion, Welles also touched upon another important issue already under consideration by the three governments: 'It is understood that the Government of India would agree to the establishment of an American consular establishment at Delhi, such agreement to be in the form of an exchange of notes . . . In view of the substantial progress made in the negotiations hitherto conducted it is my hope that, despite the pressure of other problems, it may be possible to bring these negotiations to a speedy conclusion.'⁴⁰

Firoz Khan Noon, possibly with new directions from Delhi and London, visited the State Department on 30 June 1941, accompanied by Mathur of his office and met with M. L. Parker, Paul H. Alling and Harry R. Turkel 'to discuss matters pertaining to the proposed treaty between India and the United States'. He insisted that the American businessmen in India would be treated on a 'reciprocal' basis, whereas the department official preferred treatment on a 'most-favored-nation' basis. However, the meeting ended on a positive note as before his departure 'Noon indicated that he considered it probable that agreements on all points could be reached eventually and that prospects are good for the conclusion of a treaty embodying substantially the provisions desired by the Department.'⁴¹ The next day, he wrote a letter to Wallace Murray from Washington, DC expressing his 'great pleasure' at meeting 'your officers' who 'were keen that the USA citizens should have an equal treatment with the United Kingdom subjects. I am passing this information on to my own Government and I hope that before long the two countries will be able to come to a final decision.'⁴² A few months later, Dean Acheson, Assistant Secretary of State, forwarded the copy of Noon's letter to the British chargé, Campbell, in the capital, reiterating what had been discussed earlier by Parker and his colleagues with the Indian delegates. By then Firoz Khan Noon was back in the subcontinent having relinquished his position in London, and Acheson wanted the British embassy to pursue the issue with the Indian government,⁴³ which did not accord much importance to the treaty due to its own preoccupation with the war and agitation. It was more than a year later, that a letter

was received from the Indian Agency General stating that the Government of India, after very careful deliberations on the matter, 'are disposed to feel it wiser, in view of the changed situation in India, to defer the conclusion of the negotiations until conditions are more settled'.⁴⁴ It was left to the young sovereign states of India and Pakistan to conclude such bilateral trade agreements with the USA, though the volume of trade between the two regions registered a considerable increase all through the 1940s. However, the negotiations and diplomatic correspondence, as seen above, pinpoint US impatience for the conclusion of a trade treaty giving her exploratory rights in Baluchistan as well as within the Indian States on a preferential basis. The protracted parleys also demonstrate the traditional British hesitation about accepting all the American terms – given the Crown's own imperial interests and Churchill's obsession with keeping India quarantined from any outside influence which might add to the indigenous political activism.

AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AS A FACTOR

American missionaries operating in the subcontinent had been perhaps the most permanent and influential bi-cultural agents. They had undertaken a number of projects in education, translation, publication, health and evangelisation and established a number of orphanages and dispensaries. They left a host of writings on their life-time activities in the multi-national subcontinent and kept their mother organisations at home informed about India, her inhabitants and socio-cultural realities. On occasions, these missionaries wrote to the State Department directly on a number of issues, including the impact of certain American films on the Indian mind. They would suggest the export of certain films to South Asia in order to provide more accurate and healthier images of American society. Sometimes they resented British official restrictions on their movement to certain areas, particularly during sensitive times. The missionaries would take up issues like British visa and customs restrictions for missionary personnel and goods coming from the USA and would approach the department to intervene. In 1941, in response to such a petition submitted by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, Madison Avenue, New York, the Sec-

retary of State wrote a detailed letter to the American consul-general in Calcutta requesting him to make inquiries at his end with the British authorities. The missionary organisation requested that the 'shipments of certain types of medical and educational supplies made to its representatives in India and Burma be exempted from import control restrictive measures and prohibitions in view of the fact that they are financed entirely by American funds.' However, the Secretary of State felt that the British import control measures on medical supplies might be to conserve foreign exchange, with no provision exempting them from restriction even though they were mostly prepared by church women in the USA. Referring to the representation made by the biggest American missionary enterprise in the subcontinent, he advised Consul Wilson to 'ascertain from the appropriate local authorities what exemptions may be made with respect to importations by all American missionary organizations in India of supplies of this character which do not involve foreign exchange transactions, pointing out that such supplies represent the voluntary contribution of materials for use in philanthropic enterprises.'⁴⁵

Six weeks later, an exhaustive but very assertive letter urged the consul-general to persuade the Indian authorities to exempt the goods and equipment consigned to American missionary organisations, including educational, medical, and philanthropic institutions maintained by them. The directive dwelt on the philanthropic aspects of the missionary institutions for the benefit of the local people:

By making substantial contributions to the education and medical care of the people of India, the American people are rendering material assistance to the Government of India in meeting these social problems. It does not appear to be inopportune, therefore, to enquire as to the extent to which that Government may be willing to cooperate in facilitating the conduct of this philanthropic work through customs-duty exemptions.

Wilson was asked to submit the report of his negotiations with the local authorities on the issue and was provided with details of similar arrangements granted to the American missionaries in places like Egypt, Iran, Liberia, Palestine and Syria.⁴⁶ Similar directives on the subject were sent simultaneously to Austin C.

Brady, American consul in Rangoon. Consul T. M. Wilson held the discussions with the British authorities in India who finally agreed to grant customs exemptions to American missionary organisations.⁴⁷ R. J. Pringle, the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, communicated to Wilson the official willingness 'to sanction the issue of special licenses for such goods as may be imported by American Missionary Societies and philanthropic institutions . . . [involving] no transfer of foreign exchange'.⁴⁸ The organisations were asked to contact the Import Trade Controller to obtain the licences. However, things were not so simple as, true to its name the Indian bureaucracy soon began to resist allowing the free entry of importations of equipment and supplies consigned to American missionary organisations – so as not 'to destroy the integrity of the Tariff'. Wilson expressed his disappointment in a letter from New Delhi, where he had recently taken up his new upgraded position as the US Commissioner in India.⁴⁹

Another missionary-related issue taken up by the State Department in 1941 concerned the British ban on American Lutheran missionaries in India. The Board of Foreign Mission in the United Lutheran Church in America complained that the New York-based British Passport Office had refused visas to two of the Board's missionaries, Leila R. Van Deusen and Esther Eleanor Bacon on the grounds that visas were being denied to all Lutherans. The British suspected that the American Lutheran Church was an integral part of the German Lutheran Church and thus its members might be in sympathy with Germany. The two missionaries were native-born American citizens and had already served in Southern India. They belonged to the United Lutheran Church which had come into existence in the USA in 1820 and sent its pioneer missionaries to India in 1840. Cordell Hull expressed his concern over the denial of visas to the American Lutherans through a directive to Wilson,⁵⁰ while Adolf Berle Jun. took it up with Sir Ronald Campbell, the British chargé in Washington DC, stressing 'that blanket rulings of this kind would, I thought, if publicly known, create a painful impression'.⁵¹ Campbell was once again called to the department on 28 October 1941, to confer with Ray Atherton. According to the former, the ruling had been made by the India Office and not by the British Foreign Office and he promised to draw it to the attention of London as soon as possible. It was suggested that

Ambassador Winant might be requested to approach the Foreign Office in London.⁵² In the meantime, Hull asked Wilson to 'report by telegraph immediately on action taken with respect to alleged refusal of Government of India to grant visas to Lutheran missionaries'.⁵³ The next day, Hull sent a directive to Winant 'to inquire of the British authorities as to the present status of the case' and to 'report developments in the matter to the Department promptly by telegraph and continue to keep me advised. Time is important.'⁵⁴ He also took up the issue with Lord Halifax, the British ambassador, calling his attention to the discriminatory attitude taken either by the India Office or the Government of India against American citizens.⁵⁵ A day later, Hull received a letter from Halifax informing him of the British decision 'to withdraw the general ban on the admission of members of the American Lutheran Missionary societies into India'.⁵⁶

It was Ambassador Winant who made inquiries about the issue in London and henceforth kept Hull informed. According to him, and this was substantiated by Wilson from New Delhi, the ban was imposed on the Lutherans' entry into India because of the publication of an article entitled 'England's Wars' in the *Lutherischer Herald* in Philadelphia, on 24 October 1940. This had criticised British war policies and had been sent to the United Lutheran Church Mission in India. The British authorities in India not only took a serious view of the article, but also developed severe doubts about the American Lutherans. However, the way the State Department, and particularly Hull, pursued the issue reveals the strength of official American concern and the extent of missionary pressure on the department itself.

EXCHANGE OF ENVOYS

As the war intensified, US interest in South Asia as well as her volume of trade both increased considerably. The British, by 1941, were largely dependent on American war materials and awaiting a formal declaration from the United States about her imminent entry into the war at this crucial phase. American interests in the Far East were threatened by the Japanese, and this gave strength to British hopes. In the circumstances, the

British felt that their embassy in Washington DC should have an Indian official of the rank of a minister dealing with non-political aspects of US-South Asian relations. They agreed to accept the establishment of a similar American position in New Delhi to be designated as the US agent-general. In fact, the American government had long desired to have a more visible diplomatic representation in New Delhi, since having the consulate-general located in Calcutta caused numerous logistic and administrative problems – particularly during the summer when the Government of India moved its capital to Simla, further north in the Punjab. This annual practice caused unnecessary delays in communication between Calcutta-New Delhi-Calcutta-Washington. A brief *aide-mémoire* was sent from the British embassy to the Department of State in April 1941, proposing the designation of ‘the Agent General for India in the United States if the United States Government have no objection to this title. His function will be to advise the Embassy on Indian affairs and to deal with non-political questions in Indo-American relations.’ The brief message did not propose a similar arrangement in New Delhi for the US government.⁵⁷ The Secretary of State, in his response, welcomed the British idea of stationing an Indian official in Washington, but pointed out ‘the present inadequacy of American representation in India occasioned by the unwillingness of the Government of India to permit representatives of the Government of the United States to reside or to maintain offices in the capital city of Delhi’, a place quite far from Calcutta. He further observed:

At this time when India is assuming a position of increasing importance as a source of materials essential to the implementation of the coordinated programs of the Government of the United States for national defence and the extension of aid to the British Empire, it is considered a matter of regret that delays of this character should occur . . . The Secretary of State, therefore, proposes that an American Foreign Service Officer with the rank of Minister, to be designated by the title of either Commissioner or Diplomatic Agent of the United States of America, be permitted with secretarial and clerical members of his staff to reside and maintain offices in Delhi.⁵⁸

A month later, Halifax wrote to Welles informing him of the willingness of the Government of India to accept a US official

based in New Delhi, provided that he might be designated as agent-general rather than commissioner. It was also suggested that the proposed designation move remain confidential 'to avoid embarrassment' and without dismantling the consulate at Calcutta. The British ambassador forwarded the name of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, as the nominee of the Indian government for the position of agent-general in the USA. Then aged fifty, Bajpai was described as a member of the Indian Civil Service and of the Viceroy's executive council.⁵⁹ Apparently, the British were not only anxious but also very cautious about the new diplomatic channel. They wanted more say in the USA because of their own global interests but were reluctant to allow similar access to the Americans in Delhi. Lord Linlithgow's government was very sensitive to the Indian nationalist movements and, true to Churchill's desire, wanted to keep the foreign presence in the subcontinent to a minimum. The South Asian nationalists were optimistic about American moral and political support in their struggle against the Raj.

In his reply to Lord Halifax, Sumner Welles, on behalf of the State Department, accepted all the recommendations submitted by the British ambassador yet insisted on the designation of 'commissioner' instead of 'agent-general' – for constitutional reasons, since the latter entailed the necessity 'to seek congressional legislation'. The State Department suggested the simultaneous exchange of these new envoys and extended its acceptance of Bajpai as the Agent-General for India to the USA.⁶⁰ The Government of India eventually agreed to the American representative being styled as 'commissioner',⁶¹ and the State Department issued a press release on 21 July 1941, concerning the 'exchange of representatives on a reciprocal basis between the United States and India'. The statement formally announced the appointment of Bajpai in Washington, whereas the appointment of the American commissioner was to be made public a little later.⁶² The American administration floated the name of Wilson, US Consul-General in Calcutta to become the US Commissioner to India based in New Delhi with the rank of minister. Identical telegrams were sent simultaneously to Winant and Wilson to explore the reaction of the relevant British authorities to Wilson's nomination. Thomas M. Wilson, the commissioner for the USA, was 'to conduct the affairs of his post in a manner to foster the friendship which has so long subsisted'

between both the governments, in his capacity as the nominee of President Roosevelt.⁶³ Subsequently, perhaps on the advice of the British government, it was decided that Wilson and Bajpai would not present letters of credence, and the American commissioner would 'be provided with an informal letter of introduction addressed by the President to the Viceroy'.⁶⁴

The British government were aware that, after the declaration of the Atlantic Charter, the South Asian nationalists had great expectations that the USA would play a more assertive role in making the British government accede to their demands for independence. These nationalists and their sympathisers in the USA were banking on FDR to use his influence on Churchill to help resolve the Indian stalemate. At such a critical juncture, the British government would preempt any such move from whatever direction that could compel them to make a commitment on the future of India and other colonies. Lord Halifax used his charm as 'the old India hand' with his experience as 'the former liberal viceroy' and was determined to ward off any official American pressure regarding India. The Department of State remained largely non-committal and non-assertive on the subject of India, as did the president. For reasons of urgency the British had to accept Wilson in New Delhi – and even then with quite a degree of hesitation. They avoided publicity and the formal ceremonies which the occasion warranted, so as not to betray their own imperial interests. British efforts to proceed with a low-key profile were intended to give the impression that the exchange of these envoys was a 'routine' and 'administrative' matter between the two governments, so as not to threaten the status quo in India maintained by the Churchill–Amery–Linlithgow trio. The British feared that the designation of Wilson as a representative or an ambassador might amount to *de facto* American recognition of India as a separate country, if not nation-state. Consequently, the entire affair was played down with the unison of the Department of State.

Bajpai presented his credentials to the president in November 1941 with a letter of reference from Linlithgow expecting him 'to serve India at a time when her common interests with the United States are so great'.⁶⁵ Bajpai's arrival in the USA was welcomed by the *New York Times* in an editorial supporting Dominion status for India after the War.⁶⁶ He was received at the White House by FDR who, in his letter to Linlithgow,

expressed his pleasure at having 'with us a man of his distinguished attainments'.⁶⁷ Bajpai had been a very faithful bureaucrat, true to the loyal traditions of the Indian Civil Service, and from the British official viewpoint was quite dependable. His appointment to the USA came at a time when not only commercial and strategic dictates necessitated it, but also when there was an increased awareness among the American public about India. The appointment of an Indian could be presented as a hallmark of British egalitarianism to the American critics who, in view of the Atlantic Charter, sought British clarification on the future of the colonies. Bajpai, as his master's voice, was the best choice to forestall American criticism of the Raj. Similarly, the designation of Thomas Wilson as the American commissioner in New Delhi helped the US government *vis-à-vis* the growing pressure from certain American opinion groups advocating a more vocal official stand on the future of the subcontinent. Wilson, who had earlier served as consul in Sydney, Madras and Calcutta, was a non-obtrusive person who generally avoided taking strong positions on Indian political developments. His feedback came from the South Asian English press or through casual meetings with the British authorities. Following a very cautious and rather detached policy, he refrained from establishing contacts with South Asian political leaders and thus suited Linlithgow – with whom he enjoyed a personal friendship. In a way, he efficiently represented the aloofness of both Hull and Welles, notwithstanding the personal interest occasionally manifested by Berle and Murray. He was received by Linlithgow on 21 November 1941, and thus began a new phase in US–South Asian relations.

MURRAY, BERLE AND WINANT: TRIO IN ACTION

The popular nationalist demand of Dominion status for India during the war was, for many South Asian political groups, a precondition to supporting the British war effort. This demand had an echo in the State Department when Berle, in consultation with Murray, submitted his famous *aide-mémoire* of 5 May 1941, suggesting official American support for it. This was the time when the Roosevelt administration was formulating its foreign policy with clear support for the Allies. FDR had just begun the

third term of his presidency by making a policy statement before the Congress in January 1941, reiterating his support for Four Freedoms – which encouraged officials like Berle to suggest a more precise and coherent policy toward India. He felt that an agreement between Britain and the Indians through the good offices of the US government could lead to a quick realisation of the war objectives. His thought-provoking note was sent to Hull and Welles with a covering letter. Berle felt that the Indian problem was directly related to the geo-political dictates of the Near East and that in view of its internal situation:

India is contributing little to the present problem and if it remains in this status may well become an active danger to the whole situation in the not distant future. The British seem to be doing nothing about it . . . I think the question ought to be dealt with broadly. From all the information I could get, at least a provisional settlement of the Indian problem has to be got as a preface to getting any solid help, although the Indians in general realize that if the British Empire falls their next fate will be worse than their present fate.

The attached *Aide-Mémoire* indicates the line that I rather feel ought to be considered. If it seems sensational, all I can say is that this is no time for half-measures.

Mr. Wallace Murray and the Near Eastern Section are of the same mind.⁶⁸

The letter expressed the opinion of a group of State Department officials under Berle who felt that the deadlock was being perpetuated by the British much at the expense of their own strategic imperatives. Attached to the letter was a brief note written by Alling, assistant chief of the Near Eastern Division stating: 'I understand nothing is to be done on this and that Mr. Welles feels it would be undesirable to do anything which might upset the Indian apple cart at this critical juncture.'⁶⁹ The memorandum, prepared by Berle, read as follows:

The Government of the United States has been giving earnest thought to certain problems corollary to the joint effort in which this Government and His Majesty's Government are now engaged. Among the greatest of these problems must be included the part which may be played by the Indian Empire in the coming months.

It would seem that considerations of principle as well as of policy coverage to suggest that a solution be reached in respect of certain questions outstanding. India of necessity exerts a vast influence upon the affairs in the Middle East. Her status is of interest to all of the surrounding nations, and the degree to which and the methods by which she becomes integrated into a common cooperative effort of free peoples undeniably will affect the attitude of the Middle East countries.

Were there no other compelling reasons, it would suffice that India is a vast reservoir of manpower, and occupies a dominant position in supplying certain strategic war materials and that her resources permit the development of additional supplies which in certain contingencies might well prove crucial. Converted into an active, rather than a passive, partner in the attempt to preserve a system of free cooperation among nations, her participation might well become of first importance.

To that end the Government of the United States hopes that His Majesty's Government will promptly explore the possibility of bringing India into the partnership of nations on terms equal to the other members of the British Commonwealth. Were this to be done, the Government of the United States would consider favorably receiving a diplomatic mission in Washington representing India as then constituted, and making provision for like representation of the United States at India.

The Government of the United States disclaims any desire to intervene in the relations existing between His Majesty's Government and the Indian Empire, but feels it appropriate to point out that under existing circumstances it can express concern over the tangible results, in the light of a common effort, which the British policy in India in fact produces.

The pressure of events in the Middle East leads this Government to hope that the matter may be promptly considered. It believes that the more rapidly a settlement of certain outstanding questions there prevailing can be arrived at, the greater will be the accession of strength to our common interest.⁷⁰

Berle wanted to convert 'India into an active, rather than a passive, partner in the free cooperation among nations' and 'on

terms equal to the other members of the British Commonwealth' without US government interference in the imperial policies of the British government. Berle, unlike his tone in the accompanying letter, was not hard on the British though one can ascertain his dissatisfaction with the pace of developments in the subcontinent. His thoughtful *aide-mémoire* went almost unnoticed by his superiors since one finds no reaction either from Hull or Welles in the inter-departmental correspondence. Hull depended on Halifax for information as well as advice on the subcontinent.⁷¹

Ambassador Winant sent a telegram to Hull as well as to the White House, in which he gave an account of his recent discussions in London with Fraser, the prime minister of New Zealand, who, like the Australians, was deeply 'disturbed by the Japanese encroachments' and felt that the British should quickly arrange a defence agreement with the United States. In view of the prospective summit meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill, Winant felt that this matter would be raised with the US leadership, when 'it might permit a reference to India. I have thought for some time that the charge of imperialism against England in the United States largely focused on the Indian situation. This sentiment hinders support to Britain.' Suggesting the incorporation of 'a friendly India' with China in a united defence strategy, Winant felt that 'the future problem in the Far East' could be resolved. Referring to the oft-quoted British argument that the various minorities in India posed difficulties in securing an early agreement he continued:

the war period does not permit the time and attention necessary to solve the issue, but it is also true that failing to solve it disturbs large groups both within the British Empire and elsewhere in the world and handicaps the support of the war in India itself.

It might be possible at least to get agreement on the right of the Dominion status for India so as to eliminate that major issue now, while at the same time giving a further pledge to implement this status within a stated period following the cessation of hostilities.

To Winant, such a step on the part of the British government would 'have a sobering effect upon the Japanese'. Despite the fact that many members of the British War Cabinet seemed to

support the idea of granting Dominion status to India, yet 'the Prime Minister was opposed to taking action. Unless the idea was suggested by you. I doubt if this subject would again be pressed for further consideration.'⁷²

Winant's telegram proved to be a God-sent opportunity for Berle and Murray to suggest support for India's Dominion status. Attached to his memorandum to Welles, Berle sent a draft cable 'which might be sent to London if you think well of it'. He traced the early developments on the issue, particularly in the wake of correspondence about the exchange of envoys between Washington and New Delhi. Berle felt that a British declaration of Dominion status would be helpful from the point of view of American public opinion and it would not let the Germans or Russians take advantage of the prolonged crisis. Moreover, to Berle, it would strengthen the Allied position in the Far East, as a cooperative India with her 'developed resources and industries' in collaboration with Australia, New Zealand and China could build up a favourable war machine. 'Having ample manpower, political impetus would thus be given for the nucleus of a Far Eastern alliance capable of giving a good account of itself as against Japan, or possibly even Germany.'⁷³

The draft telegram submitted by Berle with the letter was not sent to Ambassador Winant in London. It acknowledged the basic points made by Winant in his telegram of 1 August 1941, in which a geo-strategic alliance of India, Australia and New Zealand had been suggested with the concurrence of the USA. Winant had suggested the granting of Dominion status to India by the British before such an arrangement could be worked out. While endorsing the stance put forward by Winant, the draft ended on a keynote point: 'The President and the Department believe that the time is favorable for proposing such a plan, and authorizes you to present it to the Prime Minister and to the Foreign Office.' When Sumner Welles was confronted with the letter and telegram prepared by Berle, he sent a memorandum to Hull asking for his 'very careful consideration to this suggestion'. Maintaining his cautious policy, however, he suggested that the USA 'is not warranted in suggesting officially to the British Government what the status of India should be, but were the President disposed to take the matter up I should imagine that he would wish to discuss it in a very personal and confidential way directly with Mr. Churchill'. To which Hull remarked in a

brief marginal notation: 'I agree – CH.'⁷⁴ Thus, the highest officials in the US Department of State were recommending a policy of no action–no reaction about India, though they were in favour of making India contribute more effectively to the war strategy. They were reluctant to take any initiative on their own, and left it to FDR to take up the issue secretly with Churchill. Such aloofness would hardly lead to any visible change, either in the department or the White House. With a disinterested leadership in the State Department, FDR would not be sufficiently backed up officially even if he did raise the Indian question in his meeting with the British prime minister.

THE ATLANTIC SUMMIT AND CHURCHILL'S STUBBORNNESS

Berle's memorandum and the draft of the telegram intended for Ambassador Winant did not reach FDR, as he had already left for the secret meeting with Churchill which eventually led to the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter. Curiously, Hull did not know about FDR's plans, who instead took Welles with him to the summit. As seen earlier, Welles (unlike Berle or Murray) did not feel at all strongly about the Indian situation – otherwise he could have used his good offices to convince both FDR and Hull to take a more decisive stand on the South Asian issue. FDR, along with his entourage, left on the *Augusta* on 3 August 1941, while Churchill and his advisers on board the *Prince of Wales* reached the meeting point off the coast of Newfoundland on 9 August. Churchill had had Harry Hopkins with him on his ship since it left the UK and had been using his charisma to win over the energetic Midwesterner. Churchill had for a long time been trying to have a meeting with FDR for geo-strategic and economic reasons – as such a summit would result in a closer Anglo-American relationship and cause worries among the Germans, Italians and Japanese, while encouraging the Allies. 'There was much business to be settled about American intervention in the Atlantic, aid to Russia, our own supplies and above all the increasing menace of Japan.'⁷⁵ In his letters, Churchill had expressed his earnest desire for such a meeting with FDR 'which may be of service to the future'.⁷⁶

While Churchill kept Hopkins spellbound by his charm and

engaged in playing backgammon, he prepared Sir Alexander Cadogan for a dialogue with Sumner Welles, who, as Halifax had put it, was 'all out to help'.⁷⁷ Churchill went over to the *Augusta* to greet FDR and the leaders had lunch together, when the discussion revolved around the US Navy being assigned the duty of patrolling in the Atlantic between the coastal United States and Ireland. It was at dinner that the suggestion for a formal joint proclamation came up for discussion. The statement was to highlight the war aims of the Allies besides making some promises for a new world order. Although Churchill already had a draft with him, he asked the Americans to prepare one of their own. The third point of Churchill's draft acknowledged 'the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live'. Welles, in his draft, put the clause exactly as it was in the British version, yet FDR made an addition in pencil on it which then read as follows:

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they live; and they hope that self-government would be restored to those from whom it has been forcefully removed.

A further modification in the American draft made the latter part read: 'and they wish to see self-government restored to those from whom it has been forcefully removed.' It was then Churchill's turn, and he suggested the addition of the two words 'sovereign rights' which finally made the text of the third clause read as follows:

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcefully deprived of them.

Both Churchill and FDR innocuously and in a state of some sentimentality committed themselves to something of far-reaching consequences for the entire colonial and colonised world. To Americans and many others the clause meant 'sovereign rights' for all peoples whereas for Churchill, as later events showed, they were meant only for those European countries like France and Poland which had fallen before the Nazis. Since it is not possible to have access to the entire proceedings of the Atlantic summit and what transpired between

the two leaders, it is difficult to ascertain what 'parameters' the Atlantic Charter carried in its implications. A frequently quoted source is Elliott Roosevelt, the son of FDR, who was present during the meeting at his father's side and later published his recollections in *As He Saw It* in 1946. According to Elliott Roosevelt, FDR had serious reservations about British imperialism and did not want 'to be simply a good-time Charlie who can be used to help the British out of a tight spot, and then be forgotten for ever'.⁷⁸ FDR did not want to support Britain in the war 'simply so that she will be able to continue to ride roughshod over colonial peoples'. However, there is no documentary evidence to prove that FDR really spoke to Churchill in those terms. Elliott Roosevelt claims that, in a meeting with Churchill, FDR had insisted that in order to achieve international and stable peace backward countries had also to be included in the process. When the question of self-determination for the subcontinent and other colonies arose, Churchill became infuriated:

'You mentioned India', the Prime Minister growled. Roosevelt: 'Yes, I can't believe that we can fight a war against fascist slavery and at the same time not work to free people all over the world from a backward colonial policy.' The President also asserted that peace must be based on the quality of all peoples. Churchill, however, admitted that eighteenth century colonialism was not compatible with the 20th century.⁷⁹

Churchill had no remorse about the third clause of the Atlantic Charter and always prided himself on being its original author. The eight-point Atlantic Charter formally announced on 14 August 1941, raised hopes among nationalists everywhere, and particularly in the subcontinent. In addition, American prestige increased to a greater extent with FDR becoming a symbol of hope for the colonised world. Every literate person knew that it was not merely a clarification of war objectives, it was the confirmation of America's entry into the war. However, Churchill, true to his conservative nature, came up with a new 'declaration' of his own in the House of Commons on 9 September 1941, in which he confirmed that the third clause in no way affected existing British policy in India. To him, the self-determination of 'Europe now under Nazi yoke' was all-important, whereas the British colonies were a 'quite separate' issue. He reiterated the August offer of the British government

for the subcontinent,⁸⁰ which dashed the hopes entertained by many South Asians and encouraged them to look to FDR to press his viewpoint on Churchill. Apparently, the president was not interested enough to be bogged down in these controversies, although there was a quick flurry of messages between Winant and the State Department and within the department itself. Both Winant and Murray took serious note of Churchill's speech in the House of Commons, while Hull and Welles remained as cautious and aloof as ever. In a very brief message Hull asked Winant about the significance of the London visit of the Burmese Prime Minister, U. Saw.⁸¹ In a detailed and very analytical response, Winant dwelt upon the Indian question in view of the policy statement by the British prime minister. He had received a copy of Churchill's speech and asked him to eliminate the paragraph which defined the Atlantic Charter as an arrangement intended only for Europe under Hitler. Winant met Churchill on 9 September, minutes before his speech and asked him to withdraw the paragraph since 'it would have little support here and elsewhere and would simply intensify charges of Imperialism and leave Great Britain in the position of "a do nothing policy" so far as India and Burma are concerned. He told me that a vote of the Cabinet was in support of that passage, and he took the position that it was a matter of internal British politics. I was not able to change his determination to use this section of his statement.' Winant felt that along with Churchill it was Leopold S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India and Burma, who 'had pressed the matter and the timing leads me to believe that not only because of questions in regard to the application of article 3 to India but also the request of the Burmese Prime Minister to come on here to discuss Burma's future policy were responsible for the statement.' The remaining part of Winant's telegram dealt with U Saw's disappointment over British policy toward his country and also touched upon his desire to visit the United States.⁸²

Inspired by Winant's telegram, Murray initiated another memorandum addressed to Hull, Welles and Berle, in which he expressed his concern over the implications of Churchill's statement of 9 September: 'It is to be expected that the attitude of the British Government, as expressed in Mr. Churchill's address to Parliament and by the nature of the reply to the inquiry of the Prime Minister of Burma, will have repercussions in India,

which may be of a serious character and which may serve to impede further India's contribution to the war.' Murray, in his note, reproduced Welles' memorandum of 6 August 1941, in response to Berle's *aide-mémoire*, so as to emphasise the extent of reaction to the prime minister's statement. Murray suggested that in view of the British interpretation of the Atlantic Charter and the forthcoming visit of the Burmese Prime Minister to the USA, there was a strong justification for 'an effort on the part of this Government to assist in solution of problems involved in the political status of India and Burma'. Murray felt that now was the time for Winant's letter to be presented to FDR so 'that a suggestion be made to the British Government to grant dominion status to India'. He emphasised his point by referring to the continuing deterioration in the Indian political situation.⁸³

Sumner Welles, in his rejoinder to Cordell Hull, disagreed with Murray's suggestions – stating that the US government was 'facing a question of expediency' in regard to the Indian problem. He praised British achievements in the subcontinent during a century of rule, and described the British civil service as a 'highest caliber organization'. He was basing his argument on the information provided to him by Lord Halifax – 'the most liberal viceroy that India has ever had' – who stressed that any change in the status of India would produce severe internal dissension. 'In other words, the immediate granting of dominion status would create a situation in India exactly the opposite of that which Mr. Murray and those who join him in their recommendation to you forecast.' Welles claimed that although he appreciated these sentiments it was unfortunate that the officials in the State Department were not sufficiently familiar with Indian realities and their judgements were therefore liable to be wrong.

In addition, he attacked the American sympathisers of the South Asian nationalists, whom he regarded as an anti-British minority of the American left belonging to the Communist Party, along with some Irish activists in the United States: 'I have never yet found that this issue meant very much to public opinion in general in the United States. For that reason it would not seem to me a matter which has immediate political significance so far as public opinion in the United States is concerned.' Welles cautioned against any venture at a time when the British were going through a very crucial phase, when such a step could

amount to taking advantage of their predicament. He recommended putting aside Murray's suggestion until such time as US national interests were directly involved in the issue.⁸⁴ Welles was thus able to prevail upon Hull by foiling Murray's initiative. Hull's assistant, Cecil W. Gray, sent a note to Murray which stated: 'The Secretary said he didn't care to send this out now, that, if you wished, you could take it up again with U [Under Secretary].'⁸⁵

Indian reactions to Churchill's statement were quite vocal and political leaders expressed dismay at the Prime Minister's exclusion of the subcontinent from the purview of the Atlantic Charter. Even the Council of State representing the Indian princely states debated the issue and passed a resolution of indignation on 18 November 1941, which found its way into some American newspapers. Accordingly, Hull sent a telegram to Wilson, the American commissioner in New Delhi, asking for a detailed analysis of the Indian reaction. Hull advised Wilson to report 'whether such reactions are likely to result in a further deterioration in the India [n] political situation prejudicial to India's contribution to the war'.⁸⁶ Wilson, typically, was not impressed by the reaction and found it 'to be inconsequential as Mr. Roosevelt's popularity and press in India are almost universally excellent from which it is reasonable to deduce that unfavorable criticism of the President is for the purpose of (1) keeping prominently before the world India's position and (2) to try to force from Mr. Roosevelt some sort of statement which might be construed as repudiation of the Prime Minister's statement of the inapplicability to India of the Atlantic Charter.' However, Wilson acknowledged 'that India does not consider herself as fighting in this war for India's interests as a nation and feels that she is being called upon to defend an Empire in which she is not received as an equal partner'. Finally, Wilson again allayed Hull's fears, if he had any, about a strong reaction from the South Asian political leadership or even the princes.⁸⁷

Clearly, American political interest in the subcontinent increased during 1941 and this was reflected in issues such as the negotiations for a trade treaty, the exchange of envoys in the capitals, the resolution of the American Lutheran missionaries' predicament and, most of all, the Atlantic Charter which gave added momentum to South Asian nationalist movements. The South Asian political leaders and their sympathisers were

encouraged by the charter, yet their hopes were dashed to the ground the moment Churchill excluded India from its parameters. Meanwhile, the State Department pursued a policy of non-interference, though Berle and Murray tried to initiate some positive moves – which were resisted by Hull and Welles who avoided any involvement in the Indian situation, feeling that it did not directly affect American vital interests. Moreover, Lord Halifax remained very persuasive – to the extent of pre-empting any positive move by the Near Eastern Division. Hull and Welles followed a wait-and-see policy, so as not to add to British worries, although Churchill's interpretation of the charter must have shocked them a little. Throughout, the White House remained largely indifferent to the South Asian deadlock. FDR apparently showed little interest in 1941, firstly, because he was not given a continued feedback on India by the State Department and secondly, his own advisers like Hopkins – on whom he relied the most – were already under the spell of the British Prime Minister. Since he was not formally and openly involved in the war, FDR still avoided taking a strong position on international issues – and as a faithful ally of the British avoided causing troubles to them. Here, one finds a convergence in the perceptions and perspectives held both by the White House and the State Department. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor enhanced the geo-political significance of the subcontinent in the war strategy; and the internal political situation in the subcontinent, along with more frequent press coverage in America, resulted in a new phase in the US-South Asian relationship which was seen during 1942.

4 From Pearl Harbor to the Cripps Mission

The month of December, 1941 proved to be a watershed in both the global war and the bilateral relationship between the USA and the subcontinent. A number of significant political developments took place in both regions, bringing them closer than ever before. Britain, feeling quite isolated and strained in the face of the fascist onslaught, counted on American assistance – particularly after the fall of France and the Japanese advances in the Far East. The Italians were proving a formidable obstacle in North Africa for the British strategists. The American government was forwarding a massive amount of military and economic aid to Britain as the ally in an undeclared war. When Japanese aircraft damaged the American fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the war situation in the Far Eastern theatre underwent a complete change. The Americans feared Japanese encroachment on their possessions in the Philippines, in view of their early victories over the British. With American formal participation in the war, the subcontinent was an important geo-strategic area with its vast potentials in men and material. Naturally, a hectic period of intense military manoeuvres ensued, with port cities like Karachi, Bombay and Calcutta receiving contingents of American troops and battle-ships. Indian political developments assumed a greater importance to the US government, which began receiving more frequent and rapid reports from its consuls based in the subcontinent. Concurrently, a large number of American journalists and visitors began their sojourns in India, reporting on both military and more socio-political affairs, and dispatches on this part of the world began to appear in the American press. Now, for the first time for most literate Americans, India was not merely Gandhi and his fasts – though he still remained the focal point by virtue of his other-worldly life-styles.

The Labour ministers in Churchill's War Cabinet felt strongly about the continued detention of the Congress leaders and it was under their pressure that the Churchill-Amery-Linlithgow trio agreed to release the prisoners. A statement to that effect expressed

optimism about more Indian participation in the war efforts. After the fall of France, in the highest echelons of the INC there was a sharp difference of opinion about the future course of action. While Nehru and Azad felt strongly for the Allies, they reiterated their demand for a responsible government in India. Gandhi was dismayed by America's entry into the war and talked in esoteric terms of confronting fascism with non-violence. Eventually, he formally resigned from the Congress at a meeting of its working committee on 23 December 1941. The British government in India felt that the American entry into the war removed all fear of a possible Japanese invasion of the subcontinent. It tried to appease the South Asian leadership by adopting a more accommodating attitude. This policy was equally aimed at the USA so as to give a 'liberal' image of British colonialism in the wake of the post-Atlantic Charter controversy. The Linlithgow administration which had earlier been so hard on the Indian communists in the light of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Treaty, removed the curbs from the Communist Party of India (CPI) after the Nazi invasion of the USSR. Since the Indian communists themselves condemned the Axis powers, they were no more a threat to British interests in the subcontinent.

This was the situation when Churchill arrived in the USA on 22 December 1941, on an official visit to chart out a united strategy against the Axis countries. He stayed in the Lincoln study in the White House, where he had the company of Harry Hopkins. Churchill spent his Christmas in the American capital and held frequent parleys with FDR on the evolution of a common strategy, codenamed ARCADIA. Moreover, both the leaders agreed upon the draft of the proposed United Nations declaration, whose founders were to be primarily the Allies. Churchill did not consider India, by then a full-fledged partner in the war, as eligible to be one of the signatories. After FDR took a strong stand in defence of India's membership, the British formally acquiesced on 27 December 1941, when Halifax forwarded Linlithgow's approval to Sumner Welles. On 2 January 1942, Bajpai, the agent-general for India in Washington DC., signed on behalf of his government – thus making the subcontinent one of the early founding members of the UNO.

ARCADIA also resulted in a strategy for combined Anglo-American efforts in which Hopkins played a very important role – much to the comfort of the British prime minister who had

been grooming him since Hopkins' early visits to 10 Downing Street.¹ The British prime minister 'had originally planned to stay only a week in the White House, then go on to Canada for two days and start home to England on January 1. This plan was revised after the intended week was more than half over and Churchill did not leave until the night of January 14.'² The American need for strategic collaboration in the Far East was due to 'shocking defeats in the Pacific' and urgent appeals for help from General MacArthur. There was already a fear in the White House that the Japanese might attack the American west coast, mining the harbours at Seattle and San Francisco or attacking by human torpedoes. Such a scenario helped the British to acquire more military aid from the Americans. Throughout many meetings, it was General Marshall's viewpoint which received common consent. He had observed: 'As a result of what I saw in France and from following our own experience, I feel very strongly that the most important consideration is the question of unity of command . . . I am convinced that there must be one man in command of the entire theater – air, ground, and ships . . . If we make a plan for unified command now, it will solve nine-tenths of our troubles.'³ The Allies agreed upon the nomination of General Archibald Wavell to assume the supreme command of the joint forces in the Far Eastern theatre, which would 'include Northeast Burma and such portions of Thailand and Indo-China as may become accessible to the troops of the United Powers'.⁴

THE AMERICAN TECHNICAL MISSION

India gradually assumed an important place in the plans to halt the Japanese expansion. Moreover, because of her impressive potential contribution of men and materials in addition to a well-developed transport system, the subcontinent could strengthen the Allies' fragile position in the Near East and North Africa to curtail the fascist onslaught. At this juncture the Indian government sent its report on India's war effort to the Department of State through Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, the agent-general for India. Berle forwarded it to Cordell Hull along with his own comments. According to Bajpai, as reported by Berle, an increase in India's defence potential was 'dependent in

considerable degree upon the United States' and, given that she had better accessibility than China, she could be much more effective in the war effort. The subcontinent already had 64,000 miles of railway lines, about a million troops, with a quarter of them fighting in the Near East and Malay, and unlimited manpower to raise more troops – given a proper supply of the relevant equipment. As stated in Sir Claude Auchinleck's testimony, Bajpai felt that in North Africa 'Indian troops had done splendid work in the tank troops.' Of nearly 60,000 required war items, India was then producing 85 per cent but was lacking the remaining 15 per cent which consisted of heavy armaments like tanks and airplanes. Thus, according to Bajpai, it was more appropriate to send a small American technical mission to the subcontinent 'to investigate and report upon the possibility of American help being given toward increasing and strengthening Indian armed forces'. Furthermore, the Indian agent-general recommended Henry Grady to head such a mission. Grady, the president of American President Lines and, subsequently, an Assistant Secretary of State, had recently visited India on a fact-finding mission. Bajpai felt that two senior officers from the US Army and the Air Force could be included in Grady's entourage.⁵ It was, of course, not solely on Bajpai's initiative that such a formal request was put to the State Department. It must have originated in New Delhi, given the war situation in the Near and Far East.

Bajpai, moved by the urgency of the matter as well as by the Indian government, resumed his discussions with Berle on 28 January 1942. He explored the idea of establishing a supply line to the Chinese nationalists through an Indian corridor – since the route via Rangoon had already closed on 26 January and the Chinese were suggesting an alternative route. Bajpai foresaw that as Burma's security was jeopardised, India would be the next and given this eventuality it was high time for the United States to send the proposed Grady mission to the subcontinent.⁶ Berle forwarded a memorandum of his conversation with Bajpai to FDR with his own supportive remarks: 'Provided the British were willing, I think an American production mission in India might prove of considerable usefulness. The Indian plan was to have a million men in the field by the latter part of 1942, they have upward of 275,000 men and perhaps, should things go badly in Singapore and Burma, com-

pletion of this plan might be of crucial importance.⁷⁷ Berle had used his good offices with FDR to push the idea initiated by Bajpai. Since it was a matter of strategic significance to the USA, Berle had no qualms about sending it to FDR who, in his reply, endorsed the proposal: 'I think this worthy of pursuing. Please do so and take up also with the Vice-President's economic committee.'⁷⁸

Following FDR's directive to explore the possibility of sending a technical mission to India, a high level meeting was held the next day in the office of Milo Perkins of the Board of Economic Affairs, attended by many experts including Murray, Alling and Parker. The meeting aimed at determining India's needs in order to ascertain self-sufficiency in war materials. On behalf of the State Department, Murray went to great lengths to explain in detail Indo-American relations and to emphasise the need to improve Indian war capabilities. Milo Perkins wanted to know the exact extent of Indian needs and what cooperation the American mission would receive from the British authorities. Alling suggested that the USA could assist India by sending technical experts and military advisers to the subcontinent to increase its existing efficiency. However, all the participants agreed on the importance of sending such a mission to help South Asia increase her war output.⁹

Murray and Berle were supporters of the demand for Dominion status for India – as they had demonstrated time and again by initiating proposals for their superiors in the State Department. Even Ambassador Winant in London had serious reservations about the continued British policy of no change *vis-à-vis* India. These diplomats had been put off by Churchill's exclusion of India from the Atlantic Charter. They felt that it was through American support for the appropriate and necessary changes in British policies in India that a more favourable South Asian response to the war effort could be assured. It was clear to them that South Asian political factors could not be divorced from external factors, including the war effort. In other words, it was naïve to expect a political military ally in the subcontinent which had for so long been astir with agitational politics. Thus, after Pearl Harbor, it was no longer solely a British concern; rather, the United States had been led into a situation where it was not irrelevant to expect some sort of leading role from her. In these circumstances, when the negotiations

about sending an American technical mission were going on, the Indian political situation often came under review and dispatches sent from New Delhi were referred to in inter-departmental correspondence in the State Department. In a memorandum substantiated by information from the American mission in New Delhi, Murray informed Berle of recent party politics in the subcontinent. Gandhi had threatened to leave the Congress after the fall of France, when the party in its Poona session had offered to help the British government in its predicament only if the latter agreed to install a responsible government in India. The government had rejected the Poona offer which, in a way, validated Gandhi's stance on non-cooperation. He then resumed his own civil disobedience movement.

Murray now reported (a year later) that, the Congress working committee in its Bardoli session decided to approach the government to offer its conditional cooperation. These Bardoli decisions were made on 30 December 1941 – after some relaxation of the official restrictions on political activities – and were ratified in Bombay in January, 1942. Gandhi supported the Bardoli resolutions but formally relieved himself of the Congress leadership, for he felt dissatisfied with the half-hearted support his *satyagraha* had received in the highest echelons of the Congress. Murray reported on information from Thomas M. Wilson:

Many party members considered the movement unrealistic and ineffective, and opposition to it was growing. Furthermore, Gandhi found that he was receiving only half-hearted cooperation from some of those he had related to participate in the movement. Apparently, he realized that he could not prevent the adoption of the resolution but felt that his non-violent principles would not permit him to participate in a policy of cooperation with the war effort. He therefore renounced his active leadership in the party but, in endorsing it, Gandhi retains a nominal leadership and was able to nominate Nehru as his 'legal heir'.

According to Wilson, the situation was not clear yet but, as later events showed, the Congress leadership was very divided on the issue.¹⁰ More radical elements like Subhas Chandra Bose wanted to cooperate with the Axis countries against the British, whereas Nehru, Azad and a few other moderates believed in continuing the negotiations and the pressure without resorting to radical

methods. The failure of the boycott by the INC had strengthened official rigidity and the moderates were not prepared for another showdown with the government. Linlithgow had proved that he could withstand pressure yet nobody was sure for how long. These were not the best days for the Congress which apparently had not succeeded in achieving anything substantial, but felt weakened after the mass arrests and imprisonment of its leadership. The Muslim League, on the other hand, spoke from a position of strength as, after adopting the Pakistan resolution it had been able to mobilise the Muslim masses across the subcontinent. Its leadership judiciously avoided taking undue risks but without compromising its principles. While the Congress and the government engaged in a drawn-out battle, the League busied itself with organisational activities. It did not side with the British government in its ordeal nor did it try to exploit the opportunity afforded by the Congress rebellion – though it could have done so, very much to the mirth of the British. The League even admonished various Muslim provincial chief ministers for passing time with the government in violation of the League's standpoint.

The fall of Singapore provided another opportunity for Berle and Murray to raise the issue of the political status of India with Welles and Hull. Berle drafted a momentous memorandum for Welles, evaluating the strategic significance of the subcontinent in view of the Japanese victories. He underlined the ongoing bilateral negotiations for an American technical mission to India, probably consisting of Henry Grady, Louis Johnson and two officials from the War Production Board. Berle believed, however, that such measures for providing economic and military aid to the subcontinent were 'not likely to get very far unless the political situation is handled with extreme vigor'. He reminded Welles that Hull had already taken up the issue of India's political future with Halifax in 1941, exploring the possibility of her ultimate independence.¹¹ 'The President has indicated his sympathy with the general line. Winant has indicated there is wide division of opinion in the British cabinet¹² and has urged that we lend assistance. The Near Eastern Division is in full accord, and so am I.' Thus, Berle felt that the issue should be taken up with the British government through Ambassador Winant in order to persuade the Churchill administration to announce 'a statement of policy with respect to India;

and I suggest that the United States associate herself with Great Britain in stating that policy.' Berle expressed the view that Churchill could announce the British plan for the introduction of India as an equal partner in the United Nations while FDR would 'promptly and vigorously welcome the step'. This would lead to the establishment of a diplomatic relationship at the regular ambassadorial level between the USA and India.

The second most important suggestion to come from Berle stipulated the holding of a constitutional conference in New Delhi under the auspices of Lord Linlithgow, 'looking towards the evolution of ways and means of recognizing the growing political importance of Indian sentiments as such'. Berle castigated the top brass of the Indian National Congress who appeared to him to be a group unable to do much 'except talk'. Nevertheless, he was optimistic that negotiations could culminate in something more positive and suggested that the initiative for such steps should mainly come from the British government with the Americans initially operating 'as observers and potential suppliers'.¹³

Berle's thoughtful letter seems to have had an impact on the upper echelons of the State Department as, just a week later, Welles sent a message on behalf of FDR to Winant, in which the president observed:

As you may guess, I am somewhat concerned over the situation in India, especially in view of the possibility of the necessity of a slow retirement through Burma into India itself. From all I can gather the British defense will not have sufficiently enthusiastic support from the peoples of India themselves.

In the greatest confidence could you or Harriman or both let me have a slant on what the Prime Minister thinks about new relationships between Britain and India? I hesitate to send him a direct message because, in a strict sense, it is not our business. It is, however, of great interest to us from the point of view of the conduct of the war.¹⁴

THE CHINESE INTERLUDE

The contemporary political situation in the subcontinent was not only polarised but also volatile, to the consternation of many

observers. In February 1942, the Chinese nationalist leader, Chiang Kai-shek, toured India with his wife for two weeks and met a number of nationalist leaders. Among others he met the Quaid-i-Azam, and at the time of his departure he made a statement recommending that the British give India its freedom in the near future in accordance with the aspirations of the Indian nationalists.¹⁵ Jinnah felt that the Chinese leader had come under the influence of the Congress leaders and regretted that Chiang had failed to pay appropriate attention to the views of the Muslims of the subcontinent.¹⁶ Chiang Kai-shek went back convinced that given the political situation in India, her war efforts would be hampered seriously. He questioned the British policy of not allowing the Indians to decide their destiny and sent an emphatic message to that effect to Washington – through Dr Tse-ven Soong, his Foreign Minister, who was then visiting western capitals. The letter was originally intended for Churchill, to be conveyed through Wellington Koo, the Chinese ambassador in the United Kingdom. Chiang Kai-shek felt ‘personally shocked by the Indian military situation which are in such a state that I could never conceive of before I arrived in India. I am afraid Churchill does not know the real situation. It may be best to talk to Cripps first and for him to inform Churchill.’ Chiang claimed to have tried to view the colonial problem objectively:

I could not but speak frankly of what I thought. But I feel strongly that if the Indian political problem is not immediately and urgently solved, the danger will be daily increasing. If the British Government should wait until Japanese planes begin to bomb India and the Indian morale collapses, it would already be too late. If the solution is postponed until after the Japanese armies enter India, then it will be certainly too late. If the Japanese should know of the real situation and attack India, they would be virtually unopposed.

He believed that only an amicable solution of the Indian impasse could ward off the imminent Japanese invasion.

Chiang emphasised that Sir Stafford Cripps should take up the issue with Churchill so that the British government would voluntarily allow the Indians to decide their own future by delegating them the ‘real power’ and by not permitting different parties in India to cause confusion. The Chinese leader, at the

end of his bold and rather blunt message, expressed his optimism at the massive Indian cooperation with the Allies in the event that their nationalist demands were accepted. 'Only such a policy could halt the Indian trend to part from the British Empire and make it obvious that it is unpolitic and disadvantageous to secede from the Empire.' In his additional remarks for FDR, the Generalissimo observed that if the British did not change their policy toward the subcontinent, 'it would be like presenting India to the enemy and inviting them to quickly occupy India.' Chiang believed that the British were 'deluding themselves and deluding the people' at the very expense of geo-strategic interests.¹⁷ In his meetings with Nehru and Azad he had tried to pacify them so as to win their cooperation for the war effort and his statement contained similar sentiments.¹⁸ But, deep down, he sided with the South Asian nationalists, as his letter reveals. When the Chinese leader had first planned to visit India, FDR welcomed it as a useful idea, whereas Churchill had serious reservations about the meeting of the Asiatic nationalists. Accordingly, Chiang Kai-shek had not been allowed to visit Gandhi at his *ashram* and the meeting with Nehru took place in the face of official reluctance. This must have dismayed him since his fact-finding mission was aimed at studying the geopolitical situation in view of the precarious war position.¹⁹ On the other hand, the South Asian nationalists welcomed his visit as it afforded them an opportunity to air their feelings against the British and to get world-wide publicity for their cause.²⁰ In such a situation of political activity and agitation, when the future of the subcontinent was being discussed in the American Congress as well as in the press, the State Department was becoming a little more 'involved' and the White House was in a mood to take up the issues with an ever-stubborn Churchill, Chiang's observations on India acted as an impetus. The worsening situation in the Southeast Asian war theatre made the war the basic driving force – the time was approaching for a British political initiative which was to materialise in the form of the Cripps mission.

In reply to FDR's query sent by acting Secretary Welles to Winant on 25 February, W. Averell Harriman, the president's special representative in London, expressed his own views on the Indian situation and the prevailing British policy. Harriman, a confidant of FDR, held a post equal in rank to a minister and dealt with matters relating to Lend-Lease for the British Em-

pire. Since John Gilbert Winant was away from the embassy, Harriman, as requested by FDR, wrote back in confidence. After receiving telegram No. 843 of 25 February containing the presidential inquiry, Harriman met Winston Churchill on 26 February who apprised him 'of the status of political discussions now going on in London and in India for immediate action and for the future. He showed every desire to keep you informed but thought it would be better to wait a day or two, expecting that the picture would then be clarified and more definite.' According to Harriman, the War Cabinet intended to discuss the Indian situation that evening after receiving advice expected from New Delhi. Churchill, aware of FDR's interest in the situation, promised Harriman to write to the president over the weekend. Harriman, in his message to FDR, enumerated six major points of information as they were communicated to him by the British prime minister. Churchill observed that 75 per cent of Indian troops and volunteers were Muslims, out of whom merely 12 per cent sympathised 'with the Congress group'. Most of the Indian combat troops came from the northern subcontinent where the majority of 100 million South Asian Muslims lived. They were 'largely antagonistic to the Congress movement. The big population of low-lying center and south have not the vigor to fight anybody. The Prime Minister will not therefore take any step which would alienate the Moslems.' The remaining four points were about the vast Indian potential in manpower which could be properly trained and utilised in the Eastern theatre against the Japanese. Churchill, according to Harriman, was not sure whether after the Burmese conquest, the Japanese intended to capture China or India.²¹

Two assumptions can be safely deduced from Churchill's line of thought at the time. Firstly, he seemed to accept the crucial nature of the Indian political situation and secondly, he was unwilling to take timely action to resolve it. He acknowledged the US president's concern over the situation in so far as it could affect the war effort, yet he knew the true extent of FDR's interest in South Asia which, in the latter's words, 'is not our business'. Churchill, in his evasive style, cited 'the Muslim factor' to suggest that the solution of the Indian problem as stipulated by the Indian National Congress, would alienate the Muslims who, on the whole, did not subscribe to the Congress viewpoint. Although the Muslims generally placed their confidence in the

Muslim League, this in no way contradicted their desire for the independence of the subcontinent. In fact, the demand for independence was something on which not only the Congress and the League were in agreement – it was a creed of almost every political organisation in the subcontinent. Their policies differed on the question of ‘nationalities’ – in other words, how the non-Hindu South Asians were to benefit from the independence. The Muslim League had strong reservations about the British government attempting an exclusive arrangement with the Congress at the expense of other communities and took serious exception to Congress claims to be the sole mouthpiece of the ‘entire’ subcontinent – which negated the very existence of ethno-religious minorities like the Sikhs, Christians, Dalits (Untouchables), Parsis or Muslims. The League basically acknowledged the multi-national pluralism in the subcontinent, a hard and bitter fact for the Congress to accept. Churchill portrayed the Muslims as antagonistic to the Congress, which was not very convincing since the Muslims were as keenly involved in the freedom of the subcontinent as anybody else. As regards the Muslim troops, it would be sufficient to observe that the Indian Army was a highly depoliticised institution and soldiers, irrespective of their religio-ideological moorings, were just professional soldiers without any political programme or manifesto. The British government simply wanted them to be like that. There was no question of patriotism – that a Muslim soldier was less patriotic than a Hindu soldier, or vice-versa. British India was not a nation state and the people, irrespective of their profession, identified with the respective religious and geographical realities. One was a Muslim, a Hindu or a Sikh, or a Punjabi, a Bengali, a Madrasi. Even after 1947, these identities have persisted as traditions in the nation states of both India and Pakistan.

What Churchill suggested as a ‘convenience’, therefore, was not reality, yet he had his own reasons for doing this in order to convince FDR and to vindicate his imperial policies despite increased hopes in the colonised world. It was a matter of diplomacy for the British prime minister which involved no moral problem at all. Churchill gave incorrect figures for the composition of the British Indian Army, since, according to Lord Linlithgow, its composition was as follows:

	%
Hindu	41
Muslim	35
Sikh	10
Gurkha	8½
Others	5½
Total	100

Source: Linlithgow to Amery, 6 March 1942, in *The Transfer of Power*, I, pp. 328-9.

However, the flurry of letters between Washington and London and Chiang Kai-shek's outburst accelerated the ongoing negotiations between Bajpai and the State Department on the issue of deputing an American technical mission to South Asia as the Indian Supply Mission. Bajpai visited Berle on 28 February 1942 to resume the discussion. On behalf of the Indian government, he gave formal approval for the mission besides promising to facilitate its stay and transportation. As Berle noticed, the Indian government felt that the visit by the American mission 'might be of assistance in the general political atmosphere prevailing in India' and it should be led by 'a man of the world'. Bajpai noted that the mission's arrival would coincide with 'a constitutional development in India and that it might very well be that the head of mission could be of some assistance in appraising the various elements involved'. The Indian government wanted to make use of the American mission in its ordeal with the nationalists. Such a mission, though originally intended to explore the possibilities of India's defence potential, could be portrayed as proof of serious British efforts to reach some settlement with the Indians by 'involving' a 'third party'. Naturally, Berle was cautious about making a formal statement on the new development, so Bajpai switched to another topic which actually concerned his own diplomatic status. He was weary of being considered as one of Halifax's subordinates, since he was the representative of the Government of India and had signed the UN Declaration in that capacity. Apparently, he was disturbed at not being considered equal as a plenipotentiary by his own British counterparts, to some of whom a South Asian holding such an important position was not acceptable. Berle seems to

have sympathised with Bajpai at this junction, as the latter expressed his own interest in the Indianisation of the viceroy's executive council. Most of all, however, Bajpai acknowledged the extent of unofficial American support for the South Asian nationalists who were expecting a British policy statement at any moment. Berle recorded in his notes:

He [Bajpai] had telegraphed the Viceroy a summary of American opinions, saying that there was very considerable increase of American interest in India, that part of it came from partisans who wished to criticise the British, but another and very considerable part came from people who were thoroughly friendly to Britain but entirely friendly to the cause of Indian development. He had reported the interest shown by the Senate Committee, pointing out that this represented an outside opinion rather than the sentiment of the Government which had thus far scrupulously declined to intervene.²²

Further elaboration on the issue of the final technicalities regarding the mission was made when Noel Hall, the minister in the British Embassy, visited Berle on 4 March 1942, at the latter's request. Berle raised the issue of Bajpai's diplomatic status *vis-à-vis* the British embassy with Hall, who 'was not too clear about the situation himself'. The British diplomat also confirmed the American press report that some official clarification on the status of India was imminent.²³

On 6 March, the Department of State produced a press release, announcing a formal agreement between the US government and the Indian government to depute a technical mission to India. The stated purpose was 'to develop fully, and as rapidly as feasible, the industrial resources of India as a supply base for the armed forces of the United Nations in the Near East and the Far East'.²⁴ In a follow-up statement the names of the members of 'the Advisory Mission of the United States' were announced as follows:

1. Chairman, Colonel Louis Johnson, former Assistant Secretary of War
2. Henry Grady, former Assistant Secretary of State – general economic surveys
3. Arthur W. Herrington, President, Society of Automotive Engineers – production of armoured vehicles and automotive equipment

4. Harry E. Beyster, president, Beyster Engineering Company – organisation of plants for production
5. Dirk Dekker, Director of Personnel and Training, Illinois Steel Corporation²⁵

Before Johnson was named as the chairman of the mission, a number of names had been proposed. Dr Raman R. Kokatnur, a South Asian-American scientist met Vice-President Wallace and offered his services to the State Department for the mission, yet nothing came of this. Similarly, Henry Grady, strongly backed by the State Department, felt that he could be the most suitable choice. In the end Johnson was designated as the personal representative of FDR. The mission assumed some significance from the beginning, since it was a pioneering official American venture in the subcontinent. In addition, it had the support of the Council on Foreign Relations, which had been advocating sending such a mission to India for a long time. The Council's Group on Armament Questions had prepared a feasibility report which was originally drafted by Major George Fielding Eliot with contributions by Allen W. Dulles, Hanson Baldwin, Admiral William Pratt and General Frank McCoy. The report called for a more judicious and expanded use of India's war potential. Similarly, as seen earlier, both Welles and Berle attached political significance to the mission, which could help to rally more Indian support for the Allied forces by imparting a friendly image of the Americans.

FDR PROBES CHURCHILL

FDR was intrigued by the Indian geo-strategic situation as a strong base between war-torn North Africa and the Far East. With a beleaguered China watching the fall of Singapore (15 February) and Rangoon (8 March), the Japanese were threatening the very security of the subcontinent. It was feared that they would not stop until they reached the Middle East where they would join hands with the Italians and Germans. The Japanese had already demonstrated their combat abilities in the Pacific, where the main American interests were situated, including her vital colonial possessions. Under the circumstances, it was natural for the traditional American aloofness towards South Asia to be shaken off for some new ventures. Both the

American Senate and press had been discussing the continuing Indian stalemate. Churchill's exclusion of India from the applicability of the Atlantic Charter had already embarrassed many in the US government when Chiang Kai-shek gave his blunt assessment of the Indian situation arising out of British obstinacy. FDR also realised that merely dispatching an American technical mission to a volatile India would not receive the expected local cooperation unless the stalemate had been broken. For its success as well as for the war objectives, the Churchill government would have to come up with an initiative. Reports from London and New Delhi hinted at such a possibility and both the White House and the State Department expected it at any moment.

As mentioned earlier, FDR had sent his message on 25 February, requesting his envoys in London to assess Churchill's viewpoint on the Indian question. Accordingly, Harriman responded the very next day while Churchill, using his code-name, 'Former Naval Officer', wrote to FDR on 4 March 1942. The British prime minister observed:

We are earnestly considering whether a declaration of Dominion Status after the war carrying with it if desired the right to secede should be made at this critical juncture. We must not on any account break with the Moslems who represent a hundred million people and the main army elements on which we must rely for the immediate fighting. We have also to consider our duty toward 30 to 40 million untouchables and our treaties with the princes states of India, perhaps 80 millions. Naturally we do not want to throw India into chaos on the eve of invasion.²⁶

Churchill included a few documents about the Indian situation with his letter to FDR in order to substantiate his claim that if the British ever left, Indians would start killing one another in utter chaos.²⁷ FDR, not committing himself to any role in the affairs of the British Empire, decided to send a detailed letter to Churchill pressing him to initiate some forward-looking steps to resolve the Indian impasse.²⁸ More than half the letter traced the history of the young USA during the revolutionary period in order to imply an analogy with the British imperial crisis. Roosevelt's oft-quoted letter of 10 March 1942, began on a contemplative note:

I have given much thought to the problem of India and I am grateful that you have kept me in touch with it. As you can well realise, I have felt much diffidence in making any suggestions, and it is a subject which, of course, all of you good people know far more about than I do.

I have tried to approach the problem from the point of view of history and with a hope that the injection of a new thought to be used in India might be of assistance to you.

That is why I go back to the inception of the Government of the United States.

FDR then traced the crucial developments which the American constitution had been through at the time of its inception, when it was feared that the thirteen states might fall apart given the inherent weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. He wanted to suggest that it was due to the mutual deliberations of a small thoughtful group that the USA came of age and a similar approach could, perhaps, help achieve the resolution of the Indian political dilemma. The proposal which Roosevelt then made to Churchill was for the establishment of a 'temporary government in India' with an all-Indian character – a move which would be 'strictly in line with the world changes of the past half century and with the democratic process of all who are fighting Nazism'. FDR visualised a temporary government headed by representatives from various castes, occupations, religio-ethnic communities and the princely states 'to be recognised as a temporary Dominion Government'. His idea was that this stop-gap representative group could be engaged in the formulation of a constitution which could be implemented at the end of the transitional period of five to six years. While the US president felt that such an arrangement under British auspices would make Indians more loyal to the empire, he tried to reassure Churchill that he was not intervening in imperial affairs: 'For the love of Heaven don't bring me into this, though I do want to be of help. It is strictly speaking, none of my business, except insofar as it is a part and parcel of the successful fight that you and I are making.'²⁹

How far this letter persuaded Churchill to initiate a new move on the subcontinent is not clear. While it would be untrue to say that the American president had nothing to do with the developments which materialised subsequently into the Cripps proposals,

it would also be far-fetched to ascribe the formation of the Cripps mission completely to FDR's 'armtwisting' of Churchill. For a long time the chaotic situation inside India had required an early official response and this was the major factor in making the British government enter into negotiations with the South Asian nationalists. The Cripps mission was a political venture intended to pacify a number of forces. It was meant to convince the British Labour Party of the prime minister's deep concern to resolve the Indian crisis, and to persuade the US administration of Britain's genuine efforts to make India participate in the war more effectively. In addition, there was the need to prove to the South Asians that the government had a flexible policy. On the other hand, it is possible that it was simply an exercise to buy time, in view of the crucial war situation, or that Churchill wanted his Labour colleagues to cry themselves hoarse in the Indian quagmire. When Linlithgow's government demanded an initiative from London, the Cabinet committee headed by Attlee prepared a draft declaration which Churchill readily accepted.³⁰ Basically, Churchill stood for the status quo and deputing Sir Stafford Cripps to India did not necessarily imply any major shift in British policy toward the subcontinent. On 11 March 1942, he made his move by announcing in the House of Commons his decision to send Cripps to hold talks with the South Asian leaders.³¹

COLONEL JOHNSON AS FDR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Soon after Churchill's announcement of 11 March, Louis Johnson, who had been recently designated as the chairman of the American technical mission to India, was re-appointed by the president as his personal representative in New Delhi. Colonel Johnson was to replace the erstwhile career diplomat, Thomas W. Wilson, the US commissioner in the Indian capital. Colonel Johnson, a native of Virginia and a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, had been very close to FDR since the Wilson administration. He did not like his designation as 'commissioner' so he was given the title of personal representative. Wilson himself was taken aback by the message he received from Summer Welles on

11 March 1942, asking him to vacate his post at once. Welles noted:

Notification of Colonel Johnson's appointment is being effected through the British Ambassador in Washington today. Colonel Johnson will reach India in about 2 week's time, you are instructed to report to the Department en route to a new post and you should depart as soon as you can after Colonel Johnson's arrival. Inasmuch as you will not return to New Delhi, you are authorized to pack and ship your effects to the nearest United States post.³²

Colonel Johnson accepted his new assignment, although it was not known exactly what role the president envisaged for his friend. Symbolically, Johnson's appointment indicated FDR's personal interest in the resolution of the Indian impasse in line with the Atlantic summit pronouncements. Simultaneously, he wanted to show the British as well as the South Asians and their sympathisers that President Roosevelt attached great personal interest to the Cripps mission. Since Colonel Johnson was a long-time friend of FDR, his presence in India when the Cripps mission was conducting its tour signalled very considerable American interest in South Asian affairs. It appeared at the time that the White House was taking over what had traditionally been a State Department concern. The fact that Colonel Johnson's mission lacked specific instructions, not only impeded his work but also made him a controversial figure from the British official viewpoint.

On 19 March 1942, President Roosevelt wrote a letter to Linlithgow announcing the appointment of Louis Johnson as his personal representative in India. FDR observed:

I have made the choice of Colonel Louis Johnson to be my Personal Representative in India with the rank of Minister.

Colonel Johnson, who as my former Assistant Secretary of War has had broad experience with problems relating to military supply, has been selected for this important mission because of his outstanding ability and high character. In this time of crisis when ruthless aggressors are seeking to impose their will upon millions of the peoples of the world, I consider him specially qualified to further the mutual interests of the

Government of India and of the Government of the United States. I commend him highly to Your Excellency.³³

Thus, from being the chairman of the American technical mission, Johnson became the US commissioner before being redesignated as the personal representative of FDR. This all happened within a week – which not only shows how fast events were moving but also the importance being attached to this phase in the emergent bilateralism. Before Johnson took up his assignment in New Delhi, Commissioner Wilson kept the State Department informed of the latest developments in the subcontinent in view of the forthcoming visit of the highly-publicised Cripps mission.

5 Missions At the Crossroads

In the weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor there was increasing international diplomacy regarding geo-political conditions in the subcontinent. In view of internal Indian dissensions, the Japanese conquests forced Churchill, Amery and Linlithgow to look for a way out which was short of any radical measure to win massive Indian support in the war effort. Chiang Kai-shek found the Indian dilemma highly sensitive and put his views strongly to the British, whereas the US government – without risking any kind of enduring involvement – showed an interest in some sort of political resolution of the Indian dilemma based on a more conciliatory British attitude toward the South Asian nationalists. Thus, both regional and global dictates compelled an otherwise resistant Churchill to issue a policy statement on the subcontinent. The prime minister could not afford to be evasive and rely on his traditional arguments. Before his famous speech in the House of Commons on 11 March 1942, an interesting exchange of correspondence passed between the United Kingdom and the subcontinent discussing the pros and cons of future British policy with special reference to the fears and demands of minorities like the Muslims. There was a growing consciousness in British official circles of the demand for Pakistan, a realisation that to reach a unilateral agreement with the Congress at the expense of the Muslim League would be both risky and unrealistic.

The Muslim League, since the announcement of the 'August offer' by the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, on 8 August 1940,¹ had continually stressed the need for a comprehensive resolution of the Indian question with the involvement of all the representative political parties. Given the sustained Congress pressure, the working committee of the League at its Nagpur session on 27 December 1941, expressed its fears that the British government might adopt

[a] policy of appeasement of the Congress by making a fresh declaration, in utter disregard of the previous statements and promises to the Mussalmans of India and in ignorance of the

nature and extent of the political, religious and cultural differences existing between the major communities in India, viz., Hindus and Muslims.

The Working Committee, therefore consider it necessary to warn the British public and Government that any departure from the policy and the solemn declaration of the 8th of August 1940, and the pledges given therein to the Mussalmans, would constitute a gross breach of faith with Muslim India, and that any revision of policy or any fresh declaration, which adversely affects the demand of Pakistan or proceeds on the basis of a Central Government with India as one single unit and Mussalmans as an All-India minority, shall be strongly resented by the Muslims who will be compelled to resist it with all the forces at their command, which would at this critical juncture, among other things, necessarily result in the serious impediments of the country's war efforts, which have so far been largely carried on with the help and the support of the Mussalmans because of the policy and attitude hitherto adopted by the Muslim League in order not to embarrass or impede war efforts as far as possible.²

The All-India Congress working committee met at Bardoli on 30 December 1941, and reiterated its stance on war which had been agreed fifteen months earlier at Bombay on 16 September 1940, in response to the August offer. Now the Congress committee viewed the global situation with alarm and, while condemning fascism, felt that the Allies had not yet clearly stated their war aims. 'If freedom and democracy were those objectives, then they must necessarily include the ending of imperialism and the recognition of the independence of India.' The Congress reaffirmed its confidence in the leadership of Gandhi, despite the fact that *satyagraha* had resulted in the imprisonment of over 25,000 Congressites. In spite of the fact that there had been no change in British policy towards the subcontinent, the Bardoli session expressed its sympathy for the people who were the subject of aggression and fighting for their freedom. But it added:

Only a free and independent India can be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis and be of help in the furtherance of the larger causes that are emerging from the storm of the war. The whole background in

India is one of hostility and of distrust of the British Government and not even the most far-reaching promises can alter this background, nor can a subject India offer voluntary or willing help to an arrogant imperialism which is indistinguishable from fascist authoritarianism.

The Committee, is, therefore, of opinion that the resolution of the A.I.C.C. passed in Bombay on September 16, 1940, holds today and defines Congress policy still.³

Sikandar Hayat Khan, chief minister of the Punjab, though a loyalist, also felt a need for a new post-war official policy 'to establish a constitution for India as devised by the main parties concerned in agreement with one another, or failing that, [the Government] will set about devising one itself, taking into counsel all those who have bestirred themselves to defend the country in the time of the danger.' The suggestion put forth by the Punjab premier had the support of B. J. Glancy, the governor of Punjab.⁴ With such proposals afloat in political circles, military strategists expressed their own reservations about any unilateral, official agreement with the INC which might not only alienate the other strong Indian minorities but also affect the morale of the soldiers belonging to these minorities. Major-General Lockhart circulated a note to the War Cabinet Committee on India – headed by Attlee, the deputy prime minister – expressing the view that the Congress did not carry much political influence among the soldiers drawn from varied ethno-religious backgrounds. He observed:

The soldier's reaction to Congress was limited to an apprehension of what his own future would be if the British Raj were to abrogate its powers and he, the soldier, were left at the mercy of a body of Indian politicians, drawn mainly from parts of India of which the bulk of the soldiers know little and whose inhabitants they in many cases regarded almost as foreigners. There is still a strong feeling that the British officer is the surest guardian of the soldier's interests. India is not yet a nation. The Pathan or Punjabi soldier is as much a foreigner in, say, the C.P. or Southern India, as the British officer.

According to Lockhart, even the new recruit from so-called 'non-martial' areas, was generally apolitical and even if a settlement was reached with the agitated Congress, the British Indian

Army would not be affected adversely. He continued: 'But such agreement seems extremely unlikely, What does seem likely is that any concessions to Congress would produce a violent reaction from the Moslem League. Should this happen, and should Mr. Jinnah and his party attempt to stir up serious trouble, the effect upon the army might be disastrous . . . Mohammedan recruiting might cease.'⁵ In other words, the Muslim political cum military factor was a fact to be reckoned with, which was what the Muslim League had been trying to explain – that the Congress was not the representative body of a multi-national subcontinent, competent enough to negotiate with the British government on behalf of all Indians. On the other hand, as Lockhart observed, South Asian Muslims stood with the League and Jinnah therefore spoke from a vantage point of strength, which made it impossible for the government and the Congress to reach any settlement by excluding the Muslim League.

Sir Firoz Khan Noon, a Muslim Unionist from Punjab, in a private letter to the Secretary of State, Leopold Amery, expressed his fears of such a possibility and observed:

If H.M.G. contemplate making an immediate declaration of creating India Dominion, Moslems' demand for Pakistan must be conceded in the statement. If you are about to declare that after the war India will be made dominion, then Moslems [?expect] that you will also declare that if Hindus fail to come to an agreement with Moslems Pakistan will also be granted. Otherwise Moslem India will be up in arms and you will have North West Frontier problem also. Congress believe they can force the hands of H.M.G. and that is why they have made not the slightest move to win agreement of Moslems.

Noon cautioned against any hasty decision that might push the Muslims into opposition. He pointed out the Muslim role in the war, warned against any official move which would accommodate only the needs of the Hindu majority and added that the British government would 'be playing with fire, if they establish Hindu Raj in defiance of all the friendly elements who are responsible for great war effort of India at the moment'. Finally, Firoz Noon reminded Amery that there were apprehensions in various Indian quarters about the pro-Congress sentiments of Labour members of the British War Cabinet which could adversely affect the interests of other minorities: 'Irrespective of

any pressure which may exist from China or from America, quarters which know little about India [?look] at British Commonwealth with eyes different to our own, I hope that H.M.G. will finally stand by their duty which [?involves] protection of best of the peoples of India as a whole.’⁶ Noon’s letter, though highly confidential and personal, was circulated to the King, the War Cabinet, the British cabinet and the Committee on India. It strengthened the belief in official circles that yielding to the pressure politics of the Congress would be tantamount to further alienating non-Hindu societies in the subcontinent and would have adverse geo-political consequences.

In a similar telegram addressed to Amery, Sir Hussain Suhrawardy of Bengal, an adviser to the Secretary of State since 1939, who advocated the Muslim cause and took exception to the Congress claim to be the only national organisation in the subcontinent, noted: ‘Congress despite its nationalist creed is dominated by caste-ridden Hindus in overwhelming majority. Muslims seriously apprehend suppression and destruction [of] their economic life, culture, religion and political self-expression . . . Muslim League is undoubtedly exponent of Indian Muslim opinion and has achieved mass support.’ Suhrawardy claimed that Maulana Azad’s Azad Muslim Conference, launched in April 1940 to counter the Muslim League, did not command any confidence among the Muslims who were ‘perturbed lest Hindu domination be established. Muslims have contributed and are eager to contribute all material support in war effort in much greater proportion to their population strength. They will resent any far-reaching decision without adequate investigation and hearing different groups.’⁷ Such sentiments were aired by Muslim provincial leaders throughout the subcontinent in press statements or letters and telegrams to the highest echelons of the Raj. Not only the Muslims, but also at times the Sikhs and Untouchables, expressed their apprehensions about any political arrangement that could jeopardise their exclusive rights as minorities. Thus, before the Lord Privy Seal could be sent to India or Churchill’s statement to that effect be made in the British Parliament, there were several exchanges between the viceroy and the India Office, with British provincial governors, the commander-in-chief, and the British cabinet all discussing the different aspects of such a new undertaking.

Sir Tej Bahdur Sapru, a moderate leader, had sent his proposals

to Churchill in January 1942, rejecting the Muslim demand for Pakistan as such but recommending the establishment of a 'National Government'. Writing on behalf of a few other South Asian élite members (excluding known Congressites and Leaguers), Sapru enquired of the prime minister: 'Is it not possible for you [to] declare [at] this juncture that India no longer be treated as dependency to be ruled from Whitehall, and henceforth her constitutional position and powers identical with those other units [of] British Commonwealth? Such declaration should we suggest be accompanied [with] concrete measures calculated [to] impress people that in cooperating war effort they are safe-guarding their own freedom.' Sapru then suggested measures stipulating the expansion of the viceroy's executive council into the national government, with representation from all parties and communities and similar councils in those provinces then under the centre. Sapru's proposals emphasised the equality of the national government with other Dominion governments during the war and in peace efforts.⁸ Churchill, in a tentative reply to Sapru, partially agreed with the suggestion to allow the Government of India to participate in the formulation of policy in the War Cabinet and be represented on the Pacific War Council, but the other proposals dealing with 'far-reaching issues', were to be taken up later.⁹

Before being announced to the public, the draft declaration was debated in the War Cabinet Committee on India in the weeks preceding the prime minister's formal speech.¹⁰ Finally, on 11 March 1942, four days after the Japanese conquest of Rangoon, Churchill made a formal statement on the subcontinent expressing the consensus of the War Cabinet upon certain measures which, if accepted by the Indians, could resolve the constitutional crisis that had created dissensions between various communal groups. These measures were in the form of a package entrusted to Sir Stafford Cripps, the Lord Privy Seal, Leader of the House of Commons and a member of the War Cabinet who, Churchill announced, would be leaving for India to negotiate with South Asian leaders. The content of the Cripps proposals or the draft declaration was not announced by Churchill, but published by Cripps on 30 March 1942, while he was still engaged in discussions. The proposals promised the Indian Dominion an equal status to that of other Dominions associated

with the UK and 'in no way subordinate in any respect of its domestic or external affairs'. Moreover, it was suggested that after the cessation of the war, a constituent assembly would be established to frame the Indian constitution. Besides the representatives from the princely states, the lower houses of all the Indian provinces would send their representatives, elected on the basis of proportional representation, to this assembly. Elections were to be held after the war, and any constitution formulated by the assembly was to be accepted by the British government. Furthermore, it recommended that any province opting out of the suggested set-up could retain its status quo or, in league with other similar provinces, could form their own separate union. Similarly, the princely states would be at liberty to accept or stay aloof from the arrangement but in either case they would have to enter into new treaties with the union(s). Britain also would sign treaties with the Dominion regarding the transfer of power and protection of religious minorities. Until then, the British government would retain the control of Indian defence 'as part of their world war effort'.

In his broadcast on 30 March, Cripps defended his proposals and most of all the right of secession granted to the provinces. He appealed to all the South Asian leaders to accept the proposals.¹¹ The Congress rejected them on the grounds that the basic demand for complete independence was not recognised. Moreover, the secession clause was unacceptable to the Congress, for it could lead to the disintegration of the Union. Also, the Congress was not in favour of allowing the princes to nominate their representative on the constituent assembly – rather it stood for elections giving the franchise to the subjects. The All-India Congress Working Committee had already decided to reject the proposals at its meeting on 2 April, though the formal announcement was made on 11 April.¹² The All-India Muslim League was in a dilemma over a decision. On the one hand, the provincial right to secede from the Dominion could lead to 'Pakistan'. On the other hand, there was no official recognition of 'Pakistan' as such. Moreover, the proposals were not the decisions of the Crown as yet, so the entire package could easily fall apart.¹³ The Quaid-i-Azam was particularly interested in the interim arrangements, about which the Cripps proposals had nothing to offer.¹⁴ The Muslim League feared that in view of

Congress policies and non-existent guarantees for Muslims – particularly in Hindu-majority areas – the entire system might eventually operate at the whim of the Hindu majority.¹⁵

AMERICAN PRESSURE OR PERSUASION?

The announcement of the Cripps mission resulted in quite a fervour in American official and private circles. Since Churchill's exclusion of India from the Atlantic Charter, the controversy had been building up on the premise that the Roosevelt administration must play some role in making the British government move toward a settlement of the Indian deadlock. In some quarters there was even talk of the new Pacific Charter or Asiatic Charter delineating the war objectives of the Allied force. Débâcles in the Southeast Asian war theatres – direct Japanese threats against South Asia and the vulnerability of the Near East – compelled the strategists to take into account the internal dynamics of the South Asian political situation. In the wake of Chiang Kai-shek's criticism of the passive British Indian policy, FDR, the US Congress, the press and the State Department all voiced their concern about the worsening situation in the sub-continent. FDR's exhaustive letter of 10 March 1942 to Churchill was a formal, bold and rather surprising initiative. He had never taken such a position on the Indian question as he did not consider it to be 'one of our concerns'. Contemporary documentary evidence shows that from January 1942 on there was a continuum of American influence felt by the British policy-makers in London and New Delhi. The effect of American public opinion in British official circles can be clearly seen in the dispatches, telegrams, reports, minutes and letters going to and fro. The American factor was an important consideration for the British government, although there were fluctuations. It was perhaps strongest in early 1942 when the Cripps mission coincided with Louis Johnson's mission.

The British jealously guarded their politico-economic interests in the subcontinent and any American move, however limited it might be, was resented by Whitehall and the India Office. When the USA showed an interest in 1941 in building up commercial bilateralism with India – including rights of exploration and exploitation in Baluchistan through a treaty – the British main-

tained their reservations about allowing preferential status to their American allies. Notwithstanding Cordell Hull's soft line on the Indian question, Amery took him to task for even opening up a discussion on the Indo-American commercial relationship in view of the Lend-Lease Act. Warning Linlithgow of American 'designs' on India, the Secretary of State wrote in early January 1942:

Now for a wider imperial issue which is being forced on us by America and which is at any rate not without its importance for India. Cordell Hull, the American Secretary of State, is a very good friend of ours and a fine old man. But his views about economic matters date back to somewhere round 1860 and he has conceived the idea that he can use the Lease-Lend business as a lever for compelling us to adopt the same ideas and more particularly to pledge ourselves to abandoning Imperial Preference. In this latter design he would no doubt get the support of American big export interests as well as of all that element in America which, consciously or unconsciously, dislikes the idea of a united Empire and looks forward to seeing at any rate Canada and the Pacific Dominions eventually affiliated to the United States.¹⁶

London feared pan-Asiatic sentiments pronounced occasionally by various Asian nationalists in the wake of the Japanese victories. Since its victory over Czarist Russia in 1905, Japan had been idealised even in South Asian political circles and during the early phase of the Second World War, Japanese victories were celebrated by leading Congressites like Subhas Chandra Bose and other activists who had organised the Indian National Army (INA), with recruits coming from the South Asian war prisoners held by Japan. These radicals had already declared war on the British Raj, a fact debated endlessly by the War Cabinet. The British government wanted to contain pan-Asiatic feelings and felt uneasy about the American attitude which it believed 'has always leant strongly to the idea of Indian freedom'.¹⁷

The American factor weighed quite prominently in New Delhi, since the Linlithgow administration subscribed faithfully to the notion that any extremist measure against any leading Congressite like Nehru would have an adverse affect on Anglo-American relations.¹⁸ The viceroy was, at stages, literally

obsessed with the power of American public opinion on the side of the South Asian nationalists, which he thought was due to the propaganda activities of pro-Congress elements in America. While exchanging notes on the draft declaration in late February, both London and New Delhi were cautious to undertake this simply to appease the South Asians and Americans. Amery, when sending the text to Linlithgow, acknowledged the American pressure: 'I believe if we go as far as this draft we shall have gone a long way to meet American and even Indian criticism and to create an atmosphere in which such interim concessions as we can offer might possibly be accepted or, if rejected, leave us very much in the right.'¹⁹ A similar comment was made three days later by Amery when he acknowledged 'its advantages psychologically in America and in some Indian quarters'.²⁰ Amery did not seem to be happy about Whitehall's handling of Indian affairs since he felt that the Sapru's proposals were unjustly turned down by Churchill causing 'infinite difficulties' for Amery and Linlithgow. As he confided to the viceroy, Amery felt that the Churchill government had 'safeguarded the Muslims over Pakistan' and that Churchill was intent upon the Cripps mission because he had 'seen the red light (especially the American red light) overnight'.²¹ By this he presumably meant the probing by FDR through Harriman which has been discussed in the last chapter.

The British government widely publicised the Cripps mission in the United Kingdom, India 'and more particularly in the U.S.A.' – to convince both their allies and critics of their conciliatory efforts.²² The shadow of American public opinion loomed heavily on British official horizons and, as seen above, it was a recurrent reminder to the policy-makers. British fears were justified by the reports coming from Washington, more so after Chiang Kai-shek's visit to India. Bajpai discovered through a 'source' that the Chinese leader had been in touch with FDR on the 'grave' Indian situation, supporting 'everything possible behind the scene to press for immediate liberal solution of the Indian problem'. In the same message, Bajpai expressed his agony over American press coverage of the subcontinent:

The fear of breakdown of Indian morale is being worked to death by the American press as argument for the grant of Indian independence without delay. This morning's papers

feature the report by Associated Press from London that Subhas Bose's supporters have majority where India's most martial people are concentrated, namely in the North West Frontier Province, the Punjab and Maharashtra. I suggest that something be done to check these alarmist fantasies at the source. I shall take such effective counter-action as I can locally.'²³

Soon after FDR's persuasive letter to Churchill, which coincided with the prime minister's statement in the House of Commons, Bajpai met the president to ascertain his views on the subcontinent. Bajpai described the synchronisation of both the messages as 'purely coincidence'. His meeting with FDR on 12 March lasted for forty-five minutes with the president doing 'most of the talking'. In addition to his analogous reference to the revolutionary USA, FDR underlined the need for 'new thought' on India. He favoured Dominion status for India with the form of the government to be decided by the South Asians themselves. Like the thirteen American colonies, according to FDR, 'India will also learn by experience how to perfect structure of self-government that may be given to her provisionally now but prompt creation of such a structure embracing Congress, Muslims and Princes appeared essential.' According to the Indian agent-general, FDR suggested a British announcement on eventual Indian independence – similar to one made by the US government on the Philippines – that 'may lead to comparable result in India'. FDR found in both China and India long-held traditions of pacifism that could well mature into democracy given Anglo-American support. He explained to Bajpai that these were his personal views and 'disclaimed all official concern in Indian problem'.²⁴ Similar secret messages denoting American interest in the subcontinent were passed on by Halifax.²⁵

From the very inception of the Cripps mission, the US government showed a persistent interest in the success of its purported aim to bring about a reconciliation among the major political groups in the subcontinent in the light of Churchill's declaration of 11 March. In this regard Thomas Wilson, the US commissioner in New Delhi, was advised by Sumner Welles 'to transmit by telegraph with the least possible delay all information which you may be in a position to obtain regarding the

proposed formula and the Hindu and Moslem reaction to it'.²⁶ Until then Wilson's office had been mainly sending reports on military affairs and providing clerical help to General Lewis Brereton, the commander of the US Air Force in India. According to Wilson's response, the Cripps proposals were still a secret – with Jinnah, Gandhi and everybody else anxiously awaiting the arrival of Cripps and making no comment to the press. 'The Muslim position put in a few words,' observed Wilson, 'is that their leaders say that they can afford to wait. *Dawn*, the publication of the Muslim League, stated recently that the League will accept an interim arrangement providing (*sic*) nothing is done to "torpedo or prejudice the Muslim claim for a national homeland" and that regardless of numbers the major political parties are given equal say in the government of the country. All of which in my personal view is . . . put forward for trading purposes.' Wilson believed that the nature of the proposals and the speed with which they were placed before the South Asians would determine the success of the Cripps mission. If the proposals did not assure the eventual freedom of India, they were doomed to failure.²⁷

The British, for publicity reasons, wanted to make the Cripps proposal public on 30 March simultaneously in Britain, India and the United States. Lord Halifax sent two copies of the original text to Sumner Welles in advance on 28 March 1942, for the perusal of the president and State Department.²⁸ Extracts and a summary of the broadcast on 30 March, were telegraphed next day to Washington by Haselton, the officer-in-charge in New Delhi. Welles held a meeting with Halifax to assess the prospects of the Cripps proposals, which the latter believed would not be acceptable to the Congress since it 'was perfectly well aware that they could not, themselves, reach any direct agreement with the Moslem League, and that they thus avoided the responsibility for failure which otherwise would certainly have been placed upon them. They reasoned, he believed, that if the worst came to the worst the present plan would merely be placed upon the shelf and would be available later if nothing better transpired in the meantime.' Asked about the possible Indian reaction in the event of failure, Halifax replied that he 'did not anticipate any major disorders, and that the general situation would remain tranquil on account of the favorable economic situation in India and the realization of the

Japanese menace'.²⁹ Later events showed that Halifax was only partially right – for example the Quit India Movement started by the Congress.

Further communications from New Delhi on reactions to the Cripps proposals reported rejection by the Congress, League, Hindu Mahasabha, Sapru and Jayakar.³⁰ Thomas Wilson had departed and Louis Johnson took charge as the personal representative of the president at a time when the Cripps proposals had been published and were soon to be rejected by the major South Asian parties. Cripps personally felt that Wilson could help him at that crucial juncture. President Roosevelt desired the success of the Cripps mission, though he was not completely satisfied with the idea of Indian federation. According to FDR, as reported by Bajpai, 'complete autonomy, including power to raise armies, should be given to provinces'.³¹ In the meantime, in his meetings with Stafford Cripps, Louis Johnson found that the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha resented the secession clause whereas the Muslim League and the Sikhs feared that in the event of an Indian being appointed as the Defence Minister the office would go to a Hindu. Similarly, Nehru demanded that the British treaties with the princes 'be disregarded and peoples, not rulers, be represented in Constituent Assembly'. Johnson seems to have won the confidence of Cripps, who requested him to urge FDR to persuade Churchill to give further concessions to the subcontinent. Agreeing with Cripps, Johnson observed: 'Unless the President feels that he can intercede with Churchill, it would seem that Cripps' efforts are doomed to failure. Cripps so believes too. I respectfully urge therefore that the President, without disclosing he is advised of Cripps' cable, consider further effort with Churchill.' Johnson, giving his impressions of India, felt that it was a minority only in the Congress that was pro-Japan. Otherwise, leaders like Nehru were weary of the Raj, and preferred to cooperate with the USA. 'Industrial, military and political situation', Johnson reported in his dispatch, 'here much more serious than I was advised before arrival. Calcutta being partially evacuated and this has occasioned fear and large scale immigration by necessary industrial labor'.³²

Sumner Welles discussed Johnson's message with FDR and discovered 'that he does not consider it desirable or expedient for him, at least at this juncture to undertake any further personal participation in the discussion . . . It is feared that if at this

moment he interposed his own views, the result would complicate further an already overcomplicated situation.' However, Welles advised Johnson to carry on reporting the developments related to the Cripps mission and the war situation.³³ Johnson took upon himself the job of shuttle diplomacy and began meeting various South Asian leaders to help Cripps reach some agreement on the proposals. The Congress high command was under the impression – or was encouraging the view – that Johnson had brought a personal letter from FDR for Nehru and this was enhancing its status in the media. In a meeting with Nehru, Johnson categorically denied the existence of any such letter. Nehru, nevertheless, attached great hopes to the USA, although Johnson clearly stated that it supported Britain in the war without jeopardising 'the integrity of the British Empire' and that the Congress must support the Allies in order to win American support at the peace table. This interview was subsequently recorded by Olaf Caroe, later chief executive of the North-West Frontier Province and a great scholar of Pushtun history and culture.³⁴ Johnson's efforts for the success of the Cripps mission were appreciated by Linlithgow, though with certain reservations. The viceroy found the envoy 'a very pleasant fellow and evidently of good calibre . . . very favourably impressed by our war effort and much delighted by the way in which the whole position has been prepared in advance for him and the rest of the American Technical Mission.' Linlithgow found his 'dabbling in the constitutional affairs' helpful and told the Congress leaders 'that, unless they play up now and go on playing up about this war, they will lose every friend they have in the United States for two generations'.

However, Linlithgow, felt sceptical about Johnson's mission: 'But however helpful he may be, and may yet be, I do not altogether like the principle of anybody in his position concerning himself too closely with detailed negotiations between His Majesty's Government and Indian politicians, and I shall be relieved if we get through this business without some misunderstanding or confusion arising on account of Johnson's activities and perhaps on the part of the President himself.'³⁵ Johnson was trying his best to save the Cripps mission from complete collapse at a time when the war situation had become difficult in the Southeast Asian theatre. Frantic appeals were being sent out to London and Washington for the supply of bombers to protect

the British ports and ships in the Indian Ocean. Johnson, apparently unaware of Linlithgow's inner feelings about him was deeply immersed in his efforts to bring about a reconciliation. It was at the 'request of Cripps and Nehru, both absolutely on their own initiative, I have been acting as go-between since last Sunday'. He met Nehru many times a day to avert the expected failure of the mission and, at one stage, felt 'that negotiations will not be a complete washout providing the military situation does not overwhelm us.'³⁶ Johnson, like Cripps, relied completely on Congress support to save the mission from becoming a *débâcle*, and was unaware of the official impression of his role among the high British echelons in New Delhi and London. Like Linlithgow, both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India felt unsure about his assertive role being so widely discussed by the media. They felt that Colonel Johnson was exceeding his normal diplomatic duties and was using FDR's name to push things too far.

Harry Hopkins, FDR's special assistant on assignment in the UK, held frequent meetings with Churchill. On 19 April, Churchill invited Hopkins to give him his account of the Cripps mission and Johnson's role as a mediator. Churchill read out a recent dispatch from Linlithgow which seriously challenged the new proposal put forth by Cripps to let an Indian hold the office of defence on the viceroy's executive council. Hopkins felt that Linlithgow,

was irritated with the whole business and laid great stress on the fact that Johnson acts and talks as though he were sent as Roosevelt's personal representative to mediate in the Indian crisis . . . I told the Prime Minister that Johnson's original mission to India had nothing whatsoever to do with the British proposals and that I was very sure that he was not acting as the representative of the President in mediating the Indian business. That I believed that Cripps was using Johnson for his own ends, Cripps being very anxious to bring Roosevelt's name into the picture. That it was to Cripps' interest to get Roosevelt identified with his proposals . . . Churchill at once wrote in longhand a cable to the Viceroy stating that he was sure Johnson was not acting as personal representative of the President in negotiations between the Indian Congress and Cripps.³⁷

Churchill did not want to bring FDR into what he defined as the constitutional issue, yet he was unhappy over the uproar in the press linking FDR so closely with the Cripps mission. Harry Hopkins gathered the 'unfortunate impression' that Johnson was mediating between the British and the Congress on instruction from the president. According to Hopkins, Cripps was using Johnson who in turn was using FDR's name 'very freely'. The British gave the impression that Johnson's move was being directed by Roosevelt – thus making it necessary 'that Johnson's part in this be played down because of the danger of a proposal being made to the British Government which they might reject and which the public might think comes from you [FDR]'.³⁸ At the time Hopkins' message was relayed to Washington, Stafford Cripps received an urgent directive further circumscribing his independence for new initiatives and pointing out a 'grave danger that Johnson's public intervention may be misunderstood as representing action on behalf of U.S. Government, which of course is not the case'.³⁹ Due to Johnson's efforts, Cripps had relented in accepting an Indian to assume the defence portfolio in the future cabinet, which was not acceptable to either Linlithgow or Wavell, the commander-in-chief. They both felt that Cripps was trespassing his mandate and when formulating such an amendment had not taken them or the War Cabinet into prior confidence. Johnson seems to have assumed the initiative from Cripps and tried to convince both Linlithgow and Wavell of the need to incorporate new changes in the Cripps proposals. 'Wavell at first arbitrarily refused to consider any change in Cripps' amended proposal', Johnson reported, 'in my opinion because he is tired, discouraged and depressed and hates and distrusts Nehru.' First Wavell and then Linlithgow, under Johnson's influence became receptive to the idea and then held meetings with Nehru and Azad, and felt highly optimistic about the mission. He ended his report on a highly enthusiastic note: 'The magic name over here is Roosevelt; the land, the people would follow and love America.'⁴⁰

In his optimism, Johnson had gone too far. The British did not want to challenge the status quo in their imperial affairs at all. Lord Halifax had pointed to that in a speech before the Town Hall in New Delhi on 7 April 1942, which was reported widely in the press. It was broadcast on a coast-to-coast hook-up. Such an important speech had the prior approval of Churchill 'and in

view of the speaker, the timing, and the publicity given to the address, it must be taken as an expression of the ideas which formed the basis of the British Government's proposals submitted to India by Sir Stafford Cripps'.⁴¹ Halifax went to great lengths to give a historical background of Indian society and political developments. According to him, India had more than 200 languages and numerous racial stocks which differed in temperament as well as in social philosophy. Indians belonged to many faiths and the influence of religion was 'wider, deeper and more pervasive than in the West' as it was 'often involved for causes that have scant right to claim it'. Halifax then assessed Islam: 'practical though intensely religious, realist, democratic, [it] is poles apart from that of Hinduism, mystic, introspective, and bringing all the institutions of life under rigid regulation.' Both the creeds exhibited a 'fundamental antipathy' toward each other; the British took over power due to 'increasing lawlessness' so as to challenge the disruptive forces and introduce modern ideas and institutions in the subcontinent: 'In countless directions the outlook of her sons and daughters has been not only changed, but formed, by what they read in the tongue that Shakespeare and Milton spoke.' Halifax categorised the British political system as a benevolent constitutional rule since the British government aimed at the realisation of self-government for India. He predicted that the multi-communal make-up of the subcontinent would pose the main hurdle to the Cripps mission in its efforts to achieve a reconciliation.⁴² Halifax made his speech to convince the Americans of the sincerity of the British in resolving the Indian crisis at a time when the failure of the Cripps mission was quite apparent. In other words, it was merely a publicity stunt and a face-saving device.

On 12 April, Hopkins received an urgent message from the president for Churchill saying that all possible efforts should be made to prevent the breakdown of the Cripps mission. The motivation for such a request stemmed from American public concern as well as a personal request made by Johnson. FDR told Churchill that he could not support:

... the point of view you express in your message to me that American public opinion believes that negotiations have failed on general broad issues. The general impression here is quite the contrary. The almost universal feeling is that the deadlock

has been due to the unwillingness of the British Government to concede the right of self-government to the Indian people notwithstanding the Indians' willingness to entrust technical, military and naval defense control to the competent British authorities. American public opinion cannot understand why, if the British Government is willing to permit component parts of India to secede from the British Empire after the war, it is not willing to permit them during the war to enjoy what is tantamount to self-government.

FDR stated clearly that his reasons for an immediate resolution of the South Asian impasse were because of the worsening defences against the victorious Japanese:

I know you will understand my reasons for placing this issue before you very frankly. If the current negotiations are allowed to collapse and if India were subsequently to be invaded successfully by the Japanese with attendant serious military defeats for the Allies, it would be hard to overestimate the prejudicial effect of this on American public opinion. Therefore, is it not possible for you to postpone Cripps' departure on the ground that you have personally transmitted to him instructions to make final efforts to find some common ground of understanding? I gathered that last Thursday night agreement was almost reached. It appears to me that this agreement might yet be reached if you could authorize Cripps to say that he was empowered by you personally to resume negotiations as at that point with an understanding that minor concessions would be made by both sides.

It is still my feeling, as I have said before, that a solution can be found if the component groups in India could now be given an opportunity to set up a National Government . . . If you should make such an effort, and if then Cripps was still unable to achieve agreement, then American public opinion would be satisfied that at least the British Government has made a fair and real offer to the Indian people upon whom the responsibility for failure of the negotiations would be clearly placed.⁴³

Hopkins received the telegram at 3:00 in the morning when he was already meeting Churchill. The British prime minister expressed the usual concern for the minorities and the princes in

his hesitation to make a final pledge for South Asian independence. The establishment of a nationalist government, according to Churchill, and reported by Hopkins, might entail the recall of its troops from the Middle East. Such a government might:

make an armistice with Japan on the basis of free transit for Japanese forces and supplies across India to Karachi. In return, the Japanese would give the Hindus the military support necessary to impose the Congress party's will upon the Moslems, the Princes and the depressed classes. Churchill felt that any attempt to reopen the Indian constitutional issue in this way at this juncture would serve only to emphasize serious differences between Great Britain and the United States and thus do injury to the common cause. Far from helping the defense of India, it would make the task impossible.

Churchill reacted rather strongly to this arm-twisting by FDR and told Hopkins that he was quite ready to retire to private life if that would do any good in assuaging American public opinion. But he felt certain that, regardless of whether or not he continued as prime minister, 'the Cabinet and Parliament would continue to assert the policy as he had stated it.' Harry Hopkins was by then sure that the subcontinent was a region about which the two leaders had diametrically opposing views. Accordingly, both FDR and Hopkins decided to sleep on the issue at least for the time being.⁴⁴ FDR could not make any headway since Cripps had already left the subcontinent.⁴⁵ The South Asian political parties had rejected the Cripps proposals and the British government was not prepared to accept their terms. Hopkins noted that Churchill seriously mistrusted the South Asian nationalists and, due to the Japanese victories, feared they might welcome their fellow Asiatics by throwing out the few British stationed in the subcontinent – thus providing all the necessary facilities for the Japanese to join the fascist forces in the Near East. Churchill's apprehensions were further strengthened by the rebellious attitude of the Congress and policy statements by some top leaders to assist the Japanese against the British. Furthermore, the Indian National Army had already ambitiously embarked on recruiting among the Indian war prisoners, making the subcontinent more vulnerable. Bengal and Madras lay open to the Japanese after the fall of Burma and their naval victories in the

Indian Ocean. Though he felt strongly about the resolution of the Indian crisis, FDR hesitated to push Churchill against the wall, recognising that his imperial orientation did not allow any concession on the subcontinent. Even the Cripps mission, to him, was simply intended to pacify the Congress agitators without embodying any definite 'surrender' to the nationalist demand.⁴⁶

In a message on 11 April 1942, Louis Johnson formally reported on the failure of the Cripps mission and the deteriorating war situation. He sympathised with Stafford Cripps in his impressions:

Cripps is sincere, knows this matter should be solved. He and Nehru could solve it in 5 minutes if Cripps had any freedom or authority. To my amazement when satisfactory solution seemed certain, with unimportant concession, Cripps with embarrassment told me that he could not change original draft declaration without Churchill's approval and that Churchill has cabled him that he will give no approval unless Wavell and Viceroy separately send their own code cables unqualified by any change Cripps wants.

I never lost confidence then. London wanted a Congress refusal. Why? Cripp's original offer contained little more than the unkept promise of the First World War. Does England prefer to lose India to enemy retaining claim of title at peace table rather than lose it by giving freedom now? I have my own opinion about it.

Thus observed a bitter Johnson.⁴⁷

On the same day FDR received a message from Churchill, quoting from the letter of Maulana Azad, president of the INC, in which he had explained the reasons for the rejection of the Cripps proposals. Churchill felt 'absolutely satisfied we have done our utmost' and attached a copy of his message to Cripps for the perusal of the president. In this message, Churchill appreciated Cripps' 'tenacity, perseverance and resourcefulness' to prove 'the British desire to reach a settlement . . . The effect throughout Britain and the United States has been wholly beneficial.'⁴⁸ On the contrary, Amery and Linlithgow had quite a different view of the Cripps mission. Since they both expected an imminent failure of the entire exercise, it did not cause them any surprise, as Amery joyously wrote in a private message to the viceroy: 'And what a relief now that it is over! . . . It does

seem to me that the longer he stayed out there, the more his keenness on a settlement drew him away from the original plan on which we had all agreed, and in the direction of something to which we were all opposed.⁴⁹

Stafford Cripps, on his arrival back in London, briefed the press and the Parliament on his mission, vindicating official British policy in the subcontinent.⁵⁰ Although his mission had apparently failed, it created more awareness in the United States of the subcontinent. Kate Mitchell, publishing her work in late-1942, was right in observing on behalf of many of her countrymen:

No Pacific or Asiatic Charter has yet been announced to parallel the Atlantic Charter. The 'American Century' advocates in the United States continue to talk in terms of the balance of power and who shall control what areas in the Far East. And their 'British Century' counterparts in London still deny the Indian people any share in the control of their government, and refuse to permit the organization of an Indian popular defense force . . . In meeting the challenge posed by India, the people of America have a great duty and responsibility to fulfill.⁵¹

It was the monster of American public opinion that kept haunting the corridors of the Raj and Amery made elaborate efforts to influence it, as he confessed to Linlithgow: 'I hope I may soon receive a further report of the progress made in considering suggestions for propaganda measures designed to present to American opinion a fuller picture of the Indian States.'⁵²

Johnson had developed a special fondness for Nehru, who was an enigma to Wavell. Believing that Johnson was sympathetic to the South Asian nationalists, the British Raj turned against him. The very designation of Johnson as FDR's personal representative without any job specifications put him on shifting sands. Wilson had been acceptable to Linlithgow because of his non-obtrusive and rather apolitical life-style, whereas Johnson appeared assuming and self-assured, something imperialists did not take to easily. Johnson's efforts at arbitration without any backing from the White House or the State Department bore no fruit, as the Cripps mission became a fiasco. This had been expected by each and every party, since the government of Winston Churchill was not ready to accept the nationalist

demands at a time when its honour was at stake after continuous setbacks in the war against the Japanese. The empire had become a matter of prestige and the conservatives were not prepared to budge. Even Attlee and Cripps could not have any impact and Cripps had felt helpless in India exposed before Churchill's *realpolitik*. Johnson could and did temporarily delay the South Asian reaction to the proposals, but could not change the course of history. The Raj already knew what was in store for them and was prepared to confront the open American presidential support for the INC.⁵³

Nehru, using Johnson's offices, sent a detailed letter to Roosevelt on the day that Cripps departed for the UK. Reminding FDR of his interest in the Indian situation, Nehru felt that the débâcle of the Cripps mission 'must have distressed you, as it has distressed us'. He expressed the desire of his colleagues to associate with the Allies in the larger cause of freedom and democracy – and their disappointment over the cold British response. Nehru felt sure of the South Asian war potential and, despite the British refusal to establish a national government in India, assured FDR that they would 'do our utmost not to submit to Japanese or any other aggression and invasion'. In addition, he expressed his criticism of fascism and sent 'greetings and good wishes' for the victory.⁵⁴ Although the letter was written at a time when the INC had already decided to reject the Cripps proposals, it did not contain any bitter remarks but politely assured the American president of continued support in the war effort. The letter was a great diplomatic venture, it made no suggestions at all, and received a similar yet very short reply from Welles on behalf of Roosevelt. The US President was 'deeply gratified by the message' and felt sure that the Indians would keep contributing to the anti-Japanese war efforts. The brief reply avoided any comment on the Indian internal political situation, thus being very elusive about the official US stand on the future of the subcontinent.⁵⁵ Another short letter from the acting Secretary informed Louis Johnson that 'prior to Cripps' departure and up to the last moment, the President made every possible personal effort with the British Prime Minister to prevent the breakdown of negotiations and to have delayed for that purpose the departure of Cripps.'⁵⁶

In his subsequent reports, Johnson commented mainly on the war situation, pinpointing India's acute war needs,⁵⁷ with oc-

casional references to the Indian political situation. Nehru remained his favourite among the Indian leaders, whom he took to be a moderating influence on the extremists like Gandhi.⁵⁸ The Congress viewpoint received further support from Madame Chiang Kai-shek who stated that the failure of the Cripps mission had resulted in a deterioration of the general war situation 'and increased Indian hostile feeling toward Britain'.⁵⁹ Bajpai, who had kept a low profile during the Cripps mission, expressed mixed feelings about its failure – quietly praising Nehru but blaming the pro-Congress Indian businessmen for the débâcle.⁶⁰

Johnson was not deterred by the failure of the Cripps mission and continued in his efforts for a new 'formula in the shape of a Declaration of Policy' with the approval of the Congress through Nehru. He believed that 'the best interests of America will be served by insisting upon its acceptance by the British.' By this time Johnson was deeply under Nehru's influence and had alienated the Muslim League which he blamed for having 'been used by the British as a counter force to the Congress'.⁶¹ However, the facts do not substantiate his assertion. The League had already reprimanded its members for joining war boards and the viceroy's defence council and had rejected the proposals, despite the fact that the secession clause contained the inherent ingredient for 'Pakistan'. Johnson's over-ambitious moves were cut to size as Hull cautioned him against unduly favouring 'a particular faction in India' and advised him 'not to identify yourself too closely with any particular group or groups in Indian national life'.⁶² Nevertheless, despite such an official directive Johnson continued to report on post-Cripps developments in the subcontinent. The main emphasis in his dispatches remained military warfare, yet he never missed an opportunity to state that without a political solution Indian war efforts would remain divisive and unsatisfactory. In his letters, intended for both FDR and Hull, he would include information on the latest Congress strategy. This enabled Nehru and the Congress high command to get the message across since the strict censorship on news of political and military affairs had left no channels open. Johnson's letters reproduced the Congress resolutions *in toto*.⁶³ In one letter, he suggested that America should attempt to mediate by convening a conference of the South Asian leaders including Nehru, Jinnah, Gandhi, Rajgopalachari and G. D. Birla, the last being

the 'most prominent industrialist and backer of Gandhi'. Johnson thought that these leaders should then have a meeting with the British leaders under American auspices: 'America alone can save India for the United Nations cause and my suggestion ought not be disposed of on basis of meddling in internal affairs of a subject nation. I respectfully urge that saving India concerns America as much as Great Britain. The effort cannot harm. It may be the miracle. I urge immediate consideration and being on the ground, pray for President's aid. Time of essence.'⁶⁴ Such an emphatic appeal did not go unheeded by FDR, who sent him a directive emphasising the purely military nature of American interest in the subcontinent and playing down the political aspect. The presidential message, sent by Hull, observed:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your efforts to solve the difficult problems involved in the Indian situation. The position in India today is largely military. Therefore any proposal for settlement has to be weighed from the view-point whether if successful, it would aid the military effort to an important extent and whether, if unsuccessful, it is likely to hamper that effort. As far as we can judge there is little chance that the formula which you propose would be acceptable to an important element in the Congress Party, even if it were accepted by some elements in the party, by other Indian groups and by the British. An unsuccessful attempt to solve the problem along the lines which you suggest would, if we are to judge by the results of the Cripps mission, further alienate the Indian leaders and parties from the British and possibly cause disturbances among the various communities. On balance, therefore, I incline to the view that at the present moment the risks involved in an unsuccessful effort to solve the problem outweigh the advantages that might be obtained if a satisfactory solution could be found.⁶⁵

After receiving the presidential directive, Johnson informed Hull of his illness and hospitalisation at Irwin Hospital suffering with sulfanilamide. He had apparently been affected by the Indian heat and dust and his physicians advised him to go home for an extended rest. His contacts with Nehru were proving fruitful and the latter was continuing 'his efforts to calm Indians, speed production and make them hate Japs'.⁶⁶ Johnson's desire to go back to the United States was considered 'subject to the

misinterpretation both here and abroad'.⁶⁷ However, his illness had already been reported in the press, leaving no room for speculation, so he left Karachi for Cairo on 16 May 1942.⁶⁸

With Johnson ill and American official interest diverted to purely military affairs, the British felt no more pressure from across the Atlantic to pursue a plan to come to terms with the Indians. They kept sending their officials to present the British side of the story of the Cripps mission.⁶⁹ Military matters became the focal point for US strategists at a time when the American technical mission headed by Henry Grady submitted its report – after spending five weeks in India investigating India's war production and potential. The mission underlined the technical aspect of the issue and suggested prompt American help to boost Indian output, which perfectly suited the Raj.⁷⁰ Johnson's arrival in the USA was followed a week later by that of the members of the technical mission. On 26 May, Colonel Johnson held a meeting with members of the Near Eastern Division of the State Department, including Colonel Herrington, Murray, Alling, Oakes and Parker.

Both Herrington and Johnson considered that the Indian defences were in a precarious situation, but their greatest fears came from the political situation in India. The British could avoid the worst by forming a coalition government as a bulwark which, according to both the colonels, could evince support from the Muslim League. However, they claimed that 'the British are prepared to lose India, as they lost Burma, rather than make any concessions to the Indians in the belief that India will be returned to them after the war with the *status quo ante* prevailing.'⁷¹ Both American officials, who had witnessed the developments regarding the Cripps mission, felt that 'the British Government had deliberately sabotaged the Cripps Mission and indicated that likewise in their opinion the Government in London had never desired that the Mission be other than a failure.'⁷² Johnson gave his account of the developments which can be summarised as follows:

- (i) Cripps, on his arrival, promised to abolish the India Office and the Dominion status of India once the war was over.
- (ii) He held out the offer both to the Congress and the Muslim League to rescind the veto power of the viceroy and allow immediate Indian participation in the government.
- (iii) Both the major parties agreed to the offers, but Linlithgow and

Wavell immediately notified London of the terms demanding their withdrawal.

(iv) Under pressure from London, Cripps was made to withdraw his offer and communicated his despair to Nehru.

(v) Colonel Johnson 'injected' himself into the negotiations at the written request of Stafford Cripps.

(vi) Both Johnson and Herrington maintained that in their opinion Churchill and the viceroy were looking for scapegoats.⁷³

It is of interest to know that Henry Grady personally disagreed with Johnson and his tirade against the British.

Churchill's government sent Stafford Cripps to the subcontinent for a variety of reasons, including US official persuasion and American public opinion. Churchill, Amery and Linlithgow knew in advance that the mission was doomed to fail, yet the political and psychological gains in world opinion weighed heavily. After Pearl Harbor, the US government immensely valued the geo-strategic significance of the South Asian subcontinent and, on an initiative from the Linlithgow administration, agreed to send a technical mission to India. Concurrently, the British planned to send Stafford Cripps and American military interest had to correlate with the contemporary political developments. Colonel Louis Johnson, who was originally selected to head the technical mission, was redesignated as FDR's personal representative in India with Henry Grady leading the mission. From his letters and his appointment of Johnson, it is clear that Roosevelt attached great importance to the Cripps mission. Johnson entered the scene when the Cripps mission was expected to be a débâcle and, although his efforts could not produce a resolution of the crisis, they did delay the eventual breakdown of the talks. He was able to develop a closer rapport with Nehru and Azad at the expense of the Muslim League. Although Cripps was in favour of his involvement, it was frowned upon by Linlithgow, Amery and Churchill and it was his illness that took him away from India and out of controversy. He developed reservations about the sincerity of the British government in reaching a tangible settlement with the Indians. These views were shared by some members of Grady's mission, like Colonel Herrington, though the officials in the State Department had a different interpretation and version of the Indian situation. After the departure of Cripps, the US government decided to retain only a

military interest in the subcontinent and to stay out of political entanglements, at least temporarily. Notwithstanding Johnson's verdict on British imperial policies, the Cripps mission was hailed by the American press and public. The INC was blamed by influential American publications for causing the failure of the mission. *The New York Times* stated that the Congress leaders were irresponsible in their utterances and their behaviour, that they only produced 'talk of freedom' but refused to cooperate with the UK and USA. They were called 'sleepwalkers' and a group of protestors 'unable to change quickly enough to the habits of responsibility'.⁷⁴ *The New Republic* questioned the responsibility of the Indian political leaders who demanded independence when the Allies were experiencing a critical phase in the war.⁷⁵ Yet, a pro-India 'lobby' consisting of Revd Holmes, Roger Baldwin, Thomas Garrison Villard, Norman Thomas and the other members of the Post-War World Council expressed their solidarity with the Indian nationalists.⁷⁶ A meeting of 2,500 people at New York Town Hall, under the auspices of the Council, was addressed by, amongst others, Syud Hossain, Anup Singh, Francis Gunther and Roy Wilkins and demanded the immediate independence of the subcontinent. On the whole, however, the British version of events was accepted, which damaged the overall image of the INC.

6 The Congress 'Revolt' and American Concern

Colonel Louis Johnson went back to the USA with bitter-sweet memories, ostensibly not happy with the Raj, yet sympathetic toward the Nehru–Azad faction in the Indian National Congress. Forsaking Hull's cautious approach to the Indian impasse, he posed a 'threat' to the Churchill, Amery and Linlithgow trio who found him 'pushy', raising many expectations among the South Asian nationalists of an American involvement which, in fact, was not the case. He ignored the All-India Muslim League completely, relied upon the Congress in his conciliatory efforts and accepted the latter's claim to be the 'sole-spokesman' for the entire subcontinent. The Congress objected to the secession clause in the Cripps offer and demanded the Indianisation of the defence portfolio which Wavell and Linlithgow strongly resisted. Johnson's affiliations with the Congress leadership made him very unpopular with the viceroy who, on the arrival of the President's special representative a few weeks earlier, had been very enthusiastic, calling him a person of 'distinguished attainment' whose presence was considered 'an earnest of high endeavour in the common cause'.¹ The reservations about Louis Johnson were soon made known to FDR and Cordell Hull by various indirect hints from the British government.

The British did not want to annoy FDR by openly coming out against his personal representative in India. They therefore tried quietly but vigorously to court his favour – more so after the departure of Stafford Cripps from India, when an Indian backlash was imminently expected given the growing resentment against the British. In addition to Halifax and Bajpai, Graham Spry, a Canadian by nationality, was sent by the British government to lobby in Washington DC. Mr. Spry had been a special assistant to Stafford Cripps who justified British official policy to FDR and State Department officials.² He very ably put across his viewpoint to the American president who shared with him an apprehension of 'Gandhi's resurgence'. Using his diplomatic charm, Spry then joined FDR in praising Johnson, a man of considerable drive whose 'heart is in the right place'. Spry made

it clear to Roosevelt that 'Stafford was grateful for the Colonel's help and that there was no suggestion or question of interference, the colonel was brought into the discussion by the Congress and acted as an intermediary in his personal capacity only.' (On the other hand, as admitted by Cripps before Parliament, it was he who sought Johnson's help – to the subsequent anger of Churchill and Linlithgow). Spry reported that Roosevelt twice observed 'I don't want to interfere I only want to help. You see my job is the Pacific', and reiterated: 'We don't want to interfere, we only want to help. This is our common war.'³ In other words, Roosevelt emphasised that American military interests *vis-à-vis* India converged with British imperial interests to confine American involvement to strategic areas only.

Johnson's efforts were viewed sceptically by Linlithgow, Amery and other high officials of the Raj. They feared that he might have damaged the British official position in the USA through his reports. Linlithgow reported that:

My Private Secretary has had a personal message from Graham Spry in Washington to the effect that Johnson's comments on the Cripps negotiations had rather confused the officials there. I know from other sources that he has been talking somewhat indiscreetly here, and I found with great interest that his relations with Grady and the American Supply Mission were most unsatisfactory – so much so in fact that Grady and his friends who, during Johnson's recent illness, have been on their own, were apparently anxious to avoid meeting Johnson again and had at one time a scheme of their own for flying back to America without taking leave of him or letting him know. Nor am I quite sure as to what his relations are with the President . . . But it would be unfortunate if on his return to Washington he were to give a jaundiced or misleading impression of the position here, and it is with that consideration in mind that I have been pondering the case for a confidential message to Halifax through you.⁴

Linlithgow's information on tensions between Johnson and Grady was confirmed in a similar assessment by Roger Lumley, the Governor of Bombay.⁵

From the failure of the Cripps mission until August 1942, there was a lull in South Asian political history. In a hopeless war situation, the British were reluctant to offer any new

concessions to the Indians, who were not sure what course of action to take. It seemed that Nehru, Azad and Rajgopalachari wanted to establish a rapprochement with the British on some give-and-take basis avoiding any extremist retaliatory step. Nehru, in particular, wanted to make use of the American card since, having developed a personal rapport, he felt confident of some American official support for the Indian National Congress in its ordeal with the Raj – which, as later events showed, proved to be far-fetched. Rajgopalachari, coming from a vulnerable area like Madras, feared a possible Japanese invasion across the Bay of Bengal and argued for a dialogue with the Muslim League. He was ready to accept some of the League's demands, including 'Pakistan', to obtain its support for a common platform to acquire more concessions from the British. Gandhi, on the other hand, despite his formal withdrawal from the Congress, wielded enormous influence in its decision-making processes through his powerful political disciples like Sardar Patel or industrial financiers like Birla. Gandhi, unlike Nehru, Azad and Rajgopalachari, appeared more defiant at that stage and it seemed likely that the tussle between the two powerful factions of the Congress would ultimately lead to more chaotic party politics. Brokers such as Colonel Johnson relied upon the 'moderate' faction of the Congress to diminish Gandhi's influence by establishing a coalition government that would include Jinnah and these Congress leaders. In the wake of the Cripps mission Johnson communicated to FDR and Hull his own formula which stipulated such an arrangement.⁶ He had also favoured the designation of an Indian to hold the defence portfolio.

Johnson's proposals met a cold response because firstly, the British were not prepared to establish any 'representative' or 'national government' in India. Secondly, Linlithgow and Wavell rejected the proposal for an Indian to head the defence establishment. Thirdly, Johnson himself had become a controversial figure and the British were impatient to get rid of him. Fourthly, the US president circumscribed Johnson's efforts through a directive asking him to maintain a low profile.⁷ Fifthly, the Congress leadership was not at all accommodating toward the Muslim League or the Untouchables, unilaterally taking upon itself to be the only voice of the South Asians. The Congress not only challenged the League's claim to be the representative body of the Indian Muslims, but also tried to sabotage the League by

every possible means. Even Rajgopalachari's proposals, however realistic they had sounded to impartial observers, were rejected by the Congress high command.

When the Congress working committee met at Allahabad from 27 April to 2 May, it passed various resolutions condemning the Raj, many of which were banned from being published by the Government of India. On 2 May, the working committee also rejected Rajgopalachari's resolution recommending negotiations with the Muslim League. Among other things this made it quite clear to the South Asian Muslims that the Congress was hostile to the League, which represented cross-sections of the Indian Muslims. Moreover, it became obvious that the Congress was gradually heading toward a policy of confrontation with the British government in India. It was gathering its strength to challenge the British at a time when the Japanese had started bombing Chittagong; the Germans had invaded the Crimea; Rommel was beginning his attack on Gazala; and Burma and Tobruk were both lost to the Axis powers, with a stalemate at El Alamein. In other words, finally realising the precarious war situation, the Congress tried to pressurise the British into accepting its demands. No other strategy could have been better timed.

The influence of Gandhi on the Congress was increasing and he ridiculed Rajgopalachari's desire to negotiate with Jinnah on 'Pakistan'. Gandhi derided both the Madras leader and Jinnah when he observed:

Rajaji concedes Pakistan. But has Jinnah even moved an inch to discuss matters with him. No. For Jinnah's game is to bring Government pressure on the Congress and Congress pressure on the Government, or both. Rajaji says, let India be split up. But I cannot agree. I cannot swallow the splitting of India. I alone know what pain the thought has caused me. Rajaji is an old friend and an astute politician. And only I know what I suffered to let him go. But he is strongwilled. He believes that he will achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. But what after all is Pakistan? What does it mean? Besides, when Cripps came Rajaji was for acceptance.

Gandhi had this to say about Nehru:

Jawaharlal tried his utmost to get the demand conceded. You

know what Jawahar is: a straightforward man. But nothing doing. And that is what I had said all along with terrible suffering of mind. And that is what people – the millions of India told me at the station . . . But Rajaji still hopes to achieve that which the British have determined will not be achieved. Hindu-Muslim unity. What really is Pakistan? Jinnah has never really explained it . . . Musulmans have failed to explain it to me. Indeed when I am asked to solve the deadlock, I admit I can't do anything about it. . . . Rajaji talks of the Lahore Resolution. But the resolution is out of consideration. For where is Independence? Anarchy is the only way.

Gandhi hoped to win both Nehru and Azad back and then 'there will be only my voice and the voice of Rajaji and you can decide which of the two to follow.'⁸ Given Gandhi's overriding influence, both Rajaji's suggestion and Nehru's and Azad's moderation died their death. The Congress chose a different path and pushed the Indian Muslims almost against the wall.

JOHNSON'S MISSION AXED

In the absence of Colonel Johnson from the subcontinent, George Merrell, the officer-in-charge at the US mission in New Delhi, kept the State Department as well as the personal representative abreast of the latest events in the subcontinent. He sent an alarming telegram to Washington stating Gandhi's pre-eminent position in the Congress and his prospective moves to launch a mass civil disobedience movement within a month. Such a movement would affect Allied war efforts and could be thwarted by establishing a 'National Government at the center' with the involvement of Nehru, Rajgopalachari and Jinnah. Merrell informed his superiors in the US capital that James L. Berry, the secretary of the American mission at New Delhi, planned to see Nehru on his return from holiday.⁹

Accordingly, Berry met Nehru on 24 May, and expressed his concern about the proposed agitation, though the Indian leader found it premature and difficult to express his opinion. Nehru handed to Berry a message for Colonel Johnson, describing the British attitude as 'irritating to Indians'. In his letter Nehru promised his American friend that he could see Gandhi soon.¹⁰

Nehru's meetings with the American diplomats and his messages for Colonel Johnson resulted in some curious speculation in a section of the press. *The Hindustan Times* of 27 May carried a news-item from the *Bombay Chronicle* on the authority of its London correspondent stating 'that Pandit Nehru is proceeding to Washington as President Roosevelt is anxious to discuss with him India's defences and war production'. The correspondent identified the National Broadcasting Corporation as his source.¹¹ Although Linlithgow was not certain of its authenticity, he requested Leopold Amery to make further enquiries through Halifax in Washington 'or to consider with him how best to head President off any such idea should it enter his mind. I am sure we ought not to wait till invitation to Nehru has issued but rather get in first word.'¹² The viceroy, to his satisfaction, received information from Nalini Sarker the very next day that he 'had been asked by Colonel Johnson whether he thought Nehru was the right man to settle things with the President if invited to the United States for that purpose. He had replied that Nehru was quite incapable of delivering the goods in such an event.'¹³ Press speculation about Nehru's visit proved unfounded and only served to infuriate the viceroy and certain members of Churchill's cabinet. Linlithgow expressed his inner feelings to Amery on Johnson's return to India by observing: 'I have no reason to doubt entire accuracy of Sarker's statement, but it shows very clearly dangers involved in Johnson's method of handling business here, and brings out also extreme importance of our putting a stop at once to any idea of an invitation of this type from the United States Government . . . Whether in the light of all that has taken place Johnson remains the right man to return here to represent the President is not for me to say, but you will no doubt be able to form your own judgement.'¹⁴ Amery forwarded Linlithgow's letter to Churchill as well as to Anthony Eden, suggesting that Halifax be informed of the viceroy's views on Johnson's expected return to the subcontinent.¹⁵ It is very important to note that Linlithgow had been against any similar American venture in the subcontinent. The viceroy's views received a prompt response from Churchill who, in a brief message to Harry Hopkins, expressed his resentment of Johnson's 'alarmist reports about the attitude of the Indian population'.¹⁶ Amery, very emphatically, asked Churchill to stop the return of Johnson: 'This fellow Johnson is rather too much of a

good thing. Is it at all possible to prevent his return to India?'¹⁷

In the meantime, the Indian agent-general, Bajpai, called on FDR to assess his views of the Indian geo-political situation. Bajpai found the president displeased with Gandhi though he retained a 'fondness for Nehru', regarding him 'as Gandhi's victim rather than a political Hamlet'. Bajpai informed Linlithgow that FDR was 'toying with idea of inviting Sir S. Cripps to America to discuss general war situation but really to talk about India'. According to Girja Bajpai's personal viewpoint, Cripps' visit could prove an 'antidote' to Johnson's reports.¹⁸

Churchill was greatly moved by Linlithgow's and Amery's serious objections to Johnson's intended return, and therefore sent a second telegram to Hopkins on the subject. He took advantage of the opportunity to express his simultaneous indignation that any sort of invitation might be issued to Nehru to visit the USA. Churchill told Hopkins: 'There are rumours that the President will invite Pandit Nehru to the United States. I hope there is no truth in this, and that anyway the President will consult me before hand. We do not at all relish the prospect of Johnson's return to India. The Viceroy is also much perturbed at the prospect. We are fighting to defend this mass of helpless Indians from imminent invasion. I know you will remember my many difficulties.'¹⁹ The entire British official machinery was geared to ward off Johnson's prospective return to the subcontinent and to forestall any possible invitation for Nehru to visit America. These efforts bore fruit, for only one day later Hopkins informed Churchill: 'Rumours relative to invitation to Nehru entirely unfounded. Johnson ill and has no plans to return to India.'²⁰ Hopkins' message was further elaborated by a confidential letter from Halifax to Linlithgow which must have had a positive effect on the viceroy. The ambassador observed: 'Johnson has been ill since his return and in none of the talks I have had with President, Hull, or other leading personalities, have I seen any sign that they have been unduly influenced by his reports or views. I do not think he is very highly regarded here, and I shall not be surprised if he does not return to India.'²¹ Thus, Johnson's mission was swept aside leaving Nehru and his colleagues alone, with a cautious US administration attending only to military matters regarding India and not taking upon itself any new persuasive role on the Indian political future.

Nehru, still counting on the good offices of Johnson, sent a detailed letter to the colonel describing his recent meeting with Gandhi. Nehru, in a way, felt Gandhi's frustration over British stubbornness was fully justified and genuinely believed that 'unreasonable and unjust orders' should be resisted by the Indians, since 'he cannot remain passive spectator of what is happening and any risks [are] preferable to submission to repression of people and consequent spiritual degradation'.²² Johnson was still convalescing in hospital when Nehru's message reached him and he telephoned Hull asking him to forward a brief reply to the Congress leader. While expressing his sympathy for Nehru and congratulating him on his anti-Japanese speeches, Johnson observed: 'I believe you should know that Mr. Gandhi's statements are being misunderstood in the United States and are being construed as opposing our war aims.'²³

THE HOLKAR CONTROVERSY

Maharaja Holkar of Indore, building high hopes on American support to resolve the Indian crisis, published a letter in the press on 28 May 1942. The British misunderstood his intention and accused him of inviting FDR to arbitrate between the British government and 'the various groups in India'. The British government, moved by its own whims, took serious note of the open letter and reprimanded Holkar for 'the grave irregularity'. Linlithgow demanded 'not only an explanation which you may wish to offer, but also the expression of your firm resolve not again to venture into any irregularity of this kind'.²⁴ The US consul in Bombay, Donovan, had read the Maharaja's 'strongly worded appeal for the direct intervention of the United States in the present impasse between India and Great Britain'. He was not formally given any copy of it for onward dispatch to the State Department and neither did the Maharaja use any other channel to send it to the president. It thus remained an open letter which generated some interesting speculation in the press in India, Britain and the United States. Holkar had an American wife who was visiting the USA at the time but even she did not carry her husband's letter for the White House. However, Holkar's suggestion apparently carried no weight

among other Indian princes who, of course, could not afford to annoy the British. According to the American consul, Holkar's appeal had been prompted by 'his very real concern over the critical political situation now developing in India which some experienced observers believe may result in mass civil disobedience within the next few months.'²⁵

Sir Ronald Campbell, minister at the British embassy in Washington, raised the issue with Sumner Welles on 1 June 1942. According to Campbell, the letter was addressed to FDR 'urging intervention by the United States, China, and the Soviet Union in order that these powers might undertake the immediate arbitration of the disputes between India and Great Britain'. Campbell accused Donovan of forwarding a copy of Holkar's letter to Reuters while the Maharanee was on her way to America with the original copy. The British minister described Holkar as 'a psychopathic case to whom no importance should be attributed'. He recommended against any official reply to the letter and in the event that it was considered necessary the reply should be limited to a brief acknowledgement 'to be sent through official channels' – meaning thereby Lord Halifax and not Bajpai. On Donovan's specific involvement in the case, Campbell had no concrete information.²⁶

When probed,²⁷ Consul Donovan from Bombay denied any direct or indirect correspondence with Indore or any role in the preparation of the letter. He had neither seen nor sent the letter to Washington and, explaining his innocence, he observed: 'At the request of a friend who is a press correspondent, I delivered to Reuters a sealed cover which unknown to me contained text of Maharaja's letter. I did this as a personal favor to save time for my friend since I happened to be passing by Reuters office. Later that day I was informed by my friend of contents of cover.'²⁸ Holkar had no choice but to apologise to Linlithgow for publishing the letter: 'The intention of my open letter, which was written, not on advice but on my own initiative, was that its publication might contribute to a solution of the political tangle which is so widely being made an excuse, by certain political factions for failure to assist in India's war effort, and which, in fact, does seriously obstruct the building up of India's military strength.' Yet he denied having sent the letter to President Roosevelt, he had only published it in the press, for which he forwarded his regrets.²⁹ The Holkar affair revealed the fact that

the British had become jittery and reacted very strongly even to rumours justifying any outside interference in the Indian crisis. There is no record of Holkar's letter in the State Department archival holdings or in the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York, only references to it here and there. Consul Donovan, in his telegram of 29 May, had actually volunteered to send a summary or the full text of the letter, yet nobody in the State Department cared to have it.

A VIGILANT YET NON-ASSERTIVE STATE DEPARTMENT

After the arrival of Colonel Johnson in the USA, his prolonged illness and the concerted British efforts to forestall his expected return to the subcontinent, it became clear to American strategists that the best policy *vis-à-vis* India would be to observe developments minutely without any formal commitment. Such a policy suited the Raj as the British government could manipulate the situation to its own maximum interests. Johnson's post remained vacant at a time when, given the war situation and the forthcoming Congress civil revolt, a strong American diplomatic presence was needed at the American mission in New Delhi. The British government had skilfully managed the post-Cripps mission situation to their advantage and – given the meagre South Asian lobby in the United States – the Indian National Congress usually received the blame while the British were eulogised. President Roosevelt's initiatives seemed to have been abortive, thanks to British machinations, and it was left to the State Department to retain a 'routine' interest in subcontinental affairs. The White House was expected to provide consistent leadership on such complex problems, but seems to have stepped back temporarily at least. More visits were made by Halifax, Campbell and Bajpai to the State Department to provide 'feedback' on India – understandably this was one-sided, deriding the ability of South Asian nationalists to come to a tangible agreement among themselves before striking at the British. How the State Department perceived the Indian problem, has been aptly described by Cordell Hull who headed it for thirteen crucial years under FDR. He devoted one complete chapter, 'Independence for India' to a defence of American policy towards

British India, claiming that after Pearl Harbor FDR and the Secretary of State were of the view that the Indians would cooperate wholeheartedly with the British if they were given assurances on India's independence. In other words, war needs had necessitated a political resolution, which in peacetime might not have been forthcoming. Hull summarised American policy and British reservations as follows:

we recognized that any change in India's constitutional status would be brought about only if Great Britain were in agreement, and we realized full well that, with Britain fighting for her life, we should take no step and utter no words that would impede her struggle. We also knew that the British Government, and Prime Minister Churchill in particular, considered India their own problem, and that any attempt by the United States to bring pressure to solve it might give rise to controversy between our two governments and peoples. It was therefore a delicate question how far we could go in any representations to the British to grant independence, or in any actions that might encourage the Indians to demand it immediately.³⁰

Cordell Hull claims a unanimity of views on India between FDR and himself, both in favour of South Asian independence and avoiding open statements so as not to hurt American relations with the British:

But in private conversations the President talked very bluntly about India with Prime Minister Churchill just as I was talking with British Ambassador Halifax. The President was entirely of the same mind as myself. While for the sake of good relations with Britain we could not tell the country what we were saying privately, we were saying everything that the most enthusiastic supporter of India's freedom could have expected, and we were convinced that the American people were with us.³¹

Hull called Halifax to his office in early-June, 1942, to discuss some 'disquieting news' coming both from India and China. The British ambassador expressed his ignorance about the latest information from the war front and the Indian internal scenario. However, he mentioned the possibility of sending an impartial commission to investigate the complex problems and conditions in

India. Hull did not feel so enthusiastic about the new scheme.³² A few days later, Bajpai came to see Hull at his own request and gave the impression that Gandhi was 'doing all in his power to play into the hands of the Japanese by preaching non-resistance and that no practical steps of resistance were being advocated by the other leaders, including Nehru'. According to Bajpai, 'Gandhi did not have great influence in spreading his doctrines but it was only when he would go to a given city, such as Calcutta, and Bombay, and call on the people to adopt his policy of non-resistance that his influence would be heavy.'³³ On the same day Merrell submitted a report on Gandhi's intention to launch a civil disobedience movement that might hamper American military activities in India.³⁴ Thus, Gandhi became the focal point for the State Department as was the case with the British government, although from a different perspective. The British government in India was weary of Gandhi and held him responsible for arousing the masses against the Raj. They also found his popularity in America very damaging to their imperial interests. Before the beginning of the Quit India Movement, Linlithgow, in a message to Amery, expressed his apprehensions about such an American reaction – which he had heard about from visiting American press correspondents. Some coercive measures against Gandhi and other Congress leaders were then being contemplated by the British government, and Linlithgow felt 'that Gandhi's publicity value in America and its appeal to the more emotional side of opinion in the United States is so great that his cause may command some measure of support'. The viceroy suggested the deportation of Gandhi and Nehru as a way out in case of an open rebellion by the INC.³⁵

GANDHI, FDR AND JINNAH

Gandhi did not care to resolve the Hindu-Muslim dissensions, as demanded by Jinnah, before any settlement could take place on an all-India basis. Similarly, the Untouchables under Ambedkar, and the princes felt apprehensive about Hindu majority rule if the proper safeguards were not sorted out prior to any such settlement. Gandhi would not wait for such an agreement, which would mean bringing the Congress to the negotiating table at par with the AIML and other religio-political groups.

Gandhi and his followers in the INC wanted independence before anything else. Given their declared views on non-Hindu non-Congress groups this created distrust among the latter, who were equally involved in the struggle for independence but wanted first to put the whole house in order. Such an arrangement was unlikely to be possible given the open denigration and denial of the other South Asian nationalist forces by Congress. Rajgopalachari differed with Gandhi on this policy matter and was cornered, whereas Nehru and Azad gradually accepted Rajaji's stance and became quiet. In such a state of affairs, when the Congress revolted against the Raj through its Quit India Movement, the alienated groups stayed aloof and from the start the INC suffered a strategic blow of its own making. Even Subhas Bose and other extremist leaders of the Indian National Army in exile did not defend the Congress leadership.

Jinnah, in a press statement on 22 June, questioned Congress policies toward the League and the Muslim demand for Pakistan. He rebuked Gandhi by observing:

I am glad Gandhi has at least openly declared that unity and Hindu-Muslim settlement can only come after achievement of India's independence, and has thereby thrown off cloak that he has worn for last 22 years. He had tried to fool Muslims but has at least shown himself in true colours. I have held that Gandhi never wanted to settle Hindu-Muslim question except on his own terms of Hindu domination. He alone has dashed our hopes wherever there was chance of agreement.

Jinnah invited the Congress leaders like Nehru to negotiate with the League and other parties before making any major move to oust the British. He made it clear: 'It is libel to say that League favours continuation of British Raj.' According to Jinnah, the League was not going to surrender its creed even if the Congress tried to create anarchic conditions in the subcontinent:

Present threat of 'big move' is intended to coerce distress and shake Britain to accede to Gandhi's demand. Britain will be making greatest blunder if she surrenders to Congress in any manner detrimental to interests of Muslim India . . . Nothing is going to move us from purpose of achieving Pakistan. When time comes League Working Committee will decide how to face new situation, and I will call Working Committee meeting as soon as occasion arises.³⁶

Gandhi, quite conscious of his influence abroad, tried to evince the support of leaders like Chiang Kai-shek, who was already sympathetic toward the Congress. He informed the Chinese nationalist of growing anti-British feelings in the sub-continent and that he was planning to launch a movement 'which should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favor of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence.'³⁷

Gandhi wrote his only letter to FDR on 1 July 1942, aimed at gaining official American support. The letter was sent through an American journalist, Louis Fischer, who enjoyed access to the White House. Gandhi's letter began by praising the United States, where Gandhi had a number of friends and South Asian students. He acknowledged having 'profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson. I say this to tell you how much I am connected with your country.' Then, Gandhi mentioned his fondness for Britain where he had completed his own legal education – his problem was with the government that resisted his demand for independence. He added: 'The policy of the Indian National Congress, largely guided by me has been one of non-embarrassment to Britain, consistently with the honourable working of the Congress, admittedly the largest political organisation, of the largest standing in India.' Gandhi questioned the Allied war objectives of making the world safe for democracy when 'India and, for that matter Africa are exploited by Great Britain, and America has the Negro problem in her own home.' He suggested that a free Indian government could better serve the Allied interests on an equal footing.³⁸ This letter did not seem threatening or offensive except in the reference to the plight of Afro-Americans, which might have caused some resentment in the echelons of the US government. Without being a tirade against the British, the letter was suggestive in nature. However, by the time the White House and State Department were able to prepare a reply to it, Gandhi was already in gaol – he had been arrested on 9 August, the day after the Congress launched its Quit India Movement.

Hull was asked to prepare a response to Gandhi's letter and it took him exactly a month to finalise the draft. In his reply FDR justified American policy and observed that his country had 'consistently striven for and supported policies of fair dealing, of

fair play, and of related principles looking towards the creation of harmonious relations between nations. Nevertheless, now that war has come as a result of Axis dreams of world conquest, we, together with many other nations, are making a supreme effort to defeat those who would deny forever all hope of freedom throughout the world.³⁹ FDR did not say a word on British policy or the Indian political crisis and clearly avoided taking a position on either side. The letter was sent to Merrell on 5 August for delivery to Gandhi:

By the time it arrived, however, Gandhi had been put in jail. We then faced a decision as to whether to ask the British to deliver it to Gandhi whether to deliver it to the only Congress Party leader not then in prison, who was antagonistic to Gandhi, or to retain it in the Mission's files until it could be delivered to Gandhi directly. I recommended the third choice to the President, who agreed. The letter could not be delivered until two years later.⁴⁰

The Congress working committee meeting at Wardha in the second week of July 1942, passed some resolutions which demanded British withdrawal from the subcontinent, yet were considered 'comparatively moderate' – presumably due to the efforts of Azad and Nehru. One of the committee's demands – although not presented very emphatically – was for the convening of a constituent assembly 'in order to prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people'. This was interpreted as a 'veiled gesture to Muslim League since by implication it recognizes the right of self-determination of the Muslims should the new constitution prove unacceptable to them'.⁴¹ In fact, this was wrong as Gandhi did not give priority to a reconciliation with the League prior to any move for Indian independence. In a revealing article in his *Harijan*, he dwelt at great length on the Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan: 'But I see that for the moment I cannot reach the Muslim mind. The Muslim League blocks my way. In their opinion I am thoroughly untrustworthy. I do not know how to get rid of the distrust.' Regarding the demand for Pakistan, he simply said: 'It is not my giving.' He observed that if he 'felt convinced of the rightness of the demand, I should certainly work for it side by side with the League. But I do not. I would like to be convinced. Nobody has yet told me all its implications. Only the protagonists know what they want and mean. I plead

for such an exposition. Surely Pakistanis want to convert the opposition, not to force them? Has an attempt been ever made to meet the opposition in a friendly manner and to convert them? I am sure the Congress is willing to be converted, let alone one.' On the other hand, in the same issue of *Harijan* Gandhi defined Pakistan as 'a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly sovereign state'. He was confused about the question and asked, 'But what am I to do meanwhile.' Certainly he rejected the idea of an early settlement among the various political groups and demanded that the British leave India to her fate. 'The Congress and the League, best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all.'⁴²

Jinnah took Gandhi at his word and two days later issued a press statement, describing Gandhi's claim that Congress was willing to be converted on Pakistan as his 'latest bait'. Quoting from the resolutions passed at the Congress working committee in Allahabad, Jinnah questioned the sincerity of the Congress leadership toward the Muslim League and cited the case of Rajgopalachari, who was expelled because of his suggestion that there should be a dialogue with the League by accepting its demand for Pakistan. Jinnah expressed himself very vocally on Gandhi's strategy:

The picture that he draws of the result of his movement, his own aim and object being to remove British power from India, means, on his own showing, that there will ensue a rule of jungle. But he knows that he does not mean that. It is merely a ruse to coerce and embarrass the British Government to surrender to the establishment of Hindu Raj in this subcontinent. I suppose he means to set up Hindudom.

Jinnah explained the League's creed on Indian independence, which was clearly different from that of the Congress:

What we want is the independence of Hindus and Moslems and others. Mr. Gandhi by independence means Congress Raj. We do not believe in Pakistan through Britannia aid or under the British aegis. Pakistan is an article of faith with Moslem India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal and Moslem India is ready and willing to face from whatever quarter the opposition and obstacles that may concert.

He urged Gandhi 'to give up the game of fooling the Moslems by insinuating that we depend upon the British for the achievement of our goal of Pakistan and as one of the foremost leaders of Hindu India and as a realist to show his sincerity and frankness for an honourable settlement.'⁴³

It is interesting to note that from July 1942, Consul Merrell at the American mission in New Delhi had begun reporting more frequently on Muslim politics and the Pakistan movement. Of course, the INC in general and Gandhi in particular received wider coverage in the American diplomatic correspondence, but most political observers had gradually come to realise that the League under Jinnah's leadership was a massive and representative Muslim political organisation in the subcontinent. Merrell had his own reservations about the League's demand for Pakistan and, considered it 'the greatest, if not the only, bargaining point the League has and Jinnah refuses to elucidate until time comes for him to throw it on bargaining counter, probably with exaggerated claims in order to extract greatest possible concessions from Congress. To define now would be to limit and Jinnah declines to be drawn.' The American diplomat felt that Muslims of every strata were attracted by the idea of Pakistan as a national home, although realistically speaking it seemed a far-fetched idea. According to him, the proposed areas of Pakistan – such as Sind, Baluchistan and the NWFP – were largely deficit budget areas operating only by means of assistance from the central government. The Punjab was the exception, since it benefited to the extent of 300 million rupees from the presence of military establishments and large endowments like salaries and pensions. But if it were to secede from Hindu India, its contributory military sector would suffer from division and displacement. Thus, from the viewpoint of finances and logistics, the analysis concluded that it was not a tangible demand and that Jinnah was therefore 'disinclined to define his scheme at this time and thus subject it to a plethora of criticism which would produce defections in his own ranks'.

George Merrell referred to Jinnah's argument that the Muslims in the subcontinent were not merely a minority as defined by Gandhi, but a nation fully entitled to self-determination:

Jinnah desires independence no less strongly than Gandhi but the former demands it for two separate States Pakistan and Hindustan, while the latter demands it for a United India

which does not exist. This is significance of Jinnah's statement that Gandhi's conception of independence is different from his. Jinnah will not join hands with Congress in demanding complete withdrawal of British power such as envisaged by Gandhi in *Harijan* unless Congress first comes [to] terms with him on question of Pakistan and recognition of Muslim League as only organization entitled to speak for Muslim India. He believes possibly quite rightly, that complete withdrawal of British power prior to a settlement between him and Congress would result in the Muslims being crushed under heel of Hindu majority. This expresses significance of Jinnah's request to Gandhi to show his sincerity by seeking an honorable settlement.

As Merrell put it, Jinnah was prepared to form an interim national government with the Congress for the duration of the war but was absolutely opposed to any settlement on British withdrawal without a prior agreement on major issues. Merrell acknowledged forthrightly that nowhere in his statements or speeches did 'Jinnah oppose complete transfer of power'. After giving his account of the viewpoints held by Gandhi and Jinnah, Merrell estimated that the Muslim League would not agree to the Congress working committee's demands, as put forth at its Wardha session.

Although apparently sceptical of Pakistan as a practical entity, Merrell (unlike Johnson) felt no qualms about acknowledging that Jinnah held convincing arguments and spoke from a position of strength.⁴⁴ As later events were to show, by pursuing its rigid stance under Gandhi's predominance and refusing to negotiate with the League, the INC backed the wrong horse. If it had come to terms with the Muslim League at that time, it could have facilitated an early and perhaps peaceful resolution of the Indian crisis and prevented the subsequent painful experiences – the exodus of vast population groups amidst the wave of bloodshed, looting and arson let loose at the time of independence. The British could have been made to accept mutually agreed terms and the transfer of power would not have become such a traumatic and gory experience for generations in the subcontinent.

Congress policies remained the focal point for the State Department with field officers like James Berry pinning their hopes on Nehru as a moderating influence on Gandhi – who was

drifting toward a policy of confrontation with the government that could impede the Allied war effort. Nehru seems to have accepted Gandhi's line of argument that there could be no agreement between the League and the Congress as long as the British were in the subcontinent and that they could come to terms immediately after the British departure. Nehru was also hopeful that the Congress, because of its Wardha resolutions, could assume power in all cadres and that Linlithgow would make his exit – even though the British could pre-empt them by gaoling the Congress working committee.⁴⁵

AZAD AS A NEW ALTERNATIVE

When Nehru appeared to be following Gandhi in the direction of defiance, the American diplomats in New Delhi started viewing Maulana Azad as a new alternative who could be effective in leading the INC toward a policy of moderation. Azad seemed more acceptable because of his Muslim background and exceptional scholarly accomplishments. In an interview, Azad had hinted at the possibility of negotiations in the event of an Allied declaration guaranteeing India's independence soon after the war.⁴⁶ In fact, the journalist who interviewed Azad was 'a good friend of the U.S. Mission and at Mission's request posed the question as to the possibility of negotiation'. Both Merrell and Berry were aware of a lack of unanimity in the Congress working committee over the future course of action. While Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and others prepared to follow a policy of agitation, Azad hoped for a new initiative from the Allies to resolve the crisis by means of a declaration committing themselves to the ultimate freedom of the subcontinent. Azad was willing to carry the other leaders along if President Roosevelt, on behalf of the Allies, would make a personal assurance to this effect. The mission officials were enthused by Azad's optimism and drafted a proposed statement for the consideration of the State Department and the White House.

According to their plan, FDR would refer to the Wardha resolution of 14 July and the statement of Jinnah and would then announce: 'I am willing to submit an arrangement for an interim government, which I believe should prove reasonable to all sections of political thought in India and which should enable

the country to play a real part in its own defense . . . Upon receipt of the assent of these groups and their agreement to abide by my decision, I will submit an interim plan and pledge its immediate implementation.' Merrell suggested the presidential statement should be made before the 4 August session of the Congress working committee in Bombay. He also discussed the status of Azad in the Congress *vis-à-vis* Gandhi and Nehru, and felt that in the event of such a statement Azad's position would be strengthened. Of course, if they did not accept FDR's personal assurance it would prove disastrous for their party:

It is believed that President's declaration would be all but irresistible. In addition, Azad holds a very strong hand. The Congress has always held itself out to be not a communal but a national party which represents all sections of the country including Muslims. I am convinced that Azad and his Muslim colleagues would actually quit the Congress in case of refusal of declaration . . . The gloating and derisive laughter of Jinnah and his Muslim League would resound throughout India. That a declaration in the form suggested above would prove acceptable to Jinnah is hardly open to question.

Merrell recommended that the interim government should allocate seats in the cabinet as follows:

European	1 (C.-in-C.)
Hindus	6 (4 Congress, 1 Labour, 1 Hindu Mahasabha)
Muslims	5 (4 Muslim League, 1 non-Muslim League)
Depressed classes	1
Parsis	1
Sikhs	1

He felt that this composition would be acceptable to all with the personal guarantees provided by FDR.⁴⁷

Merrell's proposal was significant on three counts: firstly, in league with Colonel Johnson's ambitions, it suggested a more assertive American role in the South Asian political crisis. Secondly, he tried to dispel the image that the politics of the subcontinent was merely a Hindu domain, and to have the Muslims accepted as an important political reality. Thirdly, Merrell genuinely regarded the League as an equal factor in the

resolution of South Asian political affairs. It is surprising that the American diplomats then stationed in India understood the potential of the Muslim League whereas the Congress, itself an Indian organisation, was determined to deny its very existence or representative character. Merrell regularly argued for the acceptance of his proposals⁴⁸ and even suggested the appointment of William Phillips as the American representative in New Delhi to initiate American efforts for the resolution of the Indian crisis.⁴⁹ Phillips, a former ambassador in Italy, was then based in London as the director of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

CHIANG KAI-SHEK WRITES TO FDR

When Merrell was recommending a presidential venture to resolve the Indian political intricacies, Chiang Kai-shek, apprehensive of the war situation and the defiant attitude of the Congress, wrote a long letter to Roosevelt urging him to use his offices for arbitration between the British and the Indians. He expressed his fears that an Indian revolt would produce an adverse situation for the Allies and pleaded for a timely announcement by the British government under American persuasion to prevent this. The letter was very critical of the British government but presented a sympathetic view of the South Asian nationalists, basing the arguments on strategic, political and psychological factors. Leaving his 'disinterested advice' aside, Chiang requested FDR to 'advise both Britain and India in the name of justice and righteousness to seek a reasonable and satisfactory solution'.⁵⁰ The message, along with additional verbal explanations, was delivered personally to Sumner Welles by Dr T. V. Soong, visiting Chinese Foreign Minister on 28 July 1942.⁵¹ The next day FDR called Welles to draft a message for Churchill to be forwarded along with Chiang's letter, and Welles used the opportunity to express his support for Chiang's view on the subcontinent.⁵² The Chinese persuasion had an impact in Washington, since FDR forwarded Chiang's letter to Churchill soliciting his suggestions 'with regard to the nature of the reply I should make to him'.⁵³ Churchill and Amery tried to restrain FDR from any action regarding India such as that proposed by Chiang, arguing that it could destabilise the government in India.⁵⁴ Accordingly, FDR sent a curt reply to Chiang suggesting that both America and China should 'refrain from action', at

least for the time being.⁵⁵ The US government was not prepared to get embroiled in the South Asian impasse, though it felt concerned about Indian political developments. Hull claimed to have 'India in my mind, among other peoples' when he gave a radio address on 23 July 1942 – though he did not mention it by name while referring to the applicability of the Atlantic Charter.⁵⁶

The British government and other political observers were anxiously awaiting the meeting of the Congress working committee to be held in August which was to finally decide on civil disobedience. Punjab's Unionist Chief Minister, Sikandar Hayat Khan, appealed to the INC not to defy the British government at a crucial juncture, since he hoped that the British would in any case grant independence to the subcontinent in the near future.⁵⁷ It appears that both sides had decided on a showdown. On 5 August, the British published some secret Congress documents that they had seized, causing a strong uproar from pro-Congress quarters.⁵⁸ High British officials began a regular campaign to malign the INC among US officials. Amery accused the party of retreating 'from a position of reason to that of emotion'⁵⁹ and Minister Campbell handed over a letter from Attlee to Hull, which was addressed to FDR and blamed the INC for adopting a 'defeatist outlook'. Attlee hinted at the hopeless political situation prevailing in India as the government expected massive civil disobedience based on the general boycott by Congress:

It is the intention of the Government of India, as soon as the All-India Congress Committee pass or endorse a resolution containing threat of mass civil disobedience, promptly to order the detention of leaders, that is, of Gandhi and members of the Working Committee under the Defence of India Rules and it is possible that more prominent of them will be deported from India. The Working Committee, the All-India Congress Committee and each provincial Committee, but not the Indian National Congress Party as a whole, will be declared to be unlawful associations, their offices and funds seized, and all individuals arrested who are considered competent and likely to attempt to organize and launch a mass movement. The main object of this action will be to render the movement abortive.

Attlee had informed FDR in advance of the measures to be undertaken against the INC leaders in order to pre-empt pro-Congress sympathies in the USA.⁶⁰ On 8 August 1942, Merrell

reported on the intended official action against the INC leadership sometime during the night and anticipated a strong local reaction to the arrests: 'It is believed that such a headlong action would further deeply antagonize people of the country and possibly discredit Government even among moderates.'⁶¹ When the government put the prominent Congressites behind bars, the Quit India Movement developed after an appeal by Gandhi. This resulted in widescale arrests of party members at district and provincial levels as well as strict censorship of the press.⁶²

American diplomats feared that the Quit India Movement would become anti-American and hinder US war supplies to the Chinese through the subcontinent. This was not unfounded since Nehru, Azad and most of all Gandhi felt a deep sense of despondency over FDR's apparent inability to prevail upon Churchill to accept the nationalists' point of view. Gandhi, the unchallenged leader of the civil disobedience movement, had written as much in his *Harijan*: 'You [Americans] have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot, therefore, disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India.'⁶³ A few minor incidents took place in which American troops were involved, although quite accidentally as the mobs mistook them for Englishmen. Lauchlin Currie, administrative assistant to FDR, returning from a special mission to China for the president, stopped in New Delhi and expressed his fears that large-scale escalations of that type would occur when the non-violent movement entered a violent phase. He felt that the American troops should be given specific instructions through General Joseph W. Stillwell, commander of the US forces in India, China and Burma, and General George C. Marshall, chief of staff, US Army. Such directions would caution them against any appearance of participation in Indian internal political problems. Similarly, it should be emphasised that their safety was the sole responsibility of the Indian government.⁶⁴ Accordingly, on 18 August 1942 the State Department issued directions to this effect to the US troops in the subcontinent.⁶⁵

THE CHINESE AND MEXICAN CONCERN

Chiang Kai-shek sent another letter to FDR through T. V. Soong on 11 August, asking him 'as the inspired author of the

Atlantic Charter to take effective measures which undoubtedly have already occurred to you to solve the pressing problem now facing India'. Referring to his previous message, Chiang expressed his grave concern over the deterioration of the political situation in the subcontinent.⁶⁶ On this occasion FDR was prompt in his reply, describing the deadlock between the British and the INC as 'unfortunate for all concerned'. Nevertheless, the president did not want to make the United States a party in the controversy: 'The Government of the United States has thus far been of the opinion that it could exert its influence and efforts more effectively in this matter by refraining from offering active mediation to both sides in the controversy which seems to be a combination of many facts and factors.'⁶⁷

On a directive from the president of his country, Don Francisco Castillo Najera, the Mexican ambassador in Washington, met Sumner Welles on 12 August to inform him that 'agitation of considerable volume had already been manifest in Mexico for some steps to be taken looking towards intervention by the United Nations in favor of the granting of independence to the people of India by the British Government.' President Avila Camacho had been visited by labour leaders on 11 August, who asked him to approach the US government to initiate a concerted effort for reconciliation in cooperation with the Soviet government. Welles assured the ambassador of American interest in the amicable resolution of the South Asian crisis.⁶⁸

BRITISH ANXIETY OVER AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION

British diplomats in Washington were quite sensitive to any development that might distance the US government from its British counterpart, so they frequently visited the State Department to brief Hull or Welles on developments in India. Bajpai, Campbell and Halifax regularly called on the secretary and under-secretary to project the British official viewpoint, to solicit more military aid as suggested by Grady's technical mission or just to assess American views on the situation in India.⁶⁹ Interestingly, their views contrasted with what was happening in India as the British government was quite defensive about American public opinion. As mentioned earlier, Graham Spry, the Canadian

on the staff of Stafford Cripps, had been sent to the United States for special propaganda purposes soon after the breakdown of the Cripps mission. Spry, on instructions from Cripps, flew straight from Lagos to the USA and, after spending two months there, came back with a report titled 'India As a Factor in Anglo-American Relations'. The report gave a resumé of his activities and impressions together with recommendations on how to court favourable American public opinion. He had toured coast to coast from 22 April to 30 June and met US officials, including the president, besides holding meetings with 100 different groups of Americans. His impressions pinpointed an 'enduring', 'widespread' and persistent American interest in British India. According to Spry, British relations with India stirred nationalist feelings among the Americans who found parallels with their own eighteenth century anti-colonial experience: 'The American readiness to adopt a critical attitude towards British relations with India derives not from India itself, but from the very pattern of American nationalism.' The Americans felt a strong sense of commonality with Britain simultaneously with sentiments which arose from rivalry. They felt towards India the way they had done towards Ireland a few decades earlier. According to Spry's findings, the Americans felt a strong sympathy for the INC and were convinced that the Indians were united in their struggle for independence, which was denied to them by Britain for her own commercial and imperial reasons. If there had been no Cripps mission in 1942, the Americans would certainly have used the press and radio to insist on one.

The findings of Spry showed that the Cripps mission had achieved some positive points in American public opinion by demonstrating that the Indian problem was enormously complex. Despite some pro-Congress feelings, the people in government generally accepted the British version of developments. In conclusion, Spry underlined the growing significance of India as a factor in Anglo-American relations:

The role of India in Anglo-American relations is not of first significance, but at the moment of tension it could so become. It remains, however, a permanent factor in the complex of factors that determine American feelings, favourable or unfavourable, toward Britain. As such a factor, it is primarily a subject of Anglo-American relations; the views of Americans

about India are essentially part of the views of Americans about Britain. Therefore, the responsibility for information and propaganda about British relations with India, so many and such deep-rooted misconceptions of the Indian question in the United States, that I am led to state with emphasis that this responsibility seems not to have been adequately borne. It should be so borne.⁷⁰

Leopold Amery agreed with Graham Spry and felt that there was a great need to harness American public opinion regarding India. He suggested concerted efforts both by the Indian agent-general and the British Information Service to propagate information about 'India's war efforts and the military consequences of the Congress Party's attitude'.⁷¹

Another instance of British sensitivity over any pro-India opinion in the USA is provided by rumours circulating in July about a possible visit to the subcontinent by Wendell Willkie, the Republican presidential candidate in 1940, to assess and report personally to FDR on the Indian situation. This caused a certain amount of anxiety to Linlithgow who, basing his fears on the report by Reuters, asked Amery for confirmation, since to him such a venture might provide 'a very direct encouragement to Congress'.⁷² In another message two days later, the viceroy reported that Willkie was 'talking of an unofficial trip to the Middle East, Russia and China. He does not mention India'. However, Linlithgow urged Amery to convey to the Americans 'tactfully' that any such visit to India 'would not be welcome for the present'.⁷³ Amery suggested to Linlithgow that if Willkie passed through India on his way to China, 'it might not be a bad thing that in a purely private capacity he should have the opportunity of a talk with you and of forming his own impressions of the situation'.⁷⁴ Linlithgow's fears were communicated by Amery to Anthony Eden so that instructions might be sent to Campbell in Washington 'to warn the U.S. authorities that the visit may be an embarrassment unless Willkie makes it perfectly clear that he is proceeding to China as a private individual and is only passing through India for that purpose'. On instructions from Eden, the British embassy pursued the issue hotly. Campbell met Willkie and found it 'improbable that President Roosevelt would send Willkie as his personal representative, and still less probable that Willkie would prejudice his

not very secure reputation with the Republican Party by accepting a job as President Roosevelt's personal commissary.' Even if Willkie should decide to visit India en route to China and Russia, the British Foreign Office would warn him 'to exercise at all stages the greatest discretion as regards India'.⁷⁵

Linlithgow was sensitive to any possible visit by Americans like Willkie or Sherwood Eddy a well-known social worker – because the situation in the subcontinent was not yet stable. The British government wanted to preclude any outside 'interference' that might be used as an exposé in the world press. Consequently, the viceroy wrote in an agitated mood to Churchill about Johnson-type visitations:

I am engaged here in meeting by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security. Mob violence remains rampant over large tracts of the countryside and I am by no means confident that we may not see in September a formidable attempt to renew this widespread sabotage of our war efforts . . . These are the circumstances in which I am now threatened by visitations from Wendell Willkie and Sherwood Eddy. The latter threatens to come to India in the hope of helping by way of mediation. My experience of peripatetic Americans which is now extensive is that their zeal in teaching us our business is in inverse ratio to their understanding of even the most elementary of the problems with which we have to deal. My fear now is that these Americans may openly express a wish to see Congress leaders now under detention. Whether they themselves do or do not press for that, I am certain that Hindu press, which is always anxious to exploit the possibilities of American intervention in Indian affairs, will proclaim that they ought to see Gandhi and Nehru. Pressure of that nature is bound to be deeply damaging to my Government.⁷⁶

Before this message could be delivered to the US authorities through Anthony Eden, Willkie had already left and it was in Cairo that he was informed of British reservations about his proposed visit to India. Willkie did not want to go to India yet he promised to avoid any dangerous references. As well as Linlithgow, Amery had been pursuing the case in London and was able

to convince Churchill that such visitors would not be allowed to meet Congress leaders. The Secretary of State used Louis Fischer's statement on the Cripps mission to prove that the Americans caused unwarranted intervention and embarrassment to the British government. Louis Fischer, a noted American journalist with sympathies for the INC, had met several times with Gandhi, who had given him his letter to *FDR* for onward transmission. Through Fischer and the correspondents of the Associated Press, INS (International New Service) and the Time-Life Group, Gandhi had aired his views to America. In addition to Fischer, Preston Grover, Jack Belden and William Chaplin had reported on the Congress revolt to their news agencies. After the Cripps mission, Edgar Snow (the well-known China-hand) had witnessed the Allahabad session of the INC and interviewed Gandhi, Nehru, Azad, Rajgopalachari and Ambedkar in the company of John Patten Davies, a Foreign Service officer on the staff of General Stillwell. In his meeting with these Americans Rajgopalachari had expressed his criticism of the Congress for not negotiating with the League and thus depriving itself of a revolutionary opportunity at its disposal. On 5 August, soon after his return from India, Fischer had tried to see *FDR* – but the president did not agree to receive him. Fischer then sent his impressions of the Indian situation to the president in writing, looking critically at the British Indian policy and requesting an American initiative. He next tried to convince Hull who, as usual, was evasive and cautious. In British official circles, however, any such initiative by public and private figures caused consternation.

Louis Fischer, in his meeting with Halifax on 29 August, argued that Cripps had decided in favour of a national government and had then reneged on this offer. This was denied by Halifax but Fischer harboured grave suspicions. On the same day, Sherwood Eddy expressed a desire to visit India, and Halifax tried to dissuade him politely. Eddy already had the green light from Hull and had communicated his interest to *FDR*, but after his meeting with the ambassador he was in two minds.⁷⁷ The British were prepared if notables like Willkie or Eddy decided to visit India. The cabinet advised the viceroy to meet 'the better type of American and get our case across. Willkie is very well disposed and Winston adds especially

amenable to the influence of good champagne. Eddy is the kind of person who might be greatly influenced by a talk with Ambedkar about the position of the Untouchables.⁷⁸

However, Spry reported that British official efforts were not sufficient to contain pro-Indian feelings in the USA. Halifax, dwelling at great length on the subject in one of his dispatches, felt that in influential papers like the *Washington Post* columnists like Ernest Ludly were pressing the US government to assert its influence on its British counterpart for the establishment of a provisional government in the subcontinent. The United States could send Joseph Grew or William Philips to the subcontinent to bring about a truce between the British and the Indians at a time when Churchill and Amery had slammed the door shut against any new settlement. Even Harry Hopkins had confided to the British ambassador that strong pressure was being exerted on FDR. Halifax requested Eden to advise the British cabinet on some new initiative to counteract American public opinion: 'Otherwise I fear American press, which on the whole has stood by us remarkably well in recent Indian crisis, will rapidly and perhaps completely change its attitude much to the detriment of Anglo-American relations.'⁷⁹

Meanwhile on 26 August 1942, Wendell Willkie, the flamboyant Republican from Indiana, boarded a US Air Force aircraft in New York, which was to take him on a 49-day tour of thirteen countries covering 30,000 miles. His itinerary included North Africa, the Soviet Union and the Far East excluding India. The British Foreign Office, on the insistence of Linlithgow and Amery, had communicated its disapproval of Willkie's stop-over in India – although a message to that effect matured only after Willkie had embarked on his publicised visit of goodwill to the United Nations. FDR himself had dissuaded his formal political rival from the proposed visit to India. Curiously, Willkie had always been an Anglophile and, even before his election campaign in 1940, had aired his views vocally for American aid to Britain. Churchill enjoyed a very friendly rapport with Willkie but, in the light of the experience with Johnson and moved by Linlithgow and Amery, he had second thoughts about Willkie's visit at a time when the subcontinent was astir with the Quit India Movement. Before his departure for the East, Willkie had spoken of his concern over the Indian crisis, expressing his unanimity of views with Louis Fischer.⁸⁰

Willkie flew into Chungking in China from the Soviet Union without going to the subcontinent. By then, he knew that the Indian crisis was a major issue for the Afro-Asian world and, without naming it, he demanded a clear Allied position on the future of the colonised world once the war was over. In a press statement on 7 October, he emphasised the need for representative governments in the colonies in accordance with the nationalists' demands. He was more emphatic on these issues in his radio address to his own nation on 27 October 1942, when he shared his impressions and aspirations of the outside world with more than 35 million American listeners. His speech specifically expressed concern about the subcontinent and was broadcast by all the major networks across the nation. He acknowledged his personal confrontation with the issue from Cairo to China: 'People of the East who would like to count on us are doubtful. They cannot ascertain from our government's wishy-washy attitude towards the problem of India what we are likely to feel at the end of the war about all the other hundreds of millions of Eastern peoples.'⁸¹ Willkie's tirade against colonialism and his criticism of the US government for not being more assertive was hailed by pro-South Asia American people and press. *The New York Times* suggested that the American role proposed by Willkie would pose difficulties for the British allies and that the intricate issue should be taken up only after 'the salvation of our present world from Hitler today'.⁸² Dorothy Thompson, the well-known American columnist, took Willkie's mission to be part of his personal ambition for the presidential campaign of 1944.⁸³

The Quit India Movement was widely commented on and debated in the American press which occasionally broached American official policy about the subcontinent. Gandhi's ascetic philosophy and fasting attracted wider American interest, though officially the government pursued a non-interventionist policy.⁸⁴ It could not confine its concern merely to military-related issues as the political news and views kept coming to Washington from India as well as from various opinion groups in America. The South Asian expatriates like J. J. Singh, Anup Singh, Syud Hossein, Taraknath Das and others were engaged in lobbying for the Congress and had the support of a cross-section of urban-based Americans such as Norman Thomas, Pearl Buck, Thomas Villard, Roger Baldwin, Louis Bromfield, Frederick Schumann and Congressmen like Elmer Thomas,

Claude Pepper, Tom Connally, Robert M. La Follette and Clare Boothe Luce. J. J. Singh reactivated his India League of America and held meetings with well-known Americans to elicit their support for Indian independence. As well as street-corner meetings, campaigns were organised and on 28 September 1942, *The New York Times* carried an advertisement drafted by Pearl Buck and signed by fifty-five leading Americans and South Asians entitled 'The Time for Meditation is Now'. FDR and Chiang Kai-shek were requested to mediate between the British and Indians. It was followed by a rally at the New York Town Hall on 29 September 1942, with speeches by most of the signatories. Such rallies were organised in Washington, Philadelphia, Cambridge (Mass.) and San Francisco where the demand for an American mediatory effort was reiterated. In radio programmes featuring well-known figures like Bertrand Russell interviewed by Louis Fischer, the need was emphasised for a United Nations committee to tackle the Indian political deadlock.

Before concluding this chapter, it seems imperative to have a bird's eye-view of Muslim politics in the subcontinent during the Congress agitation. The AIML seriously fought any plan that denied rights to non-Hindu minorities. It wisely pursued a policy of moderation avoiding any radical departure from its stance to confrontation or compromise. Confident of its massive support among the South Asian Muslims, it avoided being opportunistic even during the Congress ordeal, and never made any arrangement under the table with the British at a time when it could have done so. The INC, on the other hand, declined to accept the AIML as the Muslim representative body.

The AIML working committee, at its Bombay session on 20 August, expressed its concern over the 'open rebellion' launched by the INC, which had 'resulted in lawlessness and considerable destruction of life and property'. This was interpreted as a tactic by the INC to force the British government to hand over the power to 'a Hindu oligarchy' which would then impose its own unilateralism on 100 million Indian Muslims. It was lamented that the INC not only refused these Muslims their right of self-determination but was not even prepared to negotiate with the AIML, insisting that this could 'only follow the withdrawal of British power from India'. According to the Bombay resolution of the working committee, the Cripps mission failed because the British refused to surrender all powers to the INC. The

Quit India Movement was a 'mere camouflage and what is really aimed at is supreme control of the country by the Congress'.

The working committee took the British government to task for being 'unresponsive to the Muslim League offer of cooperation. The appeasement of the Congress has been the central pivot of the Government's policy with barren and sterile results and has now culminated in open defiance of law and order.' The resolution made it clear that if Muslim cooperation was needed it could be possible only after 'the realization of the goal of Pakistan'. It also forbade Indian Muslims from any participation in the Quit India Movement.⁸⁵

The resolution ended speculation about the League's policy toward the Congress in the context of its mass agitation. Some official circles had harboured a notion that the Congress would authorise Gandhi to negotiate with Jinnah by agreeing to Pakistan in any future constitutional framework, while some had speculated that Gandhi would offer Jinnah a partnership in a national government intended to continue the pro-Allies war effort. Nothing of this type happened as the INC – motivated by its own specific outlook and ambitions – did not find it necessary to seek the support of the AIML and embarked alone on the mass agitation. Possibly, to have pursued a dialogue would have been tantamount to acknowledging that the AIML was the representative Muslim organisation – which the INC was not ready to accept under any circumstance.

7 William Phillips' Sojourn in the Subcontinent

The Quit India Movement pursued by the INC confronted the British Raj at a time when India was important to the Allies, engaged in a crucial war against the Japanese in China and the Axis forces in North Africa. The American forces depended vitally upon Indian road transport and railways from Karachi through Assam to Burma and China. Chiang Kai-shek was alarmed by the Congress revolt as it threatened the flow of supplies and any severe disruption in communications in the wake of political unrest might hamper his defence arrangements. As a fellow Asiatic nationalist, he felt strongly about the immediate resolution of the South Asian crisis and wrote very emphatic letters to FDR to that effect. During his tour of India, both Chiang Kai-shek and his wife had been deeply moved by the South Asian fervour for independence. The US government maintained a keen interest in India for political-military reasons. FDR and Secretary Hull were under constant pressure from various influential American quarters to intervene on behalf of the Indian nationalists. The US government tried to stay out of controversy so as not to invite British suspicion. Privately, FDR sympathised with the Indians but he did not assert his feelings, whereas Eleanor Roosevelt felt very strongly about South Asian independence. When Louis Johnson returned to the USA after the débâcle of the Cripps mission, the US government showed a rather low-key interest in Indian political affairs and confined itself to military-related issues. American diplomats stationed in the subcontinent continued reporting on political developments, occasionally suggesting renewed American conciliatory efforts. At a time when the American government was trying to give the appearance of being apolitical *vis-à-vis* India, American public opinion kept bothering the British decision-makers. A repetition of Johnson's approach was feared when Wendell Willkie and Sherwood Eddy wanted to visit India, although the British were able to forestall this. However, Fischer's pronouncements caused them a considerable amount of embarrassment.

The British government therefore concluded that the US

government could best respond to internal American pressure by nominating a successor to Wilson at its New Delhi mission. Besides, such a move could serve two additional purposes: it would allay FDR's personal doubts, if he had any, about British resistance to accepting any prominent American diplomatic presence in India and, secondly, the British could count on receiving undiminished American military aid since the US Congress would be mollified by the British acceptance of an American diplomat in the heart of the empire. Many Americans had begun to entertain serious doubts about the British desire to get out of India and felt strongly about continuing US aid to Britain. The very spirit of the Atlantic Charter had become questionable due to British reservations and not surprisingly many opinion groups held the view that the American military presence in India had been intended to support the Raj. Thus, both Ambassador Halifax and Agent-General Bajpai, in their meetings with the State Department officials, floated the idea of a senior American diplomat to head the Delhi mission.

The British government, in its own calculations, was ready to welcome a non-obtrusive and non-assertive Foreign Service careerist, a prototype of Thomas Wilson, and precluded the possibility of any American intervention. Bajpai advised Alling that 'by having adequate representation at New Delhi not only would this Government be kept better informed of developments but also an experienced representative would be able to bring his influence to bear upon the Viceroy.' He was perhaps being optimistic when he observed that Linlithgow, after seven years of preoccupation with the subcontinent, was 'more or less out of touch with outside opinion, particularly American opinion'.¹ In a meeting with Hull, Halifax hinted that Britain might be willing to resume negotiations with the Indians after the restoration of normalcy.² Privately, Bajpai expressed his scepticism about any rapprochement in the near future as long as the Churchill, Amery and Linlithgow trio remained at the helm.³ Halifax, in his briefings with State Department officials, avoided provocative arguments and played a very safe game. Very politely, he used his charm and his reputation as the former liberal viceroy, to broach the issue in a non-offensive manner, giving statements based on promises to be redeemed in the near future. He found a convenient entry through the issue of the vacant post of the US commissioner in New Delhi.

On behalf of the British Foreign Office, briefed by Linlithgow and Amery, Halifax made it clear that 'it would be very helpful if this position could be filled without much further delay' but, at the same time, stated that in view of the situation in India it would be very desirable that such an appointment should not carry with it the slightest suggestion that the new commissioner was to undertake any form of mediation between the British authorities and the Indian leaders. Halifax reiterated the demand that the announcement of the new commissioner should be worded clearly, precluding the possibility of any implication of mediation.⁴ The British desired the position to be filled quickly as they feared that the US government was thinking of decreasing supplies under the Lend-Lease programme. They also worried that given the volume and persistence of American public opinion, FDR might eventually succumb to it, leaving the British quite unprepared. Halifax's promises about the resumption of a dialogue with the Indians once law and order were restored were clearly a face-saving gambit. But, he did not realise the extent to which Linlithgow and Amery had become vigilant and quick-tempered. They were continuously haunted by the ghost of American public opinion and an imminent American intervention in the Indian fiasco. Linlithgow rebuked any such suggestions from Halifax and stated that negotiations with the INC were completely out of the question. He even advised the ambassador against being defensive. Bajpai now felt 'discouraged in trying to defend Great Britain's policy towards India, particularly after the deplorable impression made in this country by Mr. Churchill in his most recent pronouncement early in September on this subject'.⁵

American public opinion had become an irritant for Linlithgow and Amery who suspected an American conspiracy and wanted the British embassy in Washington to undertake counteractive measures – without fully realising the autonomy of a powerful American press and diversified opinion groups. Linlithgow told Halifax point-blank that the South Asian 'situation has changed completely since your time here'. The viceroy went to great lengths to apprise Halifax of the latest developments in Indian party politics: 'Hindu opinion is substantially behind Congress, and Muslim opinion behind Jinnah; the claims of the communities are irreconcilable and a solution can be imposed on either only if we are prepared to back one or the other in a subsequent civil war.' Linlithgow mentioned the

League's unflinching stand on Pakistan, with both Congress and Mahasabha completely opposed to it and unwilling to sit at the table with Jinnah. The viceroy, however, found the Indian army 'untouched and loyal' through the political upheaval and added that 'its contentment remains of paramount importance in war effort, particularly at the present time.' Linlithgow informed Halifax of his determination 'to stand firm against pressure whether from the United States or elsewhere to handle this business'. He reminded the ambassador of what was required:

to fight our battle, counter misrepresentation and misunderstanding, and take the offensive rather than the defensive . . . And I am quite clear myself that if we were to hand over control of policy to the USA, and to surrender our friends and supporters here in order to try (vainly) to placate an American opinion that does not understand this problem, the Americans, if they tried to take our place, would find themselves unpopular (that is already emerging as the Indian reaction to them) and unsuccessful in a far greater degree than has been our lot. So far as India's contribution to the war is concerned infinitely greater harm will be done by undue tenderness for American opinion than by fighting a case which is in fact a good and strong one.⁶

The British Foreign Office started pushing the India Office and the Indian government on the urgency of an improvement in the American diplomatic representation in India as a mutual confidence-building measure to withstand any possible American intervention on behalf of the nationalists. Anthony Eden expressed his support for the prevailing view that the American mission in New Delhi be headed by a career officer of the US Foreign Service rather than a politician:

there are many indications that pressure is being put on Roosevelt to intervene in some way. The extent of this pressure is likely to vary with the success of the Government of India in keeping the country quiet, but it would almost certainly help Roosevelt to keep his own opinion steady if he were known to have at New Delhi an American who commanded general confidence. In order to counter stories that this man had come out to mediate it, I should consider a clear statement essential, preferably from the White House.⁷

The phantom of American opinion on India almost sent Amery into a state of frenzy. It was being suggested that he should visit the United States personally, 'to make contact with President and State Department and also give some public addresses with the frankly avowed object of explaining British point of view and risks involved for successful conduct of war in premature move in direction of "national government"'.⁸ Amery was in favour of an American diplomat of the Wilson mould in New Delhi and found either William Phillips or Joseph Grew acceptable:

Roosevelt is under great pressure about India and it would keep his public opinion steady if he were known to have at Delhi a representative who commanded general confidence. Both Phillips and Grew have sufficient standing for this purpose. Confidential reports by British Representatives at post where they served describe both as level-headed, disinterested and experienced men, the best type of American gentleman. Both are at the end of distinguished careers in the Foreign Service and we need have no fear of their advocating a policy dictated by personal ambition. If you establish close and constant personal contact with whichever is selected and open your mind frankly to him this would be our best hope of keeping US Government straight regarding India.⁹

It was not just the American government that the British feared might pressurise them into some decisive action, they were constantly on the defensive over American public opinion which was highly critical of British imperialism. The British interpreted such an attitude as being based on general American ignorance about the realities. Nevertheless, American interest in India, according to some analytical observers, was 'real' and 'widely held' and thus 'dangerous'. To such observers, American interest in India amounted to 'unwarrantable interference' and gave the impression that the British 'are little men of little minds and that the vision that has made England great has gone for good'. Such reports recommended increased official initiatives in order to remove such misunderstandings before it was too late.¹⁰

PHILLIPS AS EMISSARY

William Phillips, the former ambassador in Italy and director of the London Office of OSS, received a message from Secretary

Hull through Ambassador Winant on 3 November 1942, informing him of his nomination as the personal representative of the president. Hull had proposed Phillips' name to FDR so that he might 'undertake this assignment which is regarded as one of profound importance in view of the political and military problems related to the current Indian situation'.¹¹ Colonel William Donovan, the director of OSS had given his prior approval to relieving Phillips immediately should he accept the position. Phillips informed Hull the next day of his appreciation for 'the confidence which the President and you place in me asking me to undertake this important mission. Please assure the President that I will do my utmost to carry out his purposes and that I am ready to proceed to New Delhi whenever is thought advisable'.¹²

This diplomatic position in New Delhi was in terms of protocol less than his earlier ambassadorial appointments. However, it proved to be no less ceremonial and pompous even though it later developed into controversy and, finally, fiasco. William Phillips, a native Bostonian, had a long-standing interest and training in international affairs since the time he was advised by Secretary John Hay in June 1900 to enter the Harvard Law School so as to gain a 'good background for diplomatic work'.¹³ After Harvard, Phillips became a private secretary to Ambassador Joseph H. Choate in London in 1903. His next assignment took him to China where he served during the last years of the Manchu dynasty. Then he returned to Washington to head the newly-established Division of Near Eastern Affairs in the State Department. He was sent to London once again as the first secretary under Ambassador Whitelaw Reid who lived in great style with a retinue of ninety-two servants. Phillips served as an assistant secretary under Woodrow Wilson and a minister to the Netherlands and Luxembourg. During the Harding administration, he worked as under-secretary of state, ambassador to Belgium and minister to Canada. When Italy entered the Second World War, Phillips served as the US ambassador in Rome and was then sent to London as the director of OSS. His final assignment was in 1946 as a member of the Anglo-American Commission on Palestine, thus giving him a total of forty-five years in the diplomatic service. Phillips was never 'guilty of undue enthusiasm and always remembered that he was the representative of the United States: that he was to defend its policy abroad and to make friends in any country to which he was accredited'. He was 'an old style diplomat' who embodied

an age in diplomacy which was known 'for states dealing with each other through accredited representatives and foreign offices – instead of the representatives entering the market place and hurling recriminations at each other'.¹⁴

His appointment as the personal representative of the US president in New Delhi happened at a time when the British were quite apprehensive of any change in Washington's mood. Phillips came to know of his selection by Hull and FDR in a telegram to that effect sent to him by Colonel William J. Donovan of OSS on 31 October 1942.¹⁵ He was given 'comprehensive instructions' in a cable from Hull which had the approval of FDR.¹⁶ Phillips was advised to utilise his remaining stay in London to discuss the Indian situation 'with open mind' with the British, being very conscious of the 'difficult relationship between Great Britain and India, especially as it relates to the question of independence for India'. Hull stated very clearly: 'The President and I and the entire Government earnestly favor freedom for all dependent peoples at the earliest date practicable.' American policy toward the Philippines was cited by Hull as an example of how the people in the colony could be helped toward the attainment of their independence. On behalf of the government, he reiterated his support for the independence of the colonies and that specific, objective attention be given to the British-Indian relationship on a week-to-week basis. 'The President and I have not become partisan of either Great Britain or India in the existing exigencies. To do this would seriously handicap us in dealing with the other side.' Therefore, Hull explained, US officials should meet both the British and the Indian leaders in a friendly way without taking any partisan view, and he added:

Therefore, we cannot bring pressure, which might reasonably be regarded as objectionable, to bear on the British. We can in a friendly spirit talk bluntly and earnestly to appropriate British officials so long as they understand that it is our purpose to treat them in a thoroughly friendly way. A settlement arising from such friendly and non-partisan conversations with both sides or with either side, would probably be most practicable as well as most-desirable.

Hull cautioned Phillips against any 'objectionable pressure upon either side' – as it might disturb the Anglo-American joint war

effort – and advised him to remain on friendly terms with both sides, encouraging them toward ‘a practical settlement’. Nevertheless, he was told not to take the negotiations to a point which the opposite side might interpret as an outright intervention. The Secretary of State gave his government’s added reason for interest in an Indian political settlement in the context of the ongoing war. ‘This fact would give us a probable opportunity to speak in any spirit save that of genuine friendship and of the fullest cooperation both during and following the war.’ Finally, he re-emphasised the necessity of listening to both sides ‘tactfully’ without pushing them.¹⁷

The directive was sent to Phillips by Hull, who demonstrated in it his usual cautious idealism for the Indian future – yet omitted the substantive ‘ifs’ and ‘hows’ which Phillips required in order to undertake the mission in a very crucial and ‘difficult’ situation. As far as the objectives were concerned, Phillips’ role was clearly visualised by Hull, but he said very little about strategy. This proved to be a great hurdle when Phillips, in the spirit of the directive, tried to meet Gandhi, and was resisted by the Linlithgow administration. It would have been far better if the State Department had clarified the specific details of Phillips’ role with the British Foreign Office prior to his departure for India. Linlithgow, already weary of the American press and public opinion as well as some arm-twisting by Louis Johnson, was not going to allow any American diplomat to become deeply embroiled in the South Asian dilemma – a fact that Hull had not fully appreciated.

William Phillips held meetings with Eden, Amery and Churchill before leaving for the subcontinent. Anthony Eden acknowledged to him that British officials in India were incapable of realising the importance of visiting Americans, ‘with the result that the Americans as a whole did not grasp the terrific problem. He hoped that I would get the whole picture and report it to the President.’ The British Foreign Secretary did not make any specific suggestions about a personal involvement by the American emissary in the Indian deadlock, although he did recommend a brief stop-over in Cairo ‘to have a look at the Indian forces’.¹⁸ Phillips and Amery who had known each other since their Ottawa days met on 24 November 1942. Amery wrote of him: ‘He has long experience of this country and of the Empire and has passed the age when he might be thinking of making

political capital for himself in India or anywhere else.' During their conversation, Amery tried to influence the American diplomat by observing 'that the deadlock is really between Indians themselves, to touch on the Viceroy's anxiety lest his mission should be supposed in any way to be that of mediation'. Phillips was also warned that it would be impossible to meet the interned Congress leaders at least in the immediate future.¹⁹ It appears that Amery did not visualise any major role for Phillips except to report to FDR – and even that he expected to be in accordance with the whims and wishes of Linlithgow.

Phillips was still in London when FDR sent a formal message to Linlithgow informing him of his selection of 'Mr. William Phillips to serve near the Government of India as my Personal Representative with the rank of Ambassador . . . I commend him highly to you as one especially possessed of the experience and qualities essential to a successful mutually agreeable accomplishment of his duties as my Representative to the Government of India.'²⁰ The phrase 'near the Government of India' was to reinforce ambiguity about the intended role of William Phillips, which meant different things to different people. In a press conference, FDR said 'that there was no truth in any report that Mr. Phillips would carry with him any plan or formula for the solution of the Indian problem. He will perform the ordinary diplomatic duties of the personal representative of the President abroad.'²¹ The presidential statement largely put to rest British fears based on the rumour that Phillips would carry some special instructions for mediation between Linlithgow and the INC.²²

On 16 December Phillips lunched with the Churchills, with the prime minister 'dressed in his "zipper" suit'. Churchill was very disapproving of Wendell Willkie who had lately been criticising British colonialism. According to Churchill, Willkie 'reminded him of a Newfoundland dog in a small parlour, which had wiped its paws at a young lady's blouse and swept off the tea cups with its tail.' On the other hand, he was quite generous in his remarks about FDR, calling him 'the greatest spirit in the world today'. Churchill reiterated his stance on the subcontinent – that he would never allow the disintegration of the British Empire.²³ Later, he sent Phillips his personal copy of *Twenty-one Days in India*, which a member of the ICS had given him to read in 1886 when he first went to India as a subaltern. Churchill promised that this would give Phillips 'very briefly a sweeping

glance at a vast, marvellous scene', but he was quick to add that the rare work dealt 'with the world that has passed away, and this is the only copy he could get'.²⁴

William Phillips left Britain on 28 December 1942, aboard a Pan-American flight accompanied by his assistant in the OSS, Major Richard P. Heppner. After spending one night in Lisbon and one at Fisherman's Lake in Liberia, Phillips boarded an army plane on New Year's Eve for Khartoum with a stop-over at Kano, Nigeria. The next day he landed at Cairo in stormy weather where he saw 'beyond the Pyramids, the huge, magnificent Sikhs from the Punjab'. His visits to their camps served as 'an excellent induction of me to the Indian people'.²⁵ When he reached Karachi, he was 'astonished to observe, before our take-off, the immensity of the American air base in the out-skirts of Karachi, so little had I realized the importance and scale of our operations in India'.²⁶ George Merrell kept him company to New Delhi to spend a few days with the Linlithgows, not only to take advantage of their hospitality – 'too pronounced from the Indian point of view' – but also to be groomed into Indian political realities, as described by the towering Scotsman to his distinguished American visitor.²⁷ Having settled in his own quarters at the Bahawalpur House in New Delhi, Phillips read a brief prepared statement in his first press conference. He expressed his desire to study and learn about contemporary India and to report his findings to Washington. 'We all of us have much to learn from one another, Americans from Indians, Indians from Americans, and I am confident that I shall find here the friendly guidance so necessary to help me to understand and cooperate, and thus to fulfill my mission for the President.'²⁸ So far so good, William Phillips had posed no problems for Linlithgow, even though he had started meeting Indian leaders, including Gandhi's son. In a letter to FDR, the viceroy thanked him for sending 'so distinguished and widely experienced a diplomat' to the subcontinent, whose 'charm of manner has already made a deep impression on all of those who have met him here. I am sure that our common war effort will derive fresh impetus from him, and we take the deputation to this country of a man of his personality and eminent attainments as further indication of the high regard you have for India.'²⁹

WILLIAM PHILLIPS ON THE SUBCONTINENT

Before he left London, Phillips started submitting regular reports to Washington on his impressions of the British attitude towards the subcontinent. He felt 'overwhelmed' with his new assignment which had 'made a favourable impression over here in the press, among members of the Government and Indian experts'. He was looking forward to meeting Indian leaders and visiting their educational institutions. 'As I see it, my job is first to secure, if possible, respect and confidence, not merely among those at the top, but as far down the line as I can go. Probably it would be wise to keep as far removed as possible from political subjects until I have achieved some success in gaining confidence.' He explained that his job would be difficult due to 'the bitter divisions among the Indians themselves . . . Each party therefore wishes to occupy a dominant position in the constitution-making power, and this is especially noticeable in the attitude of the Moslem League, which is gaining day by day in strength.'³⁰

After his initial meetings with Linlithgow and South Asian leaders, Phillips discovered that strong ill-will existed toward the British and a great mistrust between Hindus and Muslims. 'Jinnah and the Muslim League are equally resentful of the presence of the British', Phillips wrote to Hull, 'but because of their fear of the Hindu claims for an all India administration, they would probably prefer to have the English remain unless their own claims to Pakistan were guaranteed. Neither the League nor Congress has any faith in the British promise to free India.' He reported the pre-eminence of four men in the entire scenario: Churchill, Linlithgow, Gandhi and Jinnah. The 600-strong ICS, unlike some enlightened British officials back in Britain, operated as an efficient machinery yet were 'unaware of the changing attitude in England and cannot really envisage a free India fit to govern itself'. These officials feared that a British withdrawal would produce chaos, amounting to a civil war among the inhabitants of whom 85 per cent remained illiterate. Gandhi, as Phillips put it, was 'the god whom people worship and, I imagine, a wholly impractical god . . . But if he could be convinced that the British are sincere in their desire to see India free, there is hope that he might be unexpectedly reasonable in his approach to Jinnah and the League.' Phillips expressed his keen desire to meet Gandhi at a later stage. Regarding the

Muslim League leadership, he observed: 'Jinnah is the fourth person who has to be reckoned with. He and Gandhi distrust each other and are bitter political enemies. Jinnah's Muslim League, which in fact represents the great bulk of Muslim India, stands for Pakistan, that is, a complete independent Muslim State free from any interference whatsoever from British and Hindus alike. Recently it has been growing in power and influence, and is therefore a formidable opposition to the Hindu claim.' The Indian situation was not totally hopeless in Phillips' view, as British sincerity could bring about an agreement among the Indians themselves. In his report to the president, he gave notice of his planned visits to Assam and Punjab.³¹

In a follow-up report to Secretary Hull, Phillips apprised him of Indian unity in the demand for freedom. He felt that the British government must initiate a new move, more advanced than the Act of 1935 and the Cripps proposals, as a confidence-building measure.³² In the meantime, Gandhi announced his determination to begin 'a fast according to capacity' from 9 February, the six-month anniversary of his detention. Given his age, it was feared that he might die which would lead to the most violent agitation against the government. Gandhi, in his correspondence with Linlithgow, reiterated his demands while repudiating all the consequences of the Quit India Movement, ending on a note of despair: 'I am through with you.' Linlithgow's administration did not want to succumb to pressure and tried to play down the new development so as not to incur public wrath. Gradually, William Phillips, was seeing the true Indian picture with his own eyes and becoming sceptical of the British, 'who were permitting the impasse to continue rather [than] using their good offices to bring the opposition parties together'. The Indians, on the other hand, had been deeply encouraged by the Atlantic Charter and blamed the British for shirking their basic responsibility. Before Gandhi began his fast, Phillips left on a tour of the Punjab in a train 'that lumbered along through the darkness, making lengthy stop at every station, the platforms swarmed with noisy and ragged mobs struggling to find places on the already crowded train.' He enjoyed the hospitality of the Glancy's, which he wrote as Lanceys, and then went to Amritsar (written in his memoirs as Amritza), the holy city of the Sikhs.³³

His visit to Punjab was an educational experience, for he periodically observed the lack of trust between the Hindus and

the Muslims despite the Unionist oligarchy of Sikandar Hayat Khan in the government giving its extra-communal pronouncements. He found different views prevalent among the Punjabi Muslims regarding Pakistan, as he recorded:

On the Pakistan issue the League members whom I met during my stay were all ardent followers of Jinnah and insisted they would accept nothing less than complete separation from Hindu India. And it must be admitted that they represented the majority viewpoint in the Punjab. However, members of the provincial government, and certain other Moslems admitted to me privately that with local independence there might well be a loose tie-up with the central government in New Delhi. And the more I studied Jinnah's Pakistan, the less it appealed to me as the answer to India's communal problem, since to break India into two separate nations would weaken both and might open Pakistan, at least, to the designs of ambitious neighbors.³⁴

When Phillips returned to New Delhi on 8 February, he met Linlithgow and informed him of his desire to see Gandhi so that he could prepare some recommendations for FDR. The viceroy did not lose any time in reminding him of his non-mediatory role, mutually agreed by the State Department and the British Foreign Office,³⁵ and then informed him of Gandhi's fast which was to begin the next day. Linlithgow then 'repeated that I and my Government would be greatly disturbed if Phillips were to go to see Gandhi, even if he were a free man during the period of his fast. He said that he would not think of doing so.'³⁶ After receiving such a 'blunt' rebuke from the viceroy, Phillips tried to stay away from 'the personal feud' between Gandhi and Linlithgow – yet Indian pressure on him kept increasing. Many South Asians, including members of the viceroy's executive council, privately asked him to arbitrate given the deterioration in the political situation. Indian papers like the *Bombay Chronicle* took FDR and Phillips to task for 'not raising even a finger of protest' against the British policies.³⁷

As Gandhi's health began to deteriorate alarmingly, Sir Sultan Ahmad and a few other members of the viceroy's executive council asked to see Gandhi but were refused official permission. In this state of alienation, Phillips inquired of FDR and Hull whether, in view of the imminent danger to Gandhi's life, it

would be possible 'to approach the Viceroy informally and express our deep concern over the political crisis'. Phillips justified such a move 'for the record, because it would help to correct the impression, based on our activity and the presence of American troops, that we have been giving support to the Viceroy's position.'³⁸ The same day Phillips received a message from Hull, communicating FDR's desire that he return to the United States for a month for mutual consultations. He was expected to reach Washington in late April or early May without making the plan public at this stage.³⁹ Apparently, Hull had not received Phillips' latest report of 16 February, although on the same day he had expressed his 'feeling' about the repercussions of Gandhi's possible death with Halifax when the latter called at his request.⁴⁰

The next day, William Phillips received a presidential directive to approach Linlithgow 'informally and express our deep concern over the political crisis. You may of course convey in your discretion an expression of our hope that some means may be found to avert the worsening of the situation which would almost certainly follow Gandhi's death.'⁴¹ Accordingly, Phillips met Linlithgow on 18 February and showed him the presidential directive. Linlithgow informed him that the final decision about Gandhi rested with London, and tried to play down American apprehensions by telling him that the law and order situation was improving in various provinces.⁴² On the other hand, in his message to Amery, Linlithgow appeared weary of what he termed 'interference by the US Government in something that is none of their business; at a critical moment; and through a wholly improper channel'. He found Phillips to be a very polite person, yet asked the British government to make it clear to the US government that it must stay away from such ventures. He reminded Amery that the Louis Johnson experience was in danger of being repeated by the American government.⁴³ In one of many messages on the same day, the viceroy wrote to Amery point blank about Phillips:

This is really becoming an intolerable situation, and I have deliberately asked the Prime Minister should see this correspondence, for I suspect that it is only on the Roosevelt level that you and I will be able to get things straight. I am sure that we cannot go on as at present, and I am sure that I can

look for your full support and help. It has been a great mistake ever to have agreed to have a representative of this nature or standing coming to this country, and I must regret that I waived my objection to it in deference to your view and Eden's.⁴⁴

William Phillips was constantly harassed by journalists, particularly American correspondents keen to know about any official US pressure on the viceroy regarding Gandhi. They wanted to be informed about what had occurred at his recent meetings with Linlithgow. They persistently asked him if he had any plan to visit Gandhi in detention and how the British viewed such an idea. The volley of questions kept Phillips on his toes, while Linlithgow remained evasive over the issue. Phillips began to feel that to the viceroy it had become a matter of ego and honour.⁴⁵ Linlithgow was by now totally opposed to any concession to Gandhi and had become equally touchy about growing American interest in the Indian political situation. He was not in good health at this time but tried his best through Laithwaite, his private secretary, to dissuade Phillips from giving any factual information to the press on developments like official US concern over Gandhi's fast and the British refusal to allow him to see Gandhi.⁴⁶ The very presence of Phillips in New Delhi had become an anathema to the British government at a time when Gandhi lay on his death-bed. Halifax personally requested Hull to dissuade Phillips from making any public representation, to which Hull reacted unusually strongly. He told the British ambassador that 'not only would Phillips not be expected to remain absolutely quiet and nonvocal but that the President himself goes much further and emphasizes his position that Gandhi should not be allowed by the British to die in prison.' Hull repeated the president's position to Halifax, as well as expressing his own serious concern over the situation. Clearly, Phillips' dispatches to Washington had had an impact as such a strong position had never before been expressed by Hull. Hull had also mentioned the possibility of FDR taking up the issue with Churchill.⁴⁷

The INC and other South Asian nationalists pinned high hopes on American intervention to end the ordeal. Rajgopalachari regularly met Phillips to convince him of the popular demand for American arbitration before it was too late. Never-

theless, Phillips carefully avoided taking any position, despite the fact that he felt strongly that an immediate American initiative was required to obtain Gandhi's release. Typically, Amery agreed with Linlithgow that the Americans should keep their hands off the subcontinent. He observed: 'I am irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that Madame Chiang Kai-shek and Mrs. Roosevelt between them have got at the President . . . The trouble lies in the President thinking that it is part of his business to interfere in our internal affairs. Whether the interference is communicated through to our Ambassador at Washington, to the Foreign Office here, or to you in Delhi, it is equally intolerable.'⁴⁸ Halifax, in his diplomatic style, tried to convince Hull that American intervention would increase agitation in the wake of increased expectations. Hull referred to the general American criticism of the White House and the State Department, and similar Indian pressure on Phillips for 'sitting with hands folded doing nothing on an issue that was likely to have grave international reaction'. The Secretary of State explained that the official American view was 'not to see the fellow [Gandhi] die in prison'.⁴⁹

In a state of confusion and desperation, William Phillips took to writing directly to the president, making him aware of the sensitivity of the Indian political situation in view of Gandhi's failing health and British rigidity: 'It is difficult for Anglo-Saxons to understand the deep-seated feelings which have been aroused by this performance of an old man of 73 . . . That such a being is willing to sacrifice himself for the cause that every Indian has at heart, namely the independence of India, has touched the people as a whole.' Phillips reported widespread sympathy for Gandhi even in official circles and explained his own predicament under mounting pressure from the press, visits, petitions and calls – all of which testified to a strong Indian desire for arbitration. 'Unfortunately, the whole episode has brought the United States prominently into the picture and I have been literally besieged by calls and overwhelmed by telegrams from all parts of India, asking whether there could not be something done from Washington or by me to relieve the present deadlock.' Under these circumstances, Phillips described the viceroy as a 'chip off the old block' that had been experienced by Americans in the early 1770s – for he had now concluded that Linlithgow did not care whether Gandhi lived or died. Phillips encountered mounting

pressure for America to intervene in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and he did not want to betray South Asian idealism about the United States.⁵⁰ He did not receive any specific new instructions, only to continue his meetings with the viceroy – who did not expect any major setback to the law and order situation even if Gandhi should die during his 21-day fast.

Gandhi completed his fast on 3 March and the early restrictions against him were resumed. In his biography Phillips later recorded: 'The crisis had ended with honors to both antagonists. The Viceroy had maintained his so-called prestige; Gandhi had carried out his protest against the government by his successful fast of twenty-one days and had come back very much into the limelight. There was no material change in the situation except increased bitterness against the British.'⁵¹ On 3 March 1943, William Phillips wrote a lengthy letter to FDR acquainting him with the continued British–Congress bipolarism, with the Quit India Movement resulting in mass arrests and Gandhi's fast. He considered that the British found the situation very convenient, for they wanted to maintain the status quo by blaming the Indians for not managing to reach a settlement among themselves. Phillips saw only one way out – an international conference on India under American chairmanship that would include South Asians of all opinions. He recommended the patronage of the king-emperor, US president, president of the Soviet Union, and Chiang Kai-shek for the conference, 'in order to bring pressure to bear on Indian Politicians.' The proposed conference was to be preceded by a new British assurance about their withdrawal and the unconditional release of Gandhi. Phillips suggested that the venue should be any city other than Delhi, and there should be no pressure on the Indians to accept any specific western model of government. Such an American move, Phillips believed, would resolve the crisis and strengthen the Allied position everywhere.⁵²

Phillips had now arrived at a similar conclusion to Johnson before him – a lack of confidence in the Raj and a belief that the Indians could reach a settlement among themselves. Interestingly, the AIML had all along demanded such a dialogue, while the INC had persistently refused to provide the British with their oft-quoted explanation for their reluctance to leave the subcontinent. Of course, the subcontinent was a multinational scenario, but this did not mean that the various communities violently

confronted each other. On the contrary, they desired early independence with complete safeguards acceptable to all. The British portrayed them in a way that substantiated their claims and their desire to remain in the subcontinent. Phillips, like Johnson, felt that an American response would be forthcoming, yet he somehow failed to realise that although his government viewed the Indian political situation with deep concern it was not prepared to go as far as an intervention which would result in a British uproar. Moreover, Phillips was less assuming than Johnson, who had played a more active role during the Cripps mission, whereas Phillips was not even allowed to see Gandhi in prison. Also, the British ambassador was making Phillips' job more difficult by visiting the State Department regularly in order to establish his point of view. Halifax was able to forestall any definitive instructions to Phillips from Washington and it was a great diplomatic victory.

Before he left for a tour of Bombay and the southern subcontinent on 15 March, Phillips expressed his desire to see Gandhi in Poona, as he expected to meet Jinnah on his return to Delhi. When he discussed the prospects for the Poona meeting, Linlithgow 'said with definiteness that he could not permit a visit to Gandhi at this time. I betrayed my disappointment but hoped, I said again, that it could be arranged later.'⁵³ In Bombay, he enjoyed the hospitality of the Lumleys, with the governor trying to explain the British view of Indian developments.⁵⁴ Phillips chanced to meet V. D. Savarkar of the Hindu Mahasabha and the pro-Congress industrialists, the Birlas and the Tatas, who were loyal supporters of Gandhi. He also met Ismail Chundrigar, the president of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League who presented the League's point of view.⁵⁵

At Hyderabad, Phillips was the guest of the Nawab of Chhattari, the Prime Minister of the Nizam of Deccan, and gathered the impression 'that Hyderabad was independent and proud of it, and was unconcerned with India's future'.⁵⁶ Interestingly, again like Johnson before him, Phillips was deeply influenced by Rajgopalachari when he visited him in Madras. Rajgopalachari still hoped that a meeting between Gandhi and Jinnah could result in mutual accommodation, but the government did not allow it. Similar views were expressed by C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar (commonly known as Sir C. P.), the prime minister of Travancore, a state with an impressive rate of literacy

compared to the rest of India. C. P. suggested that the king should issue a proclamation granting independence to the subcontinent along with the establishment of a provisional government headed by Jinnah, but composed of all political parties. The next stop Phillips made was in Bangalore, where he was the guest of William Paley, later American ambassador to Brazil, who headed an aircraft factory and repair shop for the US Air Force. Here, Phillips found Indian labourers working enthusiastically and in a way that 'equalled that of our top skilled labor'.⁵⁷ On his return to New Delhi, he sent reports on the state of affairs then prevailing in the subcontinent. He felt that Linlithgow's frame of mind still precluded 'any possibility of a settlement. The continued refusal to allow mediators access to Gandhi leaves one with the suspicion that authorities have no desire to see deadlock ended.'⁵⁸ Phillips found a growing resentment towards the British and increased Indian expectations for American support. He requested backing from the State Department to help him facilitate a visit to Gandhi and Nehru. Wallace Murray, who felt sympathetic toward the South Asian nationalists, prepared a draft to this effect intended for the British authorities, recommending Phillips' meeting with the Congress leaders. When Sumner Welles read the memorandum he seriously questioned 'the wisdom of sending this telegram' and instead suggested waiting until Phillips returned to Washington.⁵⁹

PHILLIPS MEETS JINNAH

On his return to Delhi, Phillips met Jinnah on 6 April, and their meeting lasted four hours. He gave his first impression:

[I] was struck by his tall and slender figure. Erect and well-dressed he looked far more like an Englishman than an Indian. His manner was courteous and he had a natural charm. An easy and rapid talker, it was a quarter to nine before he got up to leave. We had been three and three-quarter hours in conversation. That his brilliant intellect, his ability to hold masses of people spellbound for hours at a time, and above all his concept of an independent Moslem nation have captivated the Moslem people, was understandable.

Jinnah shared with Phillips the desire of the 40 million Muslim majority in northern India to vote for Pakistan as a separate

nation. He sounded quite confident of Pakistan's economic and financial potential, although the American envoy, for his part, entertained some silent reservations about its viability. Jinnah reiterated his firm demand for official guarantees for the South Asian Muslims on the basis of Pakistan before the League could associate with any provisional government at the centre. In other words, he was cautioning against any bilateral arrangement between the British government and the INC. For his part, Jinnah gave a solemn assurance that he would not create any bottlenecks: 'You can count on me to do nothing to obstruct the war effort since I regard victory against Japan as essential to the good of India.' Phillips found this assurance very rewarding in the context of his interview with the Muslim leader. 'Later on I met Mr. Jinnah several times in the houses of friends. I felt attracted to him personally but not to his dream of severing India into separate nations.'⁶⁰

In his report to FDR, Phillips gave an account of Jinnah's stance on Pakistan which he described as 'in every way practicable and the only solution of Indian problem. Why should Hindus object he said when they would have as their share three-fourths of India including most of its wealth. In comparison Pakistan would be poor but would be a block of 40,000,000's comprising a state within the British Commonwealth.' Jinnah had observed that the relationship with 'Hindu India' would be conducted through treaties. He then reminded Phillips of the South Asian Muslims' contributions to the war effort. The president of the AIML expressed his party's willingness to join a coalition provisional government at the centre, but only on the basis of parity with the INC. 'He doubted that Gandhi would cooperate, but at the same time he admitted that no one knew Gandhi's present state of mind.' When Phillips reminded Jinnah of British reluctance to divide India and asked him if he was willing to reconsider his stand on Pakistan, Jinnah replied that 'he would not stand in way of any plan which would further war effort.'⁶¹

PHILLIPS RETURNS FRUSTRATED

Phillips busied himself meeting South Asian leaders and political analysts who repeatedly asked him for a more pronounced American intervention in the Indian dilemma. Since it was

already known to these South Asians that Phillips planned to return to the USA soon to report on the situation, they all tried to convince him of their viewpoints. Some continued to pressurise him to seek the viceroy's permission, through Washington, for a meeting with Gandhi – for otherwise his report to the president would be deficient. His inability to obtain either this permission or a green light from Washington added to the rumours and ill-feeling about the United States in the subcontinent. The journalists grilled him over his failure to see Gandhi: 'They spoke of the growing antagonism to the British with whom America was now closely identified. More and more the feeling was crystalizing that America and Britain were one in holding India down to its present position.'⁶² He sent many messages to the State Department expressing his apprehensions about the growing anti-American feeling in the subcontinent and requested Hull to take up with the British Foreign Office the issue of his proposed meeting with Gandhi.⁶³ Phillips received a curt reply suggesting that he might himself request Linlithgow for this permission, but only in his personal capacity, and making it very clear that the Department was not interested.⁶⁴ Still he kept sending his reports to Washington, urgently explaining the South Asian sense of alienation and frustration. While elaborating on the nationalists' despair, Phillips cited the South Asian reaction to a letter by Sumner Welles, published in *The New York Times* in response to that of Professor Ralph Barton Perry of Harvard University. Perry had criticised the policies of the State Department *vis-à-vis* European colonialism in the Afro-Asian world, with special reference to the British Indian empire.⁶⁵ In his response Welles had defended the Department by repudiating a role of 'active intervention' by the USA in the Indian situation.⁶⁶ This defence of American foreign policy was regarded as an apology for the British Raj by the nationalist press in India. *Dawn*, representing the AIML viewpoint, reflected that 'if the promises of freedom to India made during the last World War provide any better memories, enthusiasm cannot be whipped up by the evasive American underwriting of British platitudes.'⁶⁷

It became more and more difficult for Phillips to withstand the mounting pressure from journalists who, in addition to other issues, felt strongly that in case Linlithgow 'will not allow representative of President to see Gandhi then Indians will lose faith in ability of the U.S. to be of any assistance. Likewise they will lose confidence in my capacity to accomplish anything.'⁶⁸ After

all his efforts to counter such impressions about his country, Phillips felt 'a bitter disappointment' at not receiving a hopeful and prompt response from Hull.⁶⁹ It only served to make his position more precarious, for his inability to seek an audience with Gandhi both hurt him personally and put US prestige at stake – at a time when Linlithgow had gone on an extended tiger-hunting expedition leaving the American envoy despondent on the eve of his intended departure for America. He decided to write to FDR hoping for a renewed interest and explicit guidelines from the White House. In an exhaustive report on the situation, he observed:

India is suffering from paralysis, the people are discouraged and there is a feeling of growing helplessness . . . The British are sitting 'pretty.' They have been completely successful in their policy of 'keeping the lid on' and in suppressing any movement among the Indians which might be interpreted as a move towards independence . . . Twenty thousand Congress leaders remain in jail without trial and the influence, therefore, of the Congress Party is diminishing, while that of the Muslim League is growing.

At the same time, the prestige of the British justice is on the decline, because of the refusal of the government to allow the political prisoners to speak in their own defense, which is not the way, Indians believe, that British justice is administered in England.

The British position becomes clear. There is to be no change, no effort to open the door to negotiation among the leaders, no preparation for the future until after the war, and that date is so uncertain that I believe the Indians generally feel there will be no material changes in their favor even after the war . . .

I see only one remedy to this disturbing situation, and that is, to try with every means in our power to make Indians feel that America is with them and in a position to go beyond mere public assurances of friendship.

It was for this reason that I have laid so much stress on asking the Viceroy for permission to see Gandhi . . . My stock would fall very low indeed, unless it were known that I had, at least, made the effort. I shall, therefore, make my request of the Viceroy when I see him at the end of this week.⁷⁰

Phillips did not receive any response to his pleas from Washington

and joined Linlithgow at Dehra Dun, at the latter's invitation, in the hunting expedition that included, amongst others, the well-known hunter, James Corbett. Finding an opportunity, Phillips explained again to Linlithgow his desire to visit Gandhi – which was again politely refused. However, the viceroy agreed reluctantly to allow Phillips to make a press statement to the effect that he had actually attempted to see Gandhi: 'I was profoundly disappointed but glad to have his consent to the statement without which I would not have felt free to say anything until I returned to Washington. My visit to Dehra Dun had been a hunt for Gandhi rather than for a tiger. I had failed in my principal objective and had to be content with second best.'⁷¹ At a press conference on 25 April Phillips reported that in response to his request to meet Gandhi 'the appropriate authorities' had informed him 'that they were unable to grant the necessary facilities'.⁷² He felt that he had been able to vindicate his position to the press in the subcontinent and abroad, without compromising the prestige of his government at a crucial time.

Accompanied by Richard Heppner and Lampton Berry, Phillips left New Delhi for Karachi en route to the United States on 29 April 1943, with a strong mistrust of British policies in the subcontinent. In his brief stay of forty-three days there he had travelled widely and met an extensive number of South Asian leaders. At the start, Linlithgow had tried to influence his opinion but when Phillips observed the worsening political conditions in the subcontinent as a result of Gandhi's fast, he began to feel strongly that an immediate resolution of the crisis was vital. When no British initiative seemed forthcoming, he decided to see Gandhi and Nehru for himself, to understand their viewpoint. British intransigence, as manifested by Linlithgow's policy of maintaining the status quo and barring Phillips from seeing interned Congress leaders, convinced the American envoy of the urgent need for an American initiative. He tried to encourage Washington to enter into a dialogue with the British government at higher levels otherwise, he feared, Indian opinion might turn against the Allies. There was no encouraging response from Washington since, among other things, Churchill's presence in the American capital successfully forestalled any such move. Phillips, unlike Johnson, did not personally become very involved in Indian political developments, yet his reports to Washington and most of all his insistence on seeing Gandhi

made him no less controversial in the eyes of the British – who were already as weary of party politics in the subcontinent as they were of American public opinion regarding the empire. After interning Gandhi, Nehru and more than 20,000 other Congress members, the British believed they had quelled Indian nationalist aspirations. They were highly critical of Jinnah and the AIML's vocal stance on Pakistan and the British government tried to use Muslim premiers against Jinnah to curtail his growing power among the Muslim grass roots. However, this had no immediate results, since the Pakistan movement had become a widespread creed for South Asian Muslims. Jinnah, unlike the INC, provided no opportunity to the British to crush the AIML and even though the government withheld Gandhi's letter of 8 May to Jinnah for a long period of time, it did not adversely affect the AIML. Gandhi had agreed to talk to Jinnah, though in his letter he had been evasive over Pakistan. However, in his speech at the Delhi session of the AIML in 1943, Jinnah minced no words in lashing out at continued Congress hostility and the oppressive policies of the Raj.

While he felt agony over the Indians' miseries, Phillips had an optimistic view of their capabilities, given the proper incentives and appropriate management under their own leadership. Even so, he failed to understand the vitality of the Pakistan movement, and felt that Pakistan might not be a feasible nation-state. His scepticism about the viability of Pakistan as a country emerged from a myth based on the contemporary British and Congress conceptualisation of India as a single politico-economic unit, which completely ignored its multi-dimensional aspects. India as one administrative unit was presented to the outside world as the pinnacle of British achievements in statecraft, whose ICS and war machinery resented the idea of being 'partitioned'. Similarly, the INC did not want to compromise its all-India stance as the only representative party – a position which led to a blunderous path based on mutual dissensions and subsequent ill-will. Most of all, it was used by the British government to justify their policies in the absence of a mutual settlement among the South Asians themselves. Phillips considered Pakistan to be 'the greatest stumbling block to a settlement between the Hindus and Moslems', failing to remember what he had earlier observed with regard to Jinnah's viewpoint. The AIML had avoided causing any obstacles for the INC in its troubled days and, in the

same way, it stayed aloof from the British-Congress bipolarism. The AIML could easily have taken advantage of the INC's predicament but it did not compromise its principles – even though the Congress had persistently refused to recognise its separate identity as a Muslim political party.

Phillips felt that a provisional government based on the following formula could have worked – given the assent of the British government and its willingness to withdraw from the subcontinent eventually:

INC	5
AIML	5
Englishman	1
(C.-in-C.)	
Hindu Mahasabha	1
Scheduled castes	1
Parsi	1

This scheme appears similar to that of the AIML, and neither the INC nor the British government would have accepted it. Moreover, it gave representation to the Parsis and scheduled castes yet denied it to the Sikhs. In his autobiography Phillips produced a very harsh verdict on the British: 'I never understood the British position . . . I left India discouraged by the attitude of the British Government and fearful of the consequences of the delays caused by the continued imprisonment of the Congress Party leaders.'⁷³

The day after his arrival in Washington, Phillips met FDR and ended up listening to a monologue. In order to bring his arguments and impressions to the president's attention, he then determined to submit a written report. Highlighting India's geo-political significance in the war against the Japanese, he described South Asian disillusionment with the British in particular and the Allies in general. He criticised Churchill's exclusion of India from the purview of the Atlantic Charter and lamented their indifference to the Indian turmoil. 'If we do nothing and merely accept the British point of view that conditions in India are none of our business then we must be prepared for various serious consequences in the internal situation in India which may develop as a result of despair and misery and anti-white sentiments of hundreds of millions of subject people.' Again he urged a renewed British effort to end

the political impasse so as to leave a good impression on public opinion in Asia. 'The peoples of Asia – and I am supported in this opinion by other diplomatic and military observers – cynically regard this war as one between fascists and imperialist power. A generous British gesture to India would change this undesirable political atmosphere.'⁷⁴ This letter was somehow leaked to the press, as a year later its publication by Drew Pearson produced quite an uproar – leaving the British feeling very uptight, to the glee of the South Asian nationalists and their American sympathisers. FDR, understandably appreciative of Phillips' concern, asked him to see Churchill who was then staying in the British embassy to tell him frankly about his impressions of India. 'I sensed that FDR had his difficulties with the Prime Minister, among them the problem of India, and preferred to have me tackle this particular unpleasantness for him as he had previously been rebuffed.'⁷⁵

Phillips met Churchill on 23 May 1943, at the British Embassy and immediately felt that the prime minister was not pleased to see him, knowing in advance what the personal representative of the US president was going to say. Churchill listened to Phillips quietly and mistakenly assumed that the American diplomat had been advocating British withdrawal from the subcontinent. Phillips, on the contrary, tried to underline the need for a new British effort to resolve the deadlock by resuming negotiations with the nationalists and giving them more active participation in the administration. Churchill reacted very strongly, and observed twice in a state of annoyance: 'My answer to you is: Take India if that is what you want! Take it by all means: But I warn you that if I open the door a crack there will be the greatest blood-bath in all history; yes blood-bath in all history. Mark my words, I prophesied the present war, and I prophesy the blood-bath.' To which, Phillips reminded him that he was not suggesting that the British should pull out of India then, rather he was referring to the need to bring Indians into mutual negotiations. He left the British premises feeling that Churchill 'had a complex about India from which he would not and could not be shaken'.⁷⁶

Though deeply annoyed with Phillips, Churchill did not fear American pressure at that stage, for while he had been in Washington nobody else had raised the Indian question with him at all. FDR had only once suggested that he see Phillips,

which he did and then gave his own self-assured assessment of the meeting. Writing to Attlee and Amery, the British prime minister advised against discussing the Indian situation with the president:

I do not think it would be desirable for me to raise the question with the President. He has limited any reference to India to asking me to see Phillips. I saw him to-day and, of course, had a most depressing and unsatisfactory interview with him. He is a weak agreeable man who has had all the grievances of India poured into his ears and appears to be very ill-informed about the enormous advances in self-government that have been made, especially in the Provinces . . . Mr. Phillips is a friend of the President and I have no doubt that he will do a certain amount of harm. He does not think he will return to India. I hope he is right.⁷⁷

The same day, on his way to a luncheon meeting with FDR, Phillips ran into Eleanor Roosevelt who was curious to know how things had transpired with Churchill. His answer was, 'Badly'. FDR appeared to accept the assessment of the situation by Phillips, yet hesitated to discuss it with Churchill directly – despite the fact that there was constant pressure on him from various quarters, including Eleanor Roosevelt whose sympathies for South Asian independence were only too well known. Phillips was reluctant to return to New Delhi as he foresaw no change in British policy. Instead, FDR asked him to become minister in the US embassy in Ottawa while he persuaded the British government to send Anthony Eden to India, 'to explore the situation, to talk to leaders of all parties and groups Gandhi included, and report his findings to Churchill.' FDR wanted Phillips to be in India during the proposed visit by Eden and Phillips did not want to end his mission to India on a note of stagnation. Rather than going to Canada, therefore, he went to Beverly on vacation. From there, on 31 May, he reminded FDR that the Indians had pinned their hopes on the United States and his new assignment at Ottawa would be construed as lack of interest in their predicament on the part of the president. 'We must somehow manage to keep their sympathy in spite of Churchill's intransigent attitude.'⁷⁸

In the meantime, the South Asian press gave a mixed reaction to the possibility of Phillips returning to India. His meeting with Churchill and its repercussions on India or Anglo-American

relations was another incisive topic. A Reuter's story with a Washington dateline, was carried by the local press and concluded: 'There have been some attempts in Indian quarters here to prejudice the coincidence of the presence of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Phillips in Washington, an opportunity to raise Indian political questions, but these failed to impress responsible US officials.' *Dawn*, the prominent Muslim newspaper and organ of the AIML, published its story under the title, 'Phillips fails to impress US officials'.⁷⁹

Phillips did not want to go to Canada but was dissuaded by FDR from resigning and advised to return to Beverly. It was not until 14 March 1945, that he formally submitted his resignation and FDR acknowledged 'the reasons which prompted your resignation, and accordingly accept it with deep regret . . . In doing so, I send you my most sincere thanks for the invaluable assistance you gave me when in India and for your offer to hold yourself in readiness for service should I find it necessary to call upon you again.'⁸⁰ Although Phillips was on leave from 22 June to 13 September 1943, he kept appearing in Washington for consultations at the State Department as well as writing to FDR on the Indian situation. In the summer of 1943 a terrible famine broke out in Bengal causing widespread starvation and death. Phillips felt very strongly about this human misery and its geo-political repercussions on the war effort in a vital region. He considered that the British government was not doing enough to redress the situation and called upon FDR in September 1943, before proceeding to London to become a political adviser on General Eisenhower's staff. In a long letter to the president he expressed his concern over the pathetic Indian situation, emphasising the sense of alienation among the Indians and, particularly, the starving millions of Bengal, while the British government was doing almost nothing 'to remedy this situation, which, in my estimation, has become serious'. After quoting from a dispatch from New Delhi about the situation, Phillips observed:

But it is the combination of the two the [political] deadlock and the famine, and the fact that there are Indians of high and low degree, many millions of them, who are resentful against their present conditions, hostile to the British because of the failure of the British to help them, and distrustful of Americans because of our close association with the British that to me renders the situation of consequence to our military effort.

The remedy, if there is one, is for the British to open the door to negotiations and to do everything possible to lessen the famine conditions in the province of Bengal.⁸¹

The British jealously guarded their empire and even during the famine did not allow the American government to undertake an independent aid programme. In his autobiography Hull acknowledged this British sensitivity toward any sort of American official 'interest' in the subcontinent: 'When a serious famine developed in Bengal in 1943, we made efforts to secure from all too inadequate rice stocks in the Western Hemisphere an allocation of rice for India. The British representatives on the Combined Food Board in Washington insisted however, that the responsibility for Indian food requirements be left to Britain, and we perforce had to agree.'⁸²

When Phillips reached London, he learned of Lord Wavell's appointment as the new viceroy. The two men met before Wavell's departure for India and Phillips, expressing his now long-held interest in South Asian affairs, offered any assistance that the British viceroy might find appropriate. Being very critical of Linlithgow as a rigid administrator, Phillips found in Wavell 'a good and highly-principled man' who would hopefully collaborate with the Indian leaders over negotiation – though he did not carry any 'olive branch from Churchill' that would make his job easier.⁸³

Although his period in the subcontinent began with pomp and ceremony, Phillips left in despair that the British government remained unchallenged and secure from any outside threat, especially the much publicised and feared American intervention. The British had accepted William Phillips in the hope that he would make amends for Louis Johnson's mission which had so angered them. Fearful of mounting pressure from various American groups, the British government felt that it could prevent any future official American intervention in Indian affairs, by having a high-ranking American diplomat at the US mission in Delhi. Such a diplomat, presumably with a closer relationship with Linlithgow, was expected to be non-obtrusive and cause no embarrassment to the British government. FDR sent Phillips to India with rather ambiguous directions at a time when the Indian nationalists relied heavily on US support and the British government itself required vital American military

and economic assistance. He reached India at a politically charged time because of Gandhi's fast. Phillips did not intervene directly in the Indian quagmire, yet his insistence on seeing Gandhi and the critical reports sent to Washington generated British hostility against him just as Johnson had done. Phillips saw and knew more about the subcontinent than any other contemporary American official of his status, including Louis Johnson, and could not detach himself from the South Asian masses who visualised a better future in self-government. His frantic and urgent reports caused no tremors in Washington as they were neutralised by an efficient British embassy and, in addition, both FDR and Hull suffered from a severe lack of decision-making ability. India, to them, seemed to have been merely a geo-military consideration and even the mutilation of the Atlantic Charter by Churchill did not register any major disapproval from the White House or the State Department. Hull himself acknowledged the limited nature of American interest in the subcontinent: 'We took all steps we could to dissociate our activities in India, which merely served as a base for our operations in aid of China, from those of the British. We likewise took care to keep all American propaganda work based in India other than that of a purely psychological warfare nature directed against the enemy, completely separate from similar work by the British.'⁸⁴

Though his mission could not produce any official US political pressure for self-government in the subcontinent, the coverage in the press, particularly the leakage of the Phillips' reports in the summer of 1944, made an enormous imprint on Anglo-American relations and the future of India. Indirectly, it introduced the South Asian crisis to liberal Americans and strengthened pro-South Asia elements in the US Government. This subject will be dealt with in a separate chapter of this book.

8 Checkmated Bilateralism: Efforts Towards an Apolitical Relationship

The return to the USA of Phillips, an otherwise pro-British diplomat, had an unpleasant effect on the Anglo-American relationship, although not one that was immediately obvious. Earlier, Louis Johnson's mission had run into the same problem, with the British government strongly against him. No one heard from the Virginian again once he was back in the USA, in a state of frustration resulting from his abortive efforts to save the Cripps mission from total fiasco. His sympathies for the INC leadership and his frantic appeals for official American help in the reversal of the British Raj, did not cause any major concern in Washington. In exactly the same way, a year later, Phillips' attempts to see Gandhi and Nehru met with a persistent British rebuff, while a non-committed FDR and a cautious Hull were hesitant to come forward more persuasively. Phillips' visit to the subcontinent had coincided with Gandhi's well-publicised fast during the Quit India Movement, and the appointment of such a career diplomat as the personal representative of the US president resulted in a great amount of speculation and high expectations in South Asian circles. His return in the wake of Linlithgow's refusal to allow him to visit Gandhi brought him closer to the nationalist viewpoint in the subcontinent. Neither his personal rapport nor his reports persuaded FDR to put pressure on Churchill who was then visiting North America.

While Roosevelt sympathised with the South Asian nationalists, and had been under constant pressure from different groups who usually found easy access and an encouraging response from Eleanor Roosevelt, nevertheless the president hesitated to take the issue up directly with Churchill – who very skillfully and usually scornfully evaded making a final commitment on the subcontinent. In these circumstances, US official policy towards the subcontinent became more and more apolitical, trying to deal with single issues like famine in Bengal, the geo-political situation on the war front and maintaining a routine diplomatic

correspondence between New Delhi, Washington and London on peripheral issues. The Hard political realities were barely touched on. The 'leakage' of Phillips' letters to the press in the summer of 1944 built up a temporary momentum, but otherwise a form of political isolationism prevailed with regard to the subcontinent. However, pressure from inside America for a more pronounced official policy kept increasing and was echoed in Congressional debates and the press.

WAVELL AUGURS A NEW ERA?

Field Marshal Sir Archibald P. Wavell was elevated to the peerage simultaneously with his appointment as viceroy on 19 June 1943. Lord Wavell, who had a wide experience of South Asian Affairs before his appointment, hypothetically differed with Linlithgow when dealing with the basic issues. He had witnessed the turbulent developments after the Congress revolt and the continuing official British rigidity and had reached the conclusion: 'If India is not to be ruled by force, it must be ruled by heart rather than head.'¹ Given a more confidence-building approach, he felt that the Indians would respond favourably. He also believed that international opinion and the changed political situation in the subcontinent now made it impossible to,

hold India down by force. Indians are a docile people, and a comparatively small amount of force ruthlessly used might be sufficient; but it seems to me clear that the British people will not consent to be associated with a policy of repression nor will world opinion approve it, nor will British soldiers wish to stay here in large numbers after the war to hold the country down. There must be acquiescence in the British connection if we are to continue to keep India within the Commonwealth.²

Churchill, of course, did not see eye to eye with Wavell, whose ideals remained unattainable until Louis Mountbatten took over as the last viceroy under the Labour administration.

Churchill did not like Wavell and had appointed him as the governor-general of India only after Anthony Eden and his other favourites had refused to replace Linlithgow. Before becoming commander-in-chief in India, when he was based in North Africa Wavell had challenged Churchill's strategy. This had

earned him the prime minister's hostility and, in vengeance, he had sent him to India. Wavell, a literary man,³ believed strongly that Arabs and Indians should be treated equally with Europeans, a bitter pill for Churchill to swallow. In fact, he had almost refused to attend the farewell dinner in London for Wavell before his departure for New Delhi.⁴ Churchill expected Wavell to keep the lid tightly on the Indian pot as Linlithgow had done. He was sworn in on 20 October 1943, and soon faced the issue of the continued detention of the ailing Gandhi, then seventy-five years old. On the advice of George Abell, his deputy private secretary, and of the surgeon-general, Wavell found it prudent to release him before it was too late – which was greatly resented by Churchill. Personally, Wavell found Gandhi to be 'malignant', 'verbose, petty-minded, and quite devoid of any constructive statesmanship, bent only on his own self-justification'.⁵ Wavell was defensive about Jinnah in his personal views, yet fully aware of his mass appeal – 'he can sway opinion, and no one seems to have the character to oppose him.'⁶

The State Department was informed by George Merrell at the US mission in New Delhi that Wavell's appointment would be regarded with 'gloom on the part of all politically minded Indians with the possible exception of the Muslims it will be interpreted as a continuation of the status quo under even more rigid circumstances.' This early assessment arose from the belief that Wavell, the first military commander to head the government, would resist any major change in the basic political nomenclature since he had already served in Linlithgow's administration. However, one could find exception with Merrell's opinion of Muslim feelings in the light of subsequent developments and the new viceroy's personal views of Jinnah.⁷ Azad, the president of the INC, considered that Wavell was sincere and 'genuinely desired a change in the atmosphere'.⁸ On the other hand, as recorded by S. Gopal,⁹ Nehru suspected that the viceroy was partisan to the Muslims. Wavell had blamed Jinnah for the breakdown of the Simla conference of 1945, because of his fear 'that the Congress, by parading its national character and using Muslim dummies will permeate the entire administration of any united India is real, and cannot be dismissed as an obsession of Jinnah and his immediate entourage'.¹⁰ A. V. Alexander, one of the members of the Cabinet mission in 1946, recorded in his diary:

[Wavell] had been partisan in favour of the Muslim League, but I could understand that as he had been Commander-in-Chief of India in 1942, he was bound to remember that whilst the Muslim League were not politically active in his support, they did not, as the Congress Party had, organise the sabotage and destruction of his communications whilst he was trying to keep the Japs out of India. Congress had in fact acted as our enemies.¹¹

Wavell was not in fact partial to the AIML as he had strong reservations about the Pakistan movement. He referred to Pakistan not as a tangible solution to the South Asian impasse, but as 'rather the communal suspicion represented by it'. As he wrote to London: 'Pakistan is the extreme expression of Muslim suspicions and fears which are real and to some extent justified.'¹² Yet, he thought it the main impediment to rational thinking:

I do not believe that Pakistan will work. It creates new minority problems quite as bad as those we have now, and the Pakistan State or states would be economically unsound. On the other hand, like all emotional ideas that have not been properly thought out, it thrives on opposition. Some of the Muslims may regard it as a bargaining counter, but for the mass of the Muslim League it is a real possibility and has a very strong sentimental appeal.¹³

Given such views on Pakistan or Jinnah, one can well question Wavell's partiality towards the South Asian Muslims.

Wavell was handicapped by the legacy of the Linlithgow administration which had continued to enjoy the blessing of Leopold Amery, Churchill and the India committee of the British cabinet. He had already annoyed Churchill both by releasing Gandhi and by resisting a British move to increase the salaries of the personnel of the armed services, which the viceroy construed as a 'bribe'. C. R. Attlee, the deputy prime minister, equally abhorred the idea of sharing power with the Indians. He criticised Wavell for his suggestion that Indians should be included on the viceroy's executive council as that would amount to virtually conceding power to Gandhi and Jinnah. 'He was frankly horrified at the thought of the substitution for the present government of a brown oligarchy subject to no control from Parliament or electorate.'¹⁴ Wavell sent blunt letters to London

proposing a change in official British perceptions of Indians. He wrote to Churchill:

If our aim is to retain India as a willing member of the British Commonwealth, we must make some imaginative and constructive move without delay. We have every reason to mistrust and dislike Gandhi and Jinnah, and their followers. But the Congress and the League are the dominant parties in Hindu and Muslim India, and will remain so. They control the Press, the electoral machine, the money bags; and have the prestige of established parties . . . Even if Gandhi and Jinnah disappeared tomorrow (and I do not think that Gandhi today would be described by Insurance companies as a good life) I can see no prospect of our having more reasonable people to deal with. We have had to negotiate with similar rebels before, e.g., De Valera and Zaghlul . . .

What I have in mind is a provisional political government, of the type suggested in the Cripps declaration, within the present constitution, coupled with an earnest but not necessarily simultaneous attempt to devise means to reach a constitutional settlement.¹⁵

Wavell waited anxiously for the results when Gandhi and Jinnah met in the summer of 1944 on the basis of Rajgopalachari's formula, which suggested the acceptance of Pakistan both in the north-western and north-eastern subcontinent giving contiguous districts the right to secede from or join Pakistan. The proposal was stipulated by the former premier of Madras in order to facilitate a meeting between the two South Asian leaders and thus reach a tangible consensus for the establishment of a provisional government to operate until the attainment of independence. Gandhi and Jinnah corresponded with each other before they met in September 1944. Jinnah had already conferred with the AIML working committee at Lahore and felt confident of his stance on Pakistan. Gandhi was only willing to accept a 'maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan', with a plebiscite after independence, which was not acceptable to the AIML. Moreover, Gandhi met Jinnah in his personal capacity and not as the representative of the INC – and Jinnah was quick to point out his anomalous position, since he could not make a commitment on behalf of the Congress. Gandhi refused to accept the idea of a separate Muslim state as a prerequisite for any

Hindu-Muslim agreement and insisted upon a united India. Wavell explained why the talks had failed, in his view: 'The two great mountains have met and not even a ridiculous mouse has emerged. This surely must blast Gandhi's reputation as a leader. Jinnah had an easy task, he merely had to keep on telling Gandhi he was talking nonsense, which was true, and he did so rather rudely, without having to disclose any of the weaknesses of his own position, or define his Pakistan in any way.'¹⁶ Subsequent developments during Wavell's period as viceroy included the Simla conference of South Asian statesmen, the Cabinet mission, the elections of 1946 and the interim government, when Louis Mountbatten then succeeded him to supervise the transfer of power.

THE BENGAL FAMINE AND THE AMERICAN RESPONSE

As mentioned earlier, the famine in Bengal began in the summer of 1943, coinciding with Wavell's nomination as Linlithgow's successor. The famine took a massive toll in human lives and cattle, creating a state of despair. Wavell toured the affected area and immediately requested the authorities in London to procure food grain for India. The British government forwarded the appeal to Washington where the official response was rather slow, but some private organisations attempted their own aid programmes for the troubled South Asians. In 1943, Bengal had suffered from a shortage of rice, whereas in 1944 there was a wheat shortage caused by devastating storms. The American mission in New Delhi sent regular reports on the famine conditions in Bengal which were gradually spreading toward Madras and Bombay. George Merrell inquired if 'shipments to Calcutta have left Canada or United States or are contemplated and in what quantities'.¹⁷ Murray was quite moved by these communications from New Delhi and accordingly informed T. Ross Cissel Jun., chief of the War Commodities Division, about the acute situation in Bengal where people were dying daily in the streets of Calcutta. 'While the situation in Bengal has been aggravated by floods and hurricanes and hence is the worst', Murray wrote, 'conditions of a very serious sort are understood likewise to exist in Madras and Bombay.' He suggested setting

aside a contingent allotment of rice from American stocks 'to be used to alleviate the alarming situation existing in Bengal if shipping space can be procured'.¹⁸ In his meetings with the British officials in Washington, Cissel gained the impression that they were neither concerned nor competent enough to make the necessary arrangements.¹⁹

Despite these facts, Hull sent a telegram to Merrell stating that no such aid programme was being contemplated officially and that the difficulties mainly lay in the shortage of ships and bags. 'For your confidential information,' Hull observed, 'it is not thought that American ships will be available to assist unless strong representations regarding the matter are made by the American military authorities in India.'²⁰ Syed Badrudduja, the mayor of Calcutta, sent a telegram to the US president informing him that the 'entire population [is] being devitalized and hundreds dying of starvation. Appeal to you and Mr. Churchill in the name of starving humanity to arrange immediate shipment of food grains from America, Australia, and other countries.' Hull told Consul-General Patton at Calcutta to send 'an appropriate message' to the mayor while Merrell, in his own memorandum, remarked that the US military in India was 'indifferent to Bengal situation and implications and regards them as exclusively British concern'.²¹

Apparently, neither the British bureaucracy nor their American counterpart nor the military commanders were interested in any food assistance programme. Using one excuse or the other the buck was being passed around and the press in both countries became critical of official apathy. In response to Merrell's dispatches and press criticism, Hull decided to defend the US government by issuing a press statement that carried a number of verbose promises and no concrete aid plan whatsoever.²²

Nevertheless, since the indigenous procurement of rice, even with strict rationing, could not provide for Bengal and the adjoining territories, the time came when Churchill had to appeal to Roosevelt for help. After reviewing the scarcity of food and enormous loss of human life, he continued 'I have had much hesitation in asking you to add to the great assistance you are giving us with shipping but a satisfactory situation in India is of such a vital importance to the success [of] our joint plans against the Japanese that I am impelled to ask you to consider a special allocation of ships to carry wheat to India from Australia with-

out reducing assistance you are now providing for us.'²³ Wavell had estimated the need for wheat imports to be 1 million tons, whereas Churchill arranged for only 350,000 tons to be brought from Australia and then his government were not able to secure sufficient ships. FDR was willing to help but his military advisers told him that the shipping could not be spared from military operations.²⁴ A similar request made earlier by the Indian government was for 100 million ounces of silver to be sold in the market to boost up its faltering economy. Halifax and Bajpai made repeated representations to the State Department officials and Morgenthau, the Treasury Secretary in the Roosevelt administration. The US government provided some initial help, amounting to 20 million ounces for coinage, but did not feel enthusiastic about taking on the role of 'supplier'.²⁵

THE VIEW OF THE PRESS

A major reason for the 'cool' response to such requests by the Americans was the British refusal to come to terms with the Indian nationalists. In addition, the Indian government had been denying wire services to the United Press in India on a reciprocal basis. The UP had been building up pressure on the State Department for official British permission to use the wire services in India, in the way that these services were provided to Reuters and other British press agencies in the USA. Secretary Hull had directed Ambassador Winant in London to bring the 'matter personally to the attention of the Foreign Office and stress the fact that we attach a great deal of importance to it'. He asked Winant to 'inform the Foreign Office that we shall not rest content until some solution is found to this problem and we confidently leave to you the best method of reaching this objective'. Winant, at his end, informed Hull that there had been a delay in receiving a response from the Indian government.²⁶

The long-awaited response from New Delhi was communicated to Washington from London on 27 August 1943, four months after Hull's telegram of 28 April. The Indian government was reluctant to provide such facilities to the UP, for reasons such as lack of trained personnel, fear of news leakage to the Japanese and so on, none of which was convincing given the stringent British censorship.²⁷ Phillips, Murray and Calvin

Oakes reviewed the British refusal and observed that the arguments 'were not valid'.²⁸ Curiously, the matter had received prompt attention from Hull who sent a further telegram expressing his 'strong feeling' over the issue.²⁹ William Phillips, meanwhile, had proceeded to London to assume his temporary assignment as the personal representative of Secretary Hull at the headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander, General Eisenhower. In mid-October he received a message from Murray telling him not to pursue the UP case any further since General Auchinleck had already conveyed a point-blank British refusal to a representative of UP. It was assumed that the denial was a retaliation from London to the expositions on India by Drew Pearson in *The Round-up*, an American army periodical in New Delhi.³⁰ Pearson had published Phillips' secret reports to FDR on India, much to the embarrassment of the British authorities. He contributed a syndicated column entitled 'The Washington Merry Go-Round,' which had been reproduced in *The Round-Up* together with John Fischer's statements.

Pearson, who was based in Washington, had been able to obtain Phillips' reports from the US government secretly and mysteriously. He had also succeeded in obtaining John Fischer's letter to Leo Crowley which assessed British Indian policies critically. John Fischer was the senior representative of the Office of Economic Warfare in India and Crowley held the office of administrator, Foreign Economic Administration. Drew Pearson's publication of Phillips' reports across the United States and their reproduction in the subcontinent was a bombshell for the British government which adversely affected its prestige. Pearson had provided details of Gandhi's letter to FDR and accused the British government of withholding FDR's intended reply to Gandhi. He then informed readers about Phillips meeting with Winston Churchill in Washington, when he was 'insulted' by the prime minister. In these circumstances, Pearson concluded, 'the American people did not get to know how patient Roosevelt had been with Churchill.'³¹ Pearson was highly critical of the British government for declaring William Phillips to be *persona non grata*.

An article in the *Washington Post* by Pearson³² created quite an uproar in the British embassy, for it reproduced in great detail from Phillips' reports to FDR a year earlier. Halifax was very agitated when he called on Hull, who had not read the column

but went along with the British ambassador in condemning Pearson: 'Mr. Hull reminded me that the President had publicly described Pearson as a chronic liar and that it could only be said that the text he had published "purported" to be authentic. There was only one person in the State Department who could have given or shown such a text to Pearson and that was Welles, whose relations with Pearson had been particularly close. In fact Welles used to show Pearson documents and with him concoct attacks on Mr. Hull himself.' Merrell, while meeting with Olaf Caroe, 'confirmed that there was an unauthorised leak from the State Department, and the comments attributed to Phillips were genuine'.³⁴

Pearson's tirade against the British government in the context of Phillips testimony through his secret reports also reverberated in the US Congress where Senator Chandler was very harsh on the British government. Foreign Secretary Eden advised Halifax to take up the matter with the US authorities at a high level and to get a statement repudiating all the allegations made by Pearson against the British regarding India, the war, and the allegation that William Phillips had been declared *persona non grata*. In the event that the US government was not prepared to make such a statement, Halifax was urged by the Foreign Secretary to issue 'something that will command wide attention, and we think that your correction should be directed to the Senator rather than to Pearson'.³⁵

Who leaked the Phillips' reports and the details of the Gandhi-Roosevelt correspondence remains a mystery. William Phillips published an extensive autobiography a few years later, but only allowed a passing reference to the controversy.³⁶ Cordell Hull also ignored the issue in his memoirs and did not disclose the identity of the official in the State Department or the White House who had been responsible for the leakage.³⁷ Phillips himself, in an interview with Guy Hope, 'professed his inability to speculate meaningfully about how they occurred'. It was put to him by Guy Hope that, 'Churchill's sensitiveness on the issue and experience with Roosevelt's subtle ways of manipulating public opinion, leads to a suspicion that the President, or someone in his confidence, authorized the disclosure in order to keep the record of American intentions toward India straight and to offer ammunition and a defined target for independence advocates.' However, this view was denied by William Phillips.³⁸

Drew Pearson carried the secret with him to his grave, even though for weeks he 'was shadowed and investigated by the British Secret Service'.³⁹ He absolved Sumner Welles of any alleged complicity by stating that no top-level official from the administration or any South Asian was involved in the leakage. J. J. Singh, however, claimed that he knew the contents of the Phillips' reports long before Pearson made them public.⁴⁰

IMMIGRATION STILL AN IDEAL

The small community of South Asians in the United States dating from the early decades of the twentieth century largely remained an excluded minority through the denial of American citizenship to them. Since they came from the 'barred zone' their colonial status further weakened their case. Their urban groups on both coasts had been actively campaigning for the restoration of their naturalisation. Their representations in the press or through the US Congress had been largely inconsequential until the 1940s – when the subcontinent became a vital geo-strategic element in global warfare and US diplomacy. This new importance helped South Asian activists in the USA where the press had been giving frequent coverage to internal Indian developments. Moreover, the publicity in the wake of the Louis Johnson mission and the William Phillips mission – at a crucial stage in the Allied war against Japan – was an additional factor in favour of these groups struggling for the restoration of US citizenship.

The critical moment for the South Asians residing in California was a piece of legislation called the Alien Land Law which had been passed by the Lower House of the State Legislature and was under consideration by a Senate committee. The proposed legislation prohibited aliens who were ineligible for citizenship from holding and working land in California. In other words, it directly affected the South Asians, who did not enjoy citizenship and were predominantly an agrarian community. Some South Asians with Mexican wives had already transferred their landholdings to their spouse, but the majority feared eviction. Even the 'minority' with Mexican wives anticipated permanent discrimination. People such as D. S. Saund sent appeals all over the country and a delegation waited on the Indian agent-

general in Washington. Creagh Coen, a colleague of Bajpai at the agency, communicated their concern on 10 April 1943, to Paul Alling of the Near Eastern Division.⁴¹ His visit was followed by that of Bajpai, who volunteered to meet the governor of California himself to broach the matter with him informally as 'he could convince the California authorities by such discussions that the proposed legislation was most undesirable.'⁴²

Eventually, Hull wrote to Earl Warren, the governor of California, apprising him of the apprehensions of Bajpai and added that the intended legislation would adversely affect Indian opinion – which already accused the United States of being 'unconcerned with the practical application of the high principles expounded in the Atlantic Charter'. Hull suggested that Warren should take the legislators into his confidence on the issue so as to exempt the citizens of the United Nations, including India, from the purview of the bill.⁴³

In his telegram of 28 April 1943, Warren acknowledged receipt of Hull's message and promised 'careful consideration' of the matter.⁴⁴ In response to another reminder from Hull, Warren confided in him the fears of the Californian legislators regarding some of the Japanese who had acquired land near military establishments, thus making them susceptible to sabotage. As Warren put it, the bill was intended to do away with such anomalies but was not aimed against the 'nationals of any of our allies'.⁴⁵ When Hull persistently raised the matter, Warren again attempted to rationalise the bill by explaining that it did not affect the Indians and the Chinese, but was intended for the Japanese.⁴⁶ In fact, since he had already signed the bill it had become a statute, so Hull deemed it diplomatic not to pursue the matter any further. He then wrote an apologetic letter to Bajpai, recapitulating on his correspondence with the governor of California and expressing his inability to help in the matter since the legislation had already been enacted.⁴⁷ The issue was again raised by Bajpai in December 1944, and it remained a major issue during the Truman administration.

MUSLIM POLITICS: THE OFFICIAL VIEW

Churchill and other leading British officials blamed Hindu-Muslim dissensions for the failure to achieve Indian independence.

They argued for a bi-communal solution to the Indian crisis prior to British withdrawal, thus shifting responsibility to the South Asians and refusing to take any part in ending the impasse. As seen earlier, Churchill talked of a 'blood-bath' occurring if the British decided to leave, yet he could not accept that both by maintaining the status quo and by trying to play the two major communities against each other, the British government was aggravating the situation and shying away from its obligations. The Muslim factor was a reality stressed by the AIML, but it was not an anti-Hindu movement as the British authorities chose to represent it. The US government, while outwardly keeping a low profile, attempted to probe into such British claims and the research and analysis branch of the Co-ordinator's Office of the US government prepared the *British Empire Section Situation Report no 4*, 'How Strong Is Muslim Hostility to a Self-Government in India?' This classified document, intended for restrictive use, was forwarded by James P. Baxter, the deputy co-ordinator, to Harry Hopkins – presumably for the information of FDR and his close aides.⁴⁸ The report, the first on South Asian Muslim politics, reviewed the official British position, the stance and strength of the AIML and non-League Muslim groups and their leadership.

Quoting from Leopold Amery and the Duke of Devonshire, in an early section the report alluded to British concerns about a civil war or partition in the event of a withdrawal, as they firmly believed that the Muslims feared the imposition of a Hindu majority rule. The Muslim demand for Pakistan, according to this British assessment, stemmed from the same fear, although the official American researchers somehow misinterpreted it as Muslim hostility to the idea of self-government. On the question of the strength of the AIML, the report observed: 'there is no doubt that the Hindu-Muslim antipathy is powerful and deep, and has constituted the major internal obstacle to nationalist success against British in the past.' Before addressing itself to the main issue, the report tried to consider two major related facts. Firstly, did the AIML represent the majority of the Indian Muslims? Secondly, was the Pakistan scheme an unalterable creed for it? On the first question, the report found that the AIML was 'the strongest single Muslim party', but not the only one.⁴⁹ In the 1937 elections for the provincial legislatures, the AIML had taken 108 Muslim seats out of a total of 482 seats,

commanding 'only a plurality of the Muslim vote'. Since no other provincial elections had followed those of 1937, the report stated that it was impossible 'to estimate the present strength of the party which the Duke of Devonshire claims is increasing'.⁵⁰ It was estimated that the total membership of the AIML stood at around 1,000,000 compared to 3,000,000 in the INC. As well as these formal members, both parties enjoyed a mass following 'greater than the actual party strength'.⁵¹ The report acknowledged the support from influential quarters which the League had recently acquired – as witnessed by the question of representation on the National Defence Council, which comprised thirty members, including the four Muslim premiers of Bengal, Punjab, Assam and Sind. Since the Indian government had appointed them as members of the Muslim community, not as AIML representatives, Jinnah asked them to resign. All except the chief minister of Sind resigned, which illustrated the strength of the League as the most influential Muslim party.

Listing the other Muslim organisations, the report took into consideration the recent emergence of the Azad Muslim Conference, consisting of groups like the Ahrars, the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind and the All-India Momin Conference under the leadership of the Sind premier, Allah Baksh. The conference had come into existence in April 1940 to repudiate the Lahore resolution of March 1940 and had various chapters in numerous places organising pro-INC rallies. The conference, at its Delhi session in March 1942, resolved not to spare any effort to unite the people of India for independence. Although it urged unity among all political forces, however, it had challenged the AIML in its claim to be the sole representative of the South Asian Muslims. At this stage the report considered it premature to say anything definite about the future significance of the Azad Conference, although in early 1942 it was attracting quite a few dissenters from the AIML: 'It is not possible to assess accurately the significance of the Azad Conference actions, but it stresses the fact that the Muslim League does not represent the whole Muslim community and that in fact large and influential elements oppose it and favor a solution of India's constitutional problem on lines of a united and self-governing dominion or nation.'⁵²

On the question of the demand for Pakistan, the report found no change and cited as confirmation the various resolutions of

the AIML since 23 March 1940, and more recently the election of Jinnah as its president on 22 February 1942. 'Mr. Jinnah is dictator [*sic*] of the League,' the research staff at the Coordinator's Office stated, 'and he refuses so far to budge from his position on the question of the partition of India, and has even prophesied revolt in case a government is established in India with the Hindus in control over the Muslims.'⁵³ In its conclusion, the report commented on the strong support for Jinnah and the AIML among the Muslim masses despite disagreement from certain quarters. The Muslim community was found to be divided, with some elements supporting the INC programme – though Jinnah 'still wields large influence in the community, perhaps, more than any other leader, and the Muslim League is possibly still the dominating organization among Muslims'.⁵⁴ To what extent the report had an influence on the higher echelons of the US government remains guesswork, given its disinclination to become embroiled in the Anglo-Indian issue.

INDIAN POLITICS: LOUIS FISCHER'S REPORT

Besides official reports commissioned in Washington on specific India-related themes, similar efforts were undertaken by American citizens with an interest or background in the subcontinent. Louis Fischer is a case in point. He was asked by US officials like Sumner Welles to submit a wide-ranging report on Indian political realities for the consideration of officials in the White House and State Department. Sumner Welles sent a reference to Henry F. Grady in New Delhi introducing Louis Fischer in a generous way: 'He is a correspondent of *The Nation* and, as you know, is a distinguished author of some outstanding and highly valuable works on foreign affairs, and I believe that his present trip will be useful from the standpoint of giving public opinion in the United States accurate information as to conditions in India and the Near East.'⁵⁵ After visiting North Africa, Louis Fischer spent eight busy weeks in the subcontinent from May to June 1942 meeting members of the British authorities, South Asian leaders, journalists and American personnel in the subcontinent. His stay coincided with the post-Cripps mission gloom in India, when the INC contemplated mass agitation against the British government. Fischer was deeply influenced by Gandhi and his

observations had a strong pro-INC flavour. On his return, he prepared his 'Statement on India', a sixteen page report on the Indian situation dated 3 September 1943, which he submitted to Sumner Welles. While Welles was very close to FDR, Hull carried a personal grudge against the under-secretary and had even once confided in Campbell that he believed Welles to be responsible for the leaking of documents to Pearson.⁵⁶

Louis Fischer's 'Statement on India' began by recounting the strong anti-British feelings among the South Asians. 'Without one exception', Fischer wrote, 'those whom I asked said that India was never as anti-British as it is today.'⁵⁷ Quoting known Indian and British personalities in the subcontinent, such as Justice Varadacharia, Homi Modi, General Wavell, Firoz Khan Noon and even Lord Linlithgow, Fischer inferred that the British were only interested in the maintenance of law and order, knowing that they lacked friends in the region. The British often regarded the situation with alarm, yet rationalised Indian disenchantment with one excuse or the other and generally criticised the Indians for their apathy to the war. Fischer found India 'sullen, anti-war and anti-British', yet the government persisted with their coercive measures as if they could not comprehend the volatile situation. Privately, some British officials admitted to a prior knowledge of the failure of the Cripps mission and, despite acknowledging Gandhi's following both in the subcontinent and America, continued to underestimate it. Even Halifax in Washington seemed to be concerned only with the geo-strategic situation with no apparent regard for Indian political aspirations.⁵⁸

In his interviews with Gandhi and other South Asians, Fischer ascertained that the only way out was the establishment of an Indian national coalition government which would in no way impede the war effort. According to him, these South Asians had promised that there would be no reversal in war policy and that they would wait for complete independence until after the end of hostilities. Fischer quoted Gandhi —: 'We would organize a provisional government representing the Princes, Moslems and Congress' — and added his opinion that this was 'Realpolitik and the only answer to all objections that have been made about Hindu-Moslem differences, etc'.⁵⁹

Dealing with the various 'factions' in the Indian political scenario, for example the princes, Untouchables, Muslims and

Hindus, Fischer felt that most of them expected an eventual British withdrawal. The Nawab of Chhatari (premier of Hyderabad), the Maharaja of Bikaner and the Jam Saheb, secretary of the chamber of the princes, all alluded to this. Mir Maqbool Mahmood, the executive secretary of the chamber, confided in him on behalf of the rajas and princes: 'We all want a free and independent India. The Princes will not obstruct it if their treaties are guaranteed. The Princes would not be the Ulster of India.'⁶⁰ Fischer described Dr Ambedkar as 'the bitterest man I met in India'. He had recently joined the viceroy's executive council but complained of continued discrimination against the Untouchables by the Hindus and wished to leave the Hindu fold by opting for Christianity or Islam. Some of the Untouchables were already converts but they still remained poor and ignored, living as 'scavengers and street cleaners'. Even trade unionism did not ameliorate the plight of the most docile community in the subcontinent, who in many cases preferred Gandhi to Ambedkar. Ambedkar's influence among the Untouchables could not be precisely gauged since, after joining the executive council, he had caused much controversy over his political career.⁶¹

Considering the Hindu-Muslim problem, Fischer stated that the AIML viewpoint was 'entirely a city-made product' stemming from religious but not ethnic or blood reasons:

Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the President of the Moslem League, told me that 75% of all Moslems in India were converted Hindus; that is, Hindus brought into Islam by the Moslem conquerors of India. Jawaharlal Nehru said to me that the figure was not 75% but 95%. The vast majority of Moslems, therefore, are of the same blood and descent as the Hindus. The real difference between Hindus and Moslems is religious. In a country so very religious as India, religion does create a gulf, and the separation between the Hindu and Muslim communities is accentuated by the reluctance of the Orthodox Hindus to eat at the same table with or to intermarry with members of another church.

Perhaps Fischer forgot to mention Muslim emigration to India in the past, as well as the socio-psychological and linguistic-economic factors which made Hindus and Muslims two quite distinct societies. He likened the Hindu-Muslim problem to that of the Arab-Jewish problem, forgetting that it was more

than religion which separated them from each other. On the one hand, he recognised Hindu reluctance to share the same table with Muslims, while, on the other hand, he referred to his British and Indian respondents who 'informed me that there have never been any communal differences or riots in the villages of India, and India is 95 per cent village. In innumerable regions, Moslems participated in Hindu religious rites and vice versa.'⁶² A few lines later, Fischer made a comparison between the communities where he stated that the Hindus generally cherish political debates. He then continued: 'But if you wish to go out and dine or dance or swim or to have a good social time, you seek the company of the virile, meat-eating Moslem. So I spent many hours with Moslems. After listening to and arguing with scores of Moslems and Hindus, I made my own analysis of the Hindu-Moslem problem and then checked it with every person I met in India. I found no disagreement with it.'⁶³

Louis Fischer described the AIML as being totally dominated by upper-class Muslim feudals under the leadership of Jinnah who as 'a gifted Parliamentarian and incorruptible politician and lawyer, is an exception among them'. Describing the Muslim community, he found virtually no middle-class industrialists, traders or bankers since, according to him, Muslims generally hated going into money-lending which is prohibited by Islam. Similarly, the press in South Asia was a non-Muslim domain with Hindus and Parsis owning most of the papers.⁶⁴ Such realities, he maintained, had hindered the growth of a Muslim middle class and, consequently, both commerce and industry remained the monopolistic jurisdiction of non-Muslims. The Hindu industrial magnates and industrialists like Birlas and Tatas supported the INC and Gandhi's *satyagraha* as it suited their own economic interests. On the other hand, Fischer reported, India had limited job opportunities for educated youths who aspired for official positions and, here again, Muslims were the main losers. Such disadvantages led the Muslim politicians to plead for a Muslim quota which helped them to gain more credibility among the nascent Muslim middle class. In addition, he believed that these Muslim politicians were 'using Pakistan, which is a kind of Moslem Zionism, to whip up nationalistic fervor among the middle and lower classes.'⁶⁵

Recapitulating on events since the elections of 1936, Fischer accused the INC of neglecting the Muslims, yet claimed that the

League's charges against the INC of 'atrocities' in the provinces under the Congress had not convinced him. Nevertheless, it was in the Muslim minority provinces like the UP that Jinnah had a massive following, building his case upon the policies of Congress provincial governments. On the other hand, in Muslim majority provinces where the INC posed no such challenge, the AIML following was comparatively smaller. Although these provinces were to be integral parts of Pakistan, the leaders – Fazlul Haq in Bengal, Sikandar Hayat Khan in Punjab, Allah-baksh Soomro in Sind and the Khans of the NWFP – were all opposed to Pakistan. Neither did Fischer find any enthusiasm for Pakistan in Baluchistan, and many influential Muslims privately felt cold towards the idea. One of these was Firoz Khan Noon, who 'told me that he would prefer an all India federation to Pakistan, but asked me not to tell this to his Moslem League friends. Jinnah may not have enough arguments or ideas to convince his fellow Muslims. But he has enough power to terrorize them.' It is probable that Fischer could not reconcile himself to the fact that, notwithstanding a few individual Muslim leaders in the 'establishment', Pakistan had become the creed of a decisive majority of Indian Muslims. Since Jinnah did not hold any office in the government or head any clandestine organisation there was no way that he could have pushed these reluctant politicians into something they did not believe in. The massive support across all sections of Muslim society had strengthened the AIML since the launching of the Pakistan movement, and various pressure groups gradually came to accept the general will. It was a democratic movement, supported by a clear-cut majority and led by a scrupulous man who faithfully stood for the constitutional and democratic means to attain it.

Louis Fischer, who had pro-Gandhi and pro-INC leanings, felt that leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Azad and Rajgopalachari believed in an independent united India where Muslims could have their Pakistan if the federation did not work in a trial period of say ten to fifteen years. He strongly supported this idea in his report, even to the extent of assuming that the Muslims in Muslim majority provinces would support it. He quite failed to understand that Pakistan was not just an administrative convenience for the Muslims. This was an idea that the INC was

trying to promote and even Gandhi had floated it in his talks with Jinnah. Pakistan was a political faith for the Muslims, not merely a bargaining position. The INC resisted the idea of handing out such promises for the future, forgetting that during its eighteenth-month period of provincial rule it had totally ignored the AIML and through its Muslim mass contact movement had alienated the Muslims. After such an experience, how could the Muslim masses accept such promises from the same Congress, which dreamt of succeeding the British as soon as possible.

Like the INC leaders, Fischer felt that the demand for Pakistan was a deliberate attempt to give further proof to the British of a possible Hindu-Muslim rupture. Although he did not question the honesty of the AIML leadership on the question of Pakistan, he nevertheless gave the impression that the demand helped the British to stay on in the subcontinent. He argued that the British were reluctant to leave India but in the event that they 'announced definitely that they were transferring political power immediately, the result, I am convince[d], would be an immediate Hindu-Moslem agreement'. In support of this view he quoted Liaquat Ali Khan who was reported to have told Fischer in response to his inquiry about the possibility of the AIML joining a national government: 'Yes, if Pakistan were recognized in principle. Then if the collaboration worked, the Moslems might not wish to divide India.' He also quoted Jinnah's interview in *The New York Times* of 17 August 1942, in which he had threatened to 'resist any Hindu Government that the British might possibly set up'. Regarding the formation of an all-India provisional or national government he minced no words: 'Naturally, it would be necessary to obtain the support of all groups including the Congress.'⁶⁶ One could not expect Gandhi, Patel, Nehru or Azad to give such generous recognition to the multiple nature of the South Asian socio-political mosaic. Fischer concluded, much to the agony of the British government, that the Hindu-Muslim problem could be resolved only if the government were sincere about it, otherwise the situation would worsen rapidly. He predicted the Congress revolt and assessed that it would become a serious law and order issue. Also, he foresaw an iron fist policy from the British, whom he accused of deliberately maintaining a stalemate in the subcontinent.

Interestingly, Fischer did not touch upon the US role or nationalist expectations of a more assertive American stance on South Asian affairs.

J. J. SINGH APPROACHES ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Sirdar J. J. Singh took upon himself the task of publicising South Asian independence in the USA by lobbying in Washington DC and New York. He was the president of the India League of America based in New York, which included Dr J. Holmes Smith, Mahendra Rakhit, Dr Anup Singh, Roger Baldwin, N. R. Checker, A. Choudry, Mrs. John Gunthers, Sidney Hertzberg, Mirza Jaffer, S. R. Mandal, Mrs. Kamala Mukerji, Rustom Wadia and S. J. Wynn on its executive committee.⁶⁷ The India League published a monthly paper, *India Today*, which carried pro-INC news and views. Given the views expressed earlier by Louis Johnson and Louis Fischer and encouraged by the recent arrival of William Phillips, J. J. Singh wrote a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt knowing of her influence on FDR. Written on 20 May 1943, the letter was received by the first lady the next day and presented to FDR for his comments. In his lengthy letter, Singh reminded Eleanor Roosevelt of the recent return of William Phillips to Washington DC and the continued unawareness of Americans about British policies in India. He found a parallel with the earlier mission of Colonel Johnson who, since his return to the United States, was never heard of despite the fact that he differed essentially with the British government. Singh suggested that Phillips' views be made public given the strategic importance of India in the war against the Japanese. Referring to Phillips' statement in New Delhi before his departure for the USA, when he spoke of his inability to see Nehru and Gandhi, Singh observed that the Congress viewpoint was largely unknown on this side of the Atlantic. With the Japanese conquests in the Far East, the fall of Rangoon and the precarious situation on the Chinese war front, it was imperative that the United Nations took the INC leadership into its confidence. Singh felt that by committing itself to the ultimate independence of the subcontinent and by establishing a provisional government during the war, the British government could go a long way towards bolstering the morale of the Indians, Burmese and

Chinese. In such a situation, he even predicted widespread revolts against the Japanese all over the Far East and that 'the end of Japan might come even earlier than the end of Hitler.'⁶⁸

Knowing America's military interest in the region, J. J. Singh advocated publicising Phillips' viewpoint for the general information of the American people. He knew that such publicity would go a long way to pressurising both the US and British governments to change their respective policies *vis-à-vis* South Asia. Given the impact of the American press, Singh stated: 'Because a political settlement in India is definitely connected with the United Nations Victory over Japan, it is important for the American people and the United Nations to know what the personal envoy of the President of the United States saw in India and what his opinion is. Does Ambassador Phillips think that a settlement can be made in India or not?'⁶⁹

Eleanor Roosevelt was greatly touched by the letter and forwarded it to FDR for his comments. He cautioned her 'not to write about this because Bill Phillips and I are working at it quietly. So far without much success, but we are at least not stirring up the animal.'⁷⁰ While he obviously felt for the South Asian cause, FDR was not prepared to incur British wrath for he added a brief notation on the letter in his own handwriting: 'Tell Mrs. R. that responsible people are working quietly on this problem and I do not think any other action should be taken now.'⁷¹ Eleanor Roosevelt drafted a reply to J. J. Singh which repeated FDR's message, though with some deletions. She wrote: 'Responsible people are working quietly on the problem about which you wrote and I do not think any other action should be taken now.'⁷² Having made it all the way to the White House, Singh got no immediate result – Churchill was undoubtedly respected as well as feared in Washington.

Singh carried on his relentless lobbying during the mid-1940s. Encouraged by Louis Fischer's pro-INC stance and his rapport with Sumner Welles, Singh sent an invitation to Welles to be the chief speaker at an independence day function to be held on 26 January 1946. In the letter, mailed on 23 November 1945, Singh informed Welles of the ceremony to be held at the Hotel Commodore in New York. He wrote that Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Nehru's sister, would be the guest of honour. Nehru himself had read the Declaration of Indian Independence in December 1929 'and January 26th was set for an annual renewal

of the pledge to achieve freedom for India'. J. J. Singh felt that the meeting needed to review the situation in the whole of Asia, which necessitated 'a definite and bold lead' by the American people. Taking Welles as a symbol of concerned Americans, Singh mentioned to him the possibility of a massive resolution in the subcontinent. He hoped that Welles would not fail the India League of America and other thoughtful Americans at that crucial juncture.⁷³ Two days later, Louis Fischer wrote to Sumner Welles urging him to attend the meeting being held in New York: 'I need not tell you that events in southeast Asia have tremendous significance for all of us, for America in particular. The anti-imperialist struggle is in the forefront of world affairs and if it is allowed to develop against the western powers they will be seriously weakened.'⁷⁴

EXTRA-STRATEGIC BILATERALISM

Before concluding the present study, it would be prudent to summarise the extra-military relationship between the two governments, dealing with economic, cultural and technical matters during the mid-1940s until President Harry Truman started a new phase in Indo-American bilateralism. During the period 1944-45, relevant concerns were the US cotton export policy, cultural exchange and direct radio telegraphic contacts between the USA and the subcontinent. In the mid-1940s India was the second largest cotton producer after the USA, with its exchequer depending heavily on cotton exports. British India exported 3,398,766 bales of cotton out of a total crop of 6,148,166 bales produced during the years 1933-9. During the Second World War a sort of competition emerged between the United States and India, which worried the British government as it feared that with better shipping facilities and a stronger economy, American cotton exports would seriously affect the financial situation in the subcontinent – which had already been hard hit by war, famine, inflation and continued political instability. Following an inquiry by Girja Bajpai, the agent-general for India in Washington,⁷⁵ the State Department offered some clarification, including a suggestion to hold an international conference on the issue so as to determine a mutually acceptable

policy,⁷⁶ which was accepted by Bajpai on behalf of the Government of India.⁷⁷

Dr Jagadisan M. Kumarappa, director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, held a meeting with George D. LaMont, the US consul in Bombay in April 1944 on the subject of a closer academic relationship between Americans and Indians. Apparently, Dr Kumarappa had the approval of the Tatas to broach the issue with the American official, who agreed with the Indian scholar in principle and wrote accordingly to George H. Merrell in New Delhi. Merrell forwarded the dispatch from the Bombay consulate to the Department of State and pursued the issue with deep interest. He felt that such a relationship could serve the American political interest, although during the war it might be difficult to establish a cultural exchange programme with India for the British government might be sceptical of growing American interest. However, he felt that a limited programme – involving American teachers as visiting professors in India with organisations like the Tata Institute – could be worked out with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation or Guggenheim Fellowship Program. The American envoy strongly recommended the training of Indian students in the United States through a sponsorship programme and asked the Department to extend a formal invitation to Dr Kumarappa to visit the United States.⁷⁸ Given increased American interest in this part of the world, the Department appreciated the views expressed by its envoys in Bombay and New Delhi approving the proposal to extend an invitation to Dr Kumarappa.⁷⁹ Dr Kumarappa planned to spend five months in the United States and intended to visit a number of institutions known for their social science programmes, besides visiting American rehabilitation centres for handicapped persons. He intended to ‘recruit’ American teachers for the Tata Institute as a part of his itinerary in America.⁸⁰

Finally, Dr Kumarappa arrived in the USA on 11 December 1941 for a three-week stay and was heralded as ‘the first guest of the Department of State from India under its program of cultural cooperation’. His visit coincided with that of a delegation of seven Indian scientists who had reached the United States on 8 December for an eight-week tour programme to meet their American counterparts after attending a seminar in Britain. Among these scientists, Dr Nazir Ahmad was the only Muslim

and the rest were all Hindu.⁸¹ The British government, on the one hand, encouraged the training of selected Indian scientists and engineers in the United States and, on the other hand, it was suspicious of self-financing South Asian students hoping for education in America. It felt that such 'private' students might turn into anti-British critics like the Ghadriles and other activists. Thus, it encouraged only apolitical subjects like agriculture and engineering (and those only for its own nominees), and did not encourage the training of South Asians in social sciences. It was only after independence that many Pakistanis and Indians found it easier to acquire higher education in the United States and bilateral cultural pacts governing exchange programmes were signed.

Similarly, on the question of the establishment of a direct radio-telegraph circuit between America and India, the Indian government was elusive in the beginning and it was only after quite a bit of probing that it finally settled for a treaty.⁸² Simultaneously, when the State Department renewed its representations for the provision of teletype telegraphic lines in the subcontinent to the United Press, the British authorities remained firm in their earlier stance of denying such facilities on the grounds of 'practical considerations'. Wallace Murray had an opportunity to vent his feelings against the partisan British attitude, politely yet of no avail. The British government stuck to the position that it had adopted in 1943.⁸³ Such denials and reservations came at a time when the British authorities were furious at the publication of Phillips' letters by Drew Pearson. After the departure of William Phillips, it appears that the US government withdrew even further on the Indian question. It avoided any posture or action that could put the British on the defensive. After the missions of Louis Johnson and Louis Phillips, the Roosevelt administration abandoned India to its own fate.

By 1944, it was already obvious that the crucial stage in the war was over, with better prospects for an Allied victory. Even India's military strength had diminished, and though the Japanese were putting up strong resistance it was more of a defensive nature. The war situation in Europe and North Africa had already entered into a pro-Allies phase. The Roosevelt administration had triumphantly begun its fourth term though Hull's rival, Sumner Welles, was gone and Hull was also on his way

out. The State Department maintained its 'traditional' interest in South Asian political affairs though it was George Merrell who was submitting the regular reports. Even in the subcontinent, the political parties were actively engaged in reorganisational programmes in anticipation of a new initiative from Wavell – who planned to bring the Indian political leaders around a table for negotiations very soon. There was an atmosphere of 'thaw' with everybody waiting for something new and important to happen.

9 End of the Raj – End of an Era?

By the mid-1940s, while the polarised political situation in the subcontinent seemed to be slowly heading toward some tacit understanding on the part of the various parties involved, Lord Wavell was impatient to break the stalemate engendered by Linlithgow's rigidity and wanted to gather Indian politicians round a negotiating table so as to reach a tangible settlement. The war situation appeared optimistic to the Allies and it was clear that the nationalist demands could not be averted or delayed by using global conflict as a scapegoat. The South Asian nationalists had themselves reached a desperate stage where they suspected every move made by the British government of India, however genuine it might sound. The predominant view was that the British were employing delaying tactics to avoid a final commitment on independence. The widespread miseries and casualties caused by the famine in 1943–4 had further alienated the Indians from the Raj and they had become highly critical of the official failure to provide the necessary food to the affected millions. The government was accused of being simply interested in winning the war and giving no priority to human sufferings. Earlier, the victories by the central powers had exposed the myth of the Raj's invincibility and now its efficiency and even its intentions had become questionable during the famine. Similarly, the absence of an official American initiative in the light of these realities produced a feeling of disgust among the South Asian élites – a new development which was to recur frequently in subsequent decades.

Although his approach to the Indian issue was different to that of Linlithgow, Wavell was still a nominee of Churchill's conservative and imperialist policies. The rise of Attlee to the premiership in July–August of 1945, following the highly publicised Labour victory, hopefully augured a new era; yet Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the new Secretary of State to succeed Leopold Amery at the India Office on 4 August 1945 more or less followed in his predecessor's footprints.¹ The next major British move was the cabinet mission of three British ministers, including Stafford

Cripps, A. V. Alexander and Pethick-Lawrence which reached India on 23 March 1946, to negotiate with Indian politicians concerning the evolution of an independent federation in the subcontinent. Initially, the cabinet mission plan – stipulating elections and a constituent assembly to draft a constitution based on acknowledged rights of minorities – was accepted by both the INC and AIML but it was later rejected for their own different reasons. The AIML stood for nothing less than Pakistan, and had participated in the elections of 1946 on the basis of that creed.² Since the termination of the Quit India Movement it was obvious that the INC had lost much of its vigour, with Gandhi receding into the background. After the surrender of the Japanese, the INC faced the issue of reorganisation and the release of its interned activists. Now Jinnah held the key to any comprehensive settlement and was quite prepared to prove his strength among the Muslim masses.

From the American perspective, a number of vital developments had taken place, with a new leadership in the White House and a quite different group of high-ranking officials in the Department of State. The Truman administration began its political life in the spring of 1945, after the death of FDR on 12 April 1945, just four months in office in his fourth term and four months before the Japanese surrender. Harry S. Truman (1884–1972) was born in Missouri and became the thirty-third president on 12 April 1945, with no prior experience in the complexities of international politics. In his usual blunt manner, at the time of his assumption of office, he is reported to have said to his aides: 'Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me.'³

Truman depended heavily on his advisers and unlike FDR lacked a personal view and initiative on foreign affairs. The secretaries of state under him suffered from peculiar concerns over the rising force of communism. Heavily influenced by Churchill, even though he had been replaced by Attlee, Truman shared the predominant British worldview. Containment of communism and reparation of Western Europe were the mainstay of Truman's policy of containment during the cold war. The emergence of the United States as a superpower in an ill-prepared fashion meant that it did not fully comprehend the anti-colonial forces in the non-western world which were becoming critical of the pro-London, pro-Paris policies of the US government. In such a situation, Truman lacked a vocal stand

against western imperialism, for the American entry into the post-Second World War events heralded an era full of difficulties. Although he tried to defend his policies in his *Years of Decisions* (1955), *Years of Trial and Hope* (1956) and *Mr. Citizen* (1960), the fact remains that diplomats like Byrnes, Acheson, Harriman, Marshall, or politicians like McCarthy and Nixon were important in the formulation of policies that resulted in a war of nerves with what was then known as the east.

The leadership of the State Department in the mid- and late-1940s was in the hands of Stettinius, Byrnes, Acheson and Marshall. Cordell Hull had resigned in 1944 on health grounds and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1945 for his services in the establishment of the United Nations. FDR had appointed Edward Reilley Stettinius Jun. (1900-1949) as the new Secretary of State. This Chicago-born industrialist had studied at the University of Virginia without requiring any formal degree and then joined General Motors. Stettinius moved on to the US Steel Corporation to become its chairman in 1938. Two years later, he entered government service on the encouragement of FDR, who soon made him the administrator of Lend-Lease from 1941 to 1943. Stettinius became Under-Secretary of State in 1943 after the resignation of Sumner Welles, who had left due to differences with Hull. Enjoying a close friendship with FDR and Harry Hopkins, Stettinius succeeded Hull in 1944, and when Truman assumed the presidency, Stettinius was replaced by James Byrnes. Stettinius represented the American industrial class and held strong anti-communist views, which is evident in his book *Roosevelt and the Russians*. Curiously, this came out in 1949, the year of his death.

James Francis Byrnes (1879-1977) was a highly conservative politician from the southern USA. Born to an Irish immigrant family, Byrnes rose to a political career in South Carolina and was taken as the Secretary of State by Truman in 1945. Suffering from an anti-communist phobia, Byrnes is considered to be the architect of the cold war and was himself known as an absolutist 'czar' by his colleagues in the Department as well as by the press. His tenure as the secretary ended in 1947, when he again involved himself in the politics of South Carolina, serving as its governor from 1951 to 1955.

Joseph Clark Grew (1880-1965), who worked as a special

assistant to Secretary Hull in the years 1942–4, had succeeded Stettinius as the Under-Secretary of State in 1944–5 when the former replaced Hull. A native Bostonian, Grew had graduated from Groton and Harvard before joining the government. He had been an effective ambassador to Japan before the war and, along with Phillips, was considered for the assignment to New Delhi in 1943. He has left his own biography entitled *Turbulent Era, A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years – 1904–45* (1952) which provides his view of developments during his active career as a specialist on foreign affairs. As mentioned earlier, Grew worked under Roosevelt as a replacement for Welles who had then turned to writing.

The above resumé shows clearly that neither the White House nor the State Department had any defined views to defy or replace the contemporary international order. In the closing years of the war, the Roosevelt administration had withdrawn on sensitive issues like decolonisation and nationalism. The much-publicised Atlantic Charter was neither promulgated nor taken as a guideline in the various summit meetings during the war. The main objective was to win the war and the Charter had served its usefulness at a crucial time. More than Roosevelt's, the Truman administration symbolised post-war conservatism and operated for the maintenance of the status quo. Under such circumstances, the US Government and its related functionaries retained a semblance of interest in the Indian political situation without adopting any position whatsoever. The correspondence between Washington and the US mission in New Delhi or the agency-general dealt with issues like American immigration policy, negotiations for a US–Indian trade agreement or the redefinition of technical aspects of the bilateral diplomatic relationship. George Merrell, redesignated as the US commissioner in New Delhi, kept concerned State Department officials abreast of the latest political developments in the subcontinent, otherwise the relationship generally remained apolitical.

In a press conference on 29 January 1945, Grew, the acting Secretary of State made a statement regarding official US policy towards the subcontinent:

The American Government has continued to follow with sympathetic interest developments in the Indian question. It

is naturally hopeful that progress will be made in this difficult matter and would be happy to contribute in any appropriate manner to the achievement of a satisfactory settlement. We have close ties of friendship, both with the British and with the people of India. These ties have been strengthened by our common participation in the war effort.⁴

The statement was widely and critically discussed in the Indian press as it amounted to nothing more than the same policy of wait-and-see pursued by Hull and Welles. It was a non-committal, routine, and ceremonial statement stipulating non-interference and hoping for a 'natural' course of action to take place. On the other hand, William Phillips, who was based in Washington as special assistant to the Secretary of State, wrote in a memorandum that in the light of the Atlantic Charter and the statements by the late President Roosevelt, India was justified in expecting the 'sympathy of our country in her aspirations for eventual self-government'. He was critical of the American policy of appeasement toward Churchill who regarded India as 'Britain's backyard'. Phillips referred to the INC's demand for the release of Nehru and other detained political prisoners in order to make some headway towards a settlement. In the light of Wavell's presence in London for negotiations, Phillips urged 'that we should take advantage of this moment to informally express our interest and our hope for an amelioration of the unhappy conditions throughout India'. He simultaneously suggested that such sentiments be communicated to Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary then attending the UNO conference being held in San Francisco between 25 April and 26 June 1945.⁵

Phillips' memorandum was forwarded by Grew to Stettinius in San Francisco recommending a discussion on India with Eden as 'otherwise the opportunity will be lost'.⁶ Stettinius raised the issue with Eden who made no commitment, yet left a positive impression on the Secretary of State.⁷ Grew himself met Eden in Washington before the latter's departure for London and impressed upon him that it was a matter of prestige for the USA in the Far East and amongst the Asiatics that the Allies must take a realistic and sympathetic view of the 'Asia for the Asiatics movement'. Again, Eden was non-committal.⁸ However, a few days later, Grew received a letter from John Balfour of the

British embassy informing him in advance about Wavell's plan to convene the Simla conference of Indian leaders in order to reach some agreement.⁹ Then Wavell, in a reception for Commissioner Merrell, promised to keep him informed of all related developments.¹⁰ Merrell received eight regular notes on the Simla conference which had been announced on 14 June 1945 – with the viceroy sending invitations to twenty-one leaders.

The conference began on 25 June and went on until 14 July, with a brief intermission. It broke down on the question of the composition of the viceroy's executive council. In the meantime, the Labour government assumed office in the UK on 26 July 1945, and announced that elections for the central and provincial legislatures in India would be held soon, in compliance with the India Act of 1935 and the Cripps proposals. Lord Wavell was invited by the government to return to London for discussions. On his return to New Delhi, Wavell announced on 19 September that the British government 'are determined to do their utmost to promote in conjunction with leaders of Indian opinion the early realization of full self-government in India'. He laid out some proposals, including that concerning the elections, which were communicated by Bajpai to Dean Acheson, the acting Secretary of State. The British, by giving prior information to their American counterparts, wished to convince them of their desire to end the deadlock. However, the India Office felt that the INC was not enthusiastic about these British steps, which fell short of complete independence.¹¹

MERRELL AS THE US COMMISSIONER

The uncertainty about Phillips' return to New Delhi had produced much speculation both in the USA and the subcontinent. Amidst growing Indian criticism of American inaction, Wallace Murray came up with a suggestion that George Merrell be redesignated as the US commissioner. Such an appointment, according to the director of Near Eastern and African Affairs, would place the Delhi mission on its own footing and preclude the necessity of a presidential nomination for a representative each time.¹² Merrell was asked by the Department to make relevant inquiries with the Indian authorities who appeared receptive to this new proposal. Then Bajpai was asked to get the

necessary clearance from the Government of India, which was obtained in January 1945 subject to the approval of the British Foreign Office. Merrell was visiting the United States in December 1944 when the formal presidential approval of his new designation was conveyed to him. Halifax wrote to Eden to inform him of Merrell's appointment and recommended that since Phillips was not returning to India, Merrell should be accepted as his successor.¹³ Merrell was formally redesignated as commissioner on 28 February 1945, with the personal rank of minister. His promotion prompted Bajpai to seek a similar designation for himself.¹⁴ Initially, the Government of India, when asked by Merrell, was reluctant to redesignate Bajpai as the chief of mission,¹⁵ but subsequently Halifax formally requested the US government to raise Bajpai's status to that of a fully accredited minister.¹⁶ In fact, the State Department under Byrnes was reluctant at this point to upgrade the Indian agent-general in view of the forthcoming elections and related constitutional developments. Nevertheless, Green Hackworth, the legal adviser to the State Department, found nothing analogous in granting the ministerial position to Bajpai.¹⁷

TRADE AND IMMIGRATION

In 1945, the United States renewed her efforts for a treaty of commerce and tariff with the Government of India which had been suspended since December 1942. However, the British authorities in the subcontinent were hesitant to accept the most-favoured nation clause in the proposed agreement and, in addition, the Indian foreign exchange reserves were almost exhausted due to the war. Moreover, nationalistic feelings in the subcontinent precluded any possibility of such a bilateral treaty, possibly entailing investments by foreign companies and exploration for minerals in areas like Baluchistan. It appears that a number of American manufacturing interests were pushing the State Department to finalise an arrangement with the Indian authorities so as to facilitate their exports. At a time when the US government was keeping itself aloof from the Indian political quagmire, the economic aspects of the relationship began to assume more prominence.

Another important issue was immigration, the right of thousands of South Asian-Americans to acquire US citizenship. As seen in the last chapter, California had already passed an act that denied South Asians the right to hold land in the state. Most South Asian-Americans were still farmers, with a large concentration in California, and their exclusion from these proprietary rights during the war along with the Japanese greatly distressed the small community. Similar exclusion acts regarding the Chinese had already been removed by legislation on 17 December 1943, allowing the naturalisation of the Chinese. Legislation barring the 'East Indians' had been upheld by the Supreme Court in its decision of 19 February 1923, in the case of the *United States vs. Bhagat Singh Third*, and had been enforced by the Immigration Act of 1917, the Immigration Act of 1924 and the Nationality Act of 1940. Bajpai, quoting the Chinese precedent, raised the issue with Wallace Murray, who prepared a note for Joseph C. Grew.¹⁸ Bajpai had specifically referred to H. R. 1973, or the Luce-Celler Bill, which was pending before the House committee on immigration and naturalisation. Even Grew had found an 'inequity in American immigration and naturalisation laws – one which causes bitter resentment against the United States by the people of India, an important member of the United Nations'.¹⁹

Merrell submitted enthusiastic reports from New Delhi recording South Asian interest in the bill and the healthy effect which its approval would have on Indian opinion of the United States.²⁰ Like Grew, FDR was also critical of the inequity in American immigration policy based on exclusion of the South Asians and he personally wrote to Representative Dickstein, chairman of the said committee, in support of the bill.²¹ After further probing by Bajpai and a favourable note from Halifax, Grew wrote an extensive memorandum for President Truman advocating an equitable immigration policy toward Asiatics, as had been suggested earlier by FDR. Grew wanted Truman to use his personal influence on the congressmen in order to secure the passage of the bill – which after its first consideration in March 1945 was to be reviewed on 14 June by the House committee on immigration and naturalisation with Dickstein in the chair. Grew gave all the arguments he could in favour of the legislation,²² which also received strong support from William

Phillips in a special hearing – much to the pleasure of the South Asian press, including *Dawn*, which captioned its headline: ‘William Phillips supports Indian Immigration Bill’.²³ The bill was debated and passed by the House of Representatives on 10 October 1945 and the US Senate passed its amended version on 29 June 1946.²⁴ This received Truman’s signature on 2 July 1946, for promulgation without affecting the spirit of the quota system.

INTEREST IN THE ANGLO-SOUTH ASIAN POLITICAL DIALOGUE

As regards political developments in the subcontinent, the US government was following a cautious policy; while it declined to give support to either side, it nevertheless expected a loosening of British control over India. It expected the eventual independence of the subcontinent and, rather than aligning itself with political forces, it tried to pursue an economic-oriented foreign policy or dollar diplomacy in order to reach a trade agreement with India.²⁵ The repeated visitations and representations by Bajpai to the State Department to raise his diplomatic status to that of a full-fledged minister, together with the great respect with which he was regarded in American official circles, led Secretary of State Byrnes, in early-1946, to invite comments from Merrell, the US commissioner in India. In a similar situation, the Chinese government had already upgraded the status of the Indian diplomat at Chungking to that of a fully accredited minister – necessitating such a step by the US government also.²⁶ Merrell welcomed the idea on the grounds that it would result in the ‘gratification’ of the Indian nationalists.²⁷ However, Dean Acheson took strong exception to Merrell’s view, arguing that it would be interpreted as indicating US approval of the present representative of the Government of India. Acheson recommended that the US government wait until the reconstitution of the viceroy’s executive council. The portfolio of external relations was then being headed by Olaf Caroe, not by an Indian, which Acheson felt negated the idea of a self-governing India.²⁸ The issue of upgrading diplomatic missions figured constantly in US-South Asian bilateralism in the succeeding months, as an integral part of political developments.

In February 1946, a number of developments took place which had far-reaching implications for the subcontinent both regionally and globally. Post-war economic frustrations, scarcity of food, socio-psychological maladjustments and the sudden lack of professional promotion in the military, resulted in mutinies by the Royal Indian navy in Bombay and Karachi accompanied and followed by riots and civil disturbances in Bombay, New Delhi, Madras and many other major cities. Initially, it was assumed that the Communist Party of India, with directives from Moscow, had instigated the disturbances which had taken on anti-white dimensions and resulted in the burning of the US flag at Bombay.²⁹ At a time when the cold war had already begun between the USA and the Soviet Union, the strikes and anti-white demonstrations in India witnessed the evolution of a new factor in US–South Asian bilateralism – the fear of communist expansion in Asia. China was already witnessing the communist victory under Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai and the constant retreat of Chiang Kai-shek. War-torn Southeast Asia seemed equally vulnerable to communism and the Soviets were seen to be flexing their muscles on the ‘rimland’ including Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Greece, while East Europe had already turned to communism. In such a state of affairs, the State Department feared that the Communist Party of India and the Indian Socialist Party would whip up anti-American feelings in India. Consequently, the Department began to re-orient itself toward the INC with Dean Acheson and other officials showing a keen interest in Indian political affairs and hoping for the early emergence of a free, united India.³⁰

This renewed interest in a quick and amicable resolution of the impasse suited the global interest of the United States as a super power. Britain, under the Labour government, was equally desirous of disposing of its white man’s burden – and its own post-war socio-economic conditions exposed its fallibility as an imperial power. In these circumstances, the Muslim factor in the South Asian deadlock weighed heavily. Both Britain and the United States wanted a united, democratic and pro-West India and felt unsure about the Pakistan movement – yet they could not disregard the political aspirations of millions of Muslims in the subcontinent. Simultaneously, the Middle East, a vital region for western strategic and economic considerations, reinforced the case of the Indian Muslims. Thus, the AIML became

a focal point in any future resolution of the South Asian crisis even though the INC and their supporters abroad did not favour its creed. The INC enjoyed excellent publicity, not only in the subcontinent and the UK but also in North America, something which was not available to the AIML or any other Indian political organisation.

Clement Attlee announced on 19 February 1946, that a special mission consisting of cabinet members would be sent to the subcontinent to discuss constitutional details with the viceroy and Indian leaders so as to prepare India for independence. As discussed earlier, the mission was to be composed of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, president of the Board of Trade, and A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty. The cabinet mission had materialised after Wavell's lengthy discussions with the British government in London. The main purpose, as reported by Paul J. Patrick, the acting Under-Secretary of State, India Office, was 'to get representative Indian leaders to work together in setting up constitution making body and new executive council. If that could be achieved, Mission could pack and come home and leave actual constitution making to Indians.'³¹ The India Office felt that Pakistan was the 'stumbling block' which 'Jinnah might be using for bargaining purposes [yet] it was obvious that movement had now gained such momentum that doubtful if Jinnah or anyone else can apply the brakes'.³² Merrell had reproduced a news item from the *Statesman* suggesting that the US government favoured submitting the Pakistan question to international arbitration under the auspices of the UNO, which was reputedly disliked by many leaders including Liaquat Ali Khan, the general secretary of the AIML. Merrell felt that no useful purpose would be served by an American initiative to sponsor international arbitration on 'Pakistan' – for no solution other than Pakistan would please the Indian Muslims who were already critical of the pro-Zionist American policy in Palestine.³³

The failure of the British government to provide food to the starving millions in India in the mid-1940s and the official American reluctance to provide extra ships to import wheat from Australia had whipped up anti-western feelings. Indians in the worst-hit provinces were joining the rank and file of the leftist organisations which built their case on criticism of the Allies' food policies. Every thinking South Asian criticised the oppor-

tunism of the government which relied so heavily on Indian men and material to win a war which apparently was none of their business. The failure in food policy made the Raj extremely vulnerable. American diplomats noticed a rising trend in anti-American feelings in certain sections of the South Asian press and society. Merrell sent an exhaustive report on this new development, reproducing various statements from the *People's Age*, an organ of the Communist Party of India which, in its issue of 6 June, 1946, carried an article captioned: '100 million Indians threatened with starvation death – where Anglo-American food politics has brought our country'. According to this article, both the UK and the United States had failed the Indians in their ordeal because of their own imperialistic interests. The Americans had much more food than they needed for themselves and were sending supplies to Japan, but would come to the help of the subcontinent only if they could establish an economic monopoly in India. The Americans, it was alleged, wanted to let 'the British burn their fingers as in an Indian famine and then rush in to the rescue on their own terms – cut-throat profits and a share in the political and economic domination of India . . . India is starving to death in a mad world in which two gangs of cut-throats are using food to dominate nations.' The article concluded that the only way out for famine-stricken Indians was to establish an interim government which would acquire such food aid from the Soviet Union and other countries. *People's Age* took serious exception to the US food policy which, it alleged, was applied discriminately to gain political and strategic interest instead of lessening human miseries.³⁴

This type of criticism also found its way into the non-leftist press, indicating the growth of anti-American feelings in the subcontinent. Such an attitude was the direct result of the frustration that the Indians felt towards the United States for not coming up to expectations *vis-à-vis* the struggle against British imperialism. Since the Atlantic Charter, South Asian élites had harboured great hopes that the Americans would support them – but ironically this support was not forthcoming. To a limited extent, a similar vestige of hope had earlier existed in certain South Asian groups when President Wilson announced his fourteen points. American policies favouring the Chinese nationalists against the communists, supporting Zionist settlers in Palestine at the expense of Muslim Arabs and assisting the Dutch in the

recolonisation of the East Indies, all gave the impression that the Allies were neither sincere about the welfare of smaller nations nor about world peace. Accordingly, the Indian press was 'hypercritical' of the US government.³⁵ American diplomats in the subcontinent tried to cultivate the friendship of leading Indian journalists and intellectuals yet acknowledged their 'inadequacies' in such efforts.

In the meantime, the Indian political leadership had rejected the cabinet mission plan, which fell short of the expectations of the major South Asian communities.³⁶ The AIML, though quite confident of its power in the subcontinent and abroad, feared a secret bilateral arrangement between the viceroy and the INC excluding other parties. With a new press campaign and mass rallies in August 1946, the AIML tried to present the Muslim demand for Pakistan more vigorously. Its performance in the elections held under the act of 1935 reaffirmed the enormous support enjoyed by the League among the Muslim masses throughout the subcontinent. Not only the British and the INC, but now American officials also began to consider the AIML more seriously, as the major representative platform of the South Asian Muslims. Nevertheless, in the United States the INC was still regarded as the main organisation to be courted – as is shown by contemporary diplomatic dispatches. Dean Acheson, the acting Secretary of State, bearing in mind the ultimate British withdrawal from India, suggested to Truman that full-fledged ambassadorial relations should be established with India, which the president approved on 3 September 1946. Bajpai had long been pushing for an upgraded relationship and on occasions had also represented the INC's viewpoint to the American authorities.³⁷ Nehru found a strong advocate for the Congress in Bajpai, who was traditionally highly esteemed in Washington.³⁸

The end of 1946 heralded elevated ambassadorial relations between the United States and the subcontinent, coinciding with the London talks between the British government and the South Asian leaders. Dean Acheson anxiously awaited the outcome of the negotiations and frequently advised American diplomats in Britain and India to cultivate a closer rapport with the Indian political leaders. Unlike Hull, Acheson was fully conscious of the US role as a superpower in the post-war era and feared the spread of communism in an unstable Asia. As an architect of the

cold war, like Churchill, he was highly sensitive to the communist expansion in the region bordering the Soviet Union all the way from Eastern Europe to China and Japan.³⁹ Thus dictated by the new American global interests, Acheson felt that the British government might be assisted toward a settlement of the Indian problem by courting the INC, so that it could be persuaded to accommodate the AIML on the basis of the cabinet mission proposals. Apprising the US chargé in London of the desirability of an early resolution, Acheson observed at the end of an urgent message: 'Dept believes concession by Congress this point would probably bring Muslim League into Constituent Assembly and might also be basis for League's public acceptance Brit constitutional scheme as providing adequately for legitimate Muslim aspirations and for undertaking by League it would cooperate loyally within framework [of] Indian Union subject only to proviso reopening constitutional questions after 10 years experiment.' The State Department, aware of the geo-strategic and economic potential of the predominantly Muslim Near East, felt that the South Asian Muslims must not be excluded from any resolution of the crisis. The Middle Eastern factor had already entered active US consideration at the initial stage of the cold war.⁴⁰

Advised by Acheson, the US embassy in London tried to cultivate informal relations with the Indian leaders arriving in Britain in early December. The US government attached great importance to a closer relationship with Jinnah and Nehru and to prove its deep interest in the resolution of the impasse through negotiations, the State Department – on briefings from the London embassy – agreed to make a 'palatable' official statement stipulating American official policy on the situation. The London conference had become a focal point and the United States, true to its new status as a superpower, expressed an interest in the development – and, curiously, this was welcomed by the British government. Only four years earlier, Churchill's government had been ultra-sensitive to American 'interference', whereas now the India Office was receptive to any such statement from Washington.

A day after the arrival of the South Asian leaders in London, Dean Acheson made a statement on India in a press conference urging the parties concerned to 'grasp this opportunity to establish a stable and peaceful India'. Recognising the significance of

both the INC and AIML, he called upon them to deliberate on a peace plan based upon the cabinet mission proposal. His statement ended with a resumé of contemporary USA-South Asia relations:

The United States has long taken a sympathetic interest in the progressive realization of India's political destiny. It has welcomed the forward-looking spirit behind the comprehensive programs of industrial and agricultural advancement recently formulated in that country. Lastly, by our recent establishment of full diplomatic relations with the interim government of India, we have expressed in tangible form our confidence in the ability of the Indian leaders to make the vital decisions that lie immediately ahead with full awareness that their actions at this moment in history may directly affect world peace and prosperity for generations to come.⁴¹

Dean Acheson asked Gallman to convey personally the press statement to Jinnah, Nehru, Attlee and other members of the British administration. It was also sent to New Delhi for onward transmission to Hugh Weightman of the External Affairs Department and Sardar Vallabhai Patel. The general response from both British and South Asian quarters was appreciative. Encouraged, Acheson advised Merrell to raise with the INC working committee the issue of accommodating the AIML; which, of course, stemmed from the gradual American realisation of the strength of Muslim aspirations.⁴² While Merrell's meeting with Nehru was cordial, that with Patel developed into an unending tirade against the British government for fanning communalism and using any excuse to withhold independence.⁴³ In a follow-up to his press statement of 3 December, Acheson sent an urgent message to Merrell intended for Nehru, providing further clarification of the genuine US interest in the subcontinent, which had not been inspired by the British. The US government simply wanted to see the Indian problem resolved amicably by the Indians themselves, taking the cabinet mission plan as the basis, not necessarily the end result. Acheson recognised that the plan was 'open to honest and objective criticism' yet considered it to be a milestone on the road to federalism, which he believed was most suitable for the Indian situation. Like FDR before him, the acting Secretary of State found a successful parallel in the US experience of federalism.⁴⁴ Possibly

he harboured apprehensions that chaos and anarchy would dominate should communal violence and disagreement result in a communist take-over of India. However, he did not express this in his message.

The State Department was attempting to bring the leaders of both the AIML and INC closer together on the basis of the cabinet mission plan, envisaging an Indian federation without 'partitioning' the subcontinent. The American government, like its British counterpart, was keenly interested in the maintenance of the political-administrative unity of the subcontinent. Such a convergence in policies, however coincidental it might appear, showed a lack of appreciation of Muslim nationalism. Through statements and direct diplomatic contacts, the State Department tried to clarify its position *vis-à-vis* India, but Jinnah was aware of a general American ignorance about the Pakistan movement, as he mentioned to Gallman.⁴⁵ The British government was encouraging the US Government to use her offices to persuade the Indian leaders to accept the plan.⁴⁶ The Attlee government was aware of Nehru's political clout in American official circles.

After holding discussions with Nehru and Patel to convince them of the feasibility of the cabinet mission plan, George Merrell was asked by Byrnes to approach Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan. The US Secretary of State wanted the League leadership to accept the plan stipulating the Indian Federal Union. The State Department believed that the plan held 'ample scope for Muslim political and economic aspirations but that atmosphere for creating necessary safeguards can never be achieved unless the concept of union itself is generally accepted by the principal parties'.⁴⁷ After the failure of the London talks, both the British government and its American counterpart tried hard to convince the South Asian political leaders of the need for a mutual agreement on the basis of an Indian federation avoiding any partition. The British request for direct American support arose from the emergence of the United States as a superpower at the time when the old colonial powers were in the process of winding up their empires. In addition, it had quite a lot to do with the transfer of power from the Conservatives to the Labour Party in a war-weary Britain.

Liaquat Ali Khan, in his meeting with Merrell, made it clear that the major initiative must come from the INC, which had persistently denied any accommodation to the AIML in the

establishment of coalition governments in various provinces. The recent large-scale anti-Muslim riots in Assam and Bihar causing 30,000 Muslim dead and 100,000 refugees had, according to the secretary-general of the AIML, confirmed Muslim fears about the ultimate intentions of a Hindu Raj. Nevertheless, he believed that, given concrete assurances by both the INC and the British government, the AIML could work for a peaceful transfer of power. The Muslims feared that the INC was planning a gradual administrative take-over of the subcontinent causing the AIML to 'feel that perhaps outright Pakistan would be only means of obtaining their objectives - namely to give Muslims scope for development culturally, educationally and economically'. Merrell probed the idea of the AIML forwarding an 'assurance' to the INC concerning the acceptability of an Indian federal union. That the INC should have entertained such an expectation appears strange, given the fact that it already enjoyed a 'brutal' majority in the Constituent Assembly. The INC was not prepared to form a coalition government in collaboration with the AIML even in Hindu majority provinces, which strengthened Muslim fears of an absolute Hindu rule. Liaquat also hinted at a possible Soviet move in the subcontinent should chaos arise out of British inactivity. He was not at this point convinced about an eventual British withdrawal, yet hoped that before they departed they would manage a 'peaceful transfer of power'.⁴⁸ This uncertainty was a natural result of the British policy of doing nothing in India. They hoped that by accentuating the question of law and order on the basis of the communal riots they could further delay the transfer of power. Such an approach only increased the atmosphere of uncertainty, and when they finally left it was an abdication of responsibility rather than a considered decision. Civil life in the subcontinent consequently became vulnerable to forces of violence, strife and arson and prevented the evolution of a *modus operandi* which could have avoided Churchill's oft-quoted 'blood-bath' at the time of independence.

George Merrell again met Liaquat Ali Khan to seek his offices in approaching Jinnah over the possibility of an Indian federation based on the cabinet mission plan. Such American efforts originated from an official misconception that the AIML might be using Pakistan as a bargaining chip in order to acquire more concessions from the government and the INC. Obviously,

Pakistan was not an instrument to be used for political manoeuvring, rather it was an article of faith for millions of South Asian Muslims. The AIML leadership, which had so successfully led the masses toward the nationalist goal, could not sacrifice its creed at a time when Hindu communalists were killing Muslims in Bihar and Assam. Liaquat and his Muslim colleagues in the interim government felt betrayed that Nehru, by unilaterally appointing Asaf Ali as the ambassador to the USA, had violated the democratic norms – since Ali was neither a Leaguer nor did he enjoy any large-scale Muslim following. Similarly, when the AIML recommended M. A. H. Ispahani and Begum Shah Nawaz as the Indian delegates to the United Nations, Nehru appointed his own people instead. Such acts widened the gulf between the AIML and the INC. Gandhi, though not a regular member of the INC, was holding mass rallies in riot-stricken Bengal and ostensibly proving irksome to the League government in the province. Liaquat, Merrell observed, 'was convinced Gandhi had no desire for Hindu-Muslim cooperation but was working for Hindu domination of India – to be attained through violence if necessary . . . he believed Ghandi's activities in east Bengal were deliberate attempt to embarrass Bengal govt. and to divert attention from Bihar.' He further explained to the American envoy that even Jinnah would not take any decision on his own, since only the council of the AIML was the legitimate body to do so and Jinnah, being a democrat, would never transgress its authority.⁴⁹

Along with his colleagues in the subcontinent, George Merrell persistently attempted to convince the AIML leadership to accept the concept of the Indian federal union by dropping the demand for Pakistan. The State Department officials, like the British government, had assumed that a federal administration on the basis of the cabinet mission plan, and as further explained by HMG's statement of 6 December, were sufficient guarantees to make the arrangement acceptable. The INC had already issued provocative statements alleging that the said plan favoured the AIML as it stipulated that no legislation could be imposed on any unwilling party.⁵⁰ The American diplomats gradually came to realise that both Hindu nationalism and its Muslim counterpart were two quite different realities.⁵¹ Yet the efforts to make the League agree to such an arrangement continued until June 1947. The US vice-consul in Karachi reported

that Jinnah appreciated the American interest in resolving the Indian deadlock, as shown in Dean Acheson's statement of 3 December. However, he asked him to 'tell your government we work toward same ends but for God's sake not to be chloroformed by meaningless Congress gestures made for purely propaganda effect. Congress had only to say we accept nothing more; that would have shown true faithful intent and League would have responded in same coin.'⁵² The working committee of the AIML met in Karachi on 31 January 1947 when, despite heavy pressure from the viceroy and other outside parties, it rejected the 6 December statement as a dishonest trick and criticised the Constituent Assembly, describing its proceedings as *ultra vires* and illegal.⁵³

The INC, sensing the mood of the government after the League's resolution, demanded the resignation of the League ministers from the interim government. Even the US government feared a retaliation against the AIML by its British counterpart and it was assumed that the British Government would go ahead with its own plan, seeking cooperation both from the INC and the princes, and excluding the League from the entire arrangement.⁵⁴ There were also fears that in such an atmosphere, the AIML might suffer from dissension and desertion. However, Jinnah's popularity among the South Asian Muslims ensured that no such move by politicians or businessmen was possible, as Merrell observed: 'Jinnah's influence with Muslim masses is such that if he declared League participation in Cabinet Mission plans impossible, embassy questions whether League politicians would dare court his wrath by attempting formation of new party.'⁵⁵ This assessment was based on hard facts and the British government came to accept that no tangible settlement could be reached in South Asia without the AIML. The massive support enjoyed by the League was evident from the rallies in the Punjab where the party engaged in a movement against the Unionist government in the province. In addition, the NWFP, Sind, Bengal and Assam had emerged as strongholds of the League, rallying Muslim support for Pakistan.

The report by Merrell had an influence in official American circles. The absolute power enjoyed by Jinnah amongst the Muslims was further confirmed by reports from the US consulates in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi. Jinnah was aware of American interest in South Asian independence, and felt that

cross-sectional viewpoints were not given enough space in the American media, as the news on India was 'influenced by false propaganda'.⁵⁶ According to him, it was not just the British but also the INC that used an efficient propaganda machinery to influence the opinion of foreign news correspondents. Whenever he found an opportunity Jinnah would explain the demand for Pakistan to American diplomats and media men. He spoke from a vantage point of strength as he told the US consul-general that 'the difference in culture, religion and way of life between the Muslims and Hindus precludes any possibility of a compromise. He asked why a hundred million Muslims should become a minority in a Hindu dominated government.' He believed that no safeguards would be adequate as 'the accused would sit as the judges of the accusers'. He made his point strongly: 'We have made sacrifices, we are willing to make more sacrifices, and even die for Pakistan so why should people talk of compromise when there is no basis for compromise.'⁵⁷

It was quite obvious to American and other observers that Pakistan was soon to become a reality and the idea of an Indian federation was out of the question. Even the autonomous princely state of Hyderabad was asking for a 'direct relation with the British Crown', a trend that was described as 'a fragmentation process' or 'Balkanisation' of India. The State Department now felt that it must review its policy toward India, since for more than a year it had been pushing for the maintenance of the Indian federation envisaged in the cabinet mission plan. It acknowledged that it had been pursuing such a policy so as to retain Indian unity in league with the British policy. Realising the multifarious dynamics in South Asian politics, such as the Pakistan movement itself, the Department directed the American embassy in April 1947 to seek 'informal inquiries' from the British officials whether they still stood for a federated Indian union including the princely states – adding that, if not, 'we may have to reconsider our own position with regard to India'.⁵⁸ Such a quest for a new policy *vis-à-vis* India reflected American naïvety in following Britain at a time when the cold war was raging, and a lack of precise information on vital developments in regions such as the subcontinent. It was also evidence that under Truman the State Department was taking on a greater role than the White House.

The League's irrevocable position on Pakistan was now

becoming crystal clear to foreign observers and Jinnah, frequently available to western diplomats and news correspondents, would elaborate on the subject. The months since the closing of 1946 were crucial in US-South Asian relations as the Americans – who had earlier agreed with the British on the necessity for an Indian federation – gradually came to accept the idea of an independent Muslim state as the ultimate objective of the AIML struggle. George Merrell from New Delhi, Sparks and Macdonald from the Karachi and Bombay consulates respectively, all submitted frequent reports on Pakistan becoming a reality in the near future. In a document originating from Merrell on 22 April 1947, the US envoy gave the latest news on South Asian political dynamics:

The demand for Pakistan or nothing, and the allegation that there is not the slightest possibility of the League's entering the Constituent Assembly are bargaining points which are a logical outcome of events of the past year. While in the light of Mr. Jinnah's past performance it would be rash to predict that there is now no possibility of compromise on the question of the League's associating itself with a Union Center, the League's declared fears of Congress domination are, unfortunately, not without a rational basis . . . Annoying as Mr. Jinnah and his followers have been in many of their statements and declarations, I feel the Congress leaders have not only failed to show magnanimity which so many observers have felt would have led to a peaceful settlement but have demonstrated remarkable ineptitude as politicians. I question seriously whether their fear of a Muslim majority of two (36 Muslims, 34 non-Muslims) in the proposed Bengal-Assam Constituent Assembly, can be justified in the light of the larger issues involved. Had they been willing to agree to the British Government's interpretation of the grouping clause the League's civil disobedience campaigns in the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier Province, and Assam might never have materialized. As it is, the provincial League organizations concerned have demonstrated sufficient strength to encourage Mr. Jinnah in his demand for Pakistan, and the likelihood of his obtaining it in one form or another seems to be growing daily.

In another meeting with the American diplomats, Jinnah observed that the establishment of 'Pakistan was essential to pre-

vent “Hindu imperialism” spreading into Middle East; Muslim countries would stand together against possible Russian aggression and would look to US for assistance.’ Jinnah was equally critical of the US attitude towards Indian Muslims and Palestinians. He felt that most South Asian Muslims were under the impression that the US government was opposed to Pakistan.⁵⁹

In early 1947, while Merrell and his colleagues were sending reports on the crucial developments in the subcontinent, general ignorance about Indian political conditions remained the order of the day. Notwithstanding the aloofness of the White House, even important officials like George Marshall or John Foster Dulles gave irresponsible statements on India which created embarrassing moments in US–South Asian relations. Marshall, the Secretary of State, acknowledged his general ignorance about India to Asaf Ali, the first Indian ambassador to the United States, when the latter visited him on 26 February 1947.⁶⁰ And Dulles, in a dinner speech in New York to the National Publishers Association on 17 January 1947, had declared that in ‘India Soviet Communism exercises a strong influence through interim government’. This was reported by the press both in the USA and the subcontinent and agitated Nehru greatly. Both Merrell and Marshall tried to allay the misunderstanding, presenting it as an observation by Dulles in his personal capacity.⁶¹

PAKISTAN BECOMES A REALITY

1947 dawned with a realisation on the part of the AIML, the British government and concerned officials of the State Department that the subcontinent was on the verge of independence and that Indian Muslims would not settle for anything less than Pakistan. Anglo-American efforts for an Indian federation and the INC’s ambitions for a United India had petered out. The British government, despite being a winner in the Second World War, faced the most severe crisis of self-confidence. With the economy falling apart, war-ravaged urban and industrial establishments relied on their unfaltering belief in the invincibility of the empire. The massive casualties had demoralised the forces for the status quo and Britain under the Labour Party was fighting for its own survival, discovering that to maintain a

turbulent colonial empire in South Asia was a costly and nerve-wrecking legacy. The sahibs were ready to pack up and leave it to the natives to pick up the pieces. The changing international order, due to the emergence of the United States and Soviet Union as superpowers, forced the traditional colonial powers like Britain, France, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy gradually to withdraw and relinquish the world to these two new powers. Humanity was still recovering from the miseries of the war, when it was thrown into the bi-polarised world of the cold war. The Americans were taking over wherever their European allies departed, although how far they were prepared for it is quite another story. The Truman doctrine and Marshall plan addressed themselves to the 'containment' of the expansive threat of communism. The less-developed near eastern republics, as well as the colonies like South Asia with mature national liberation movements on the threshold of independence, were perceived as being vulnerable to communism. Such areas also appeared very attractive to ambitious economic interest groups, for surplus capital could be absorbed in order to generate more profits. Thus, the political and economic vacuum caused by the weakening of the traditional colonial powers, the cold war and the increased geo-political and economic importance of the countries – especially those 'on the rimland', added a new dimension to American interest in the trans-Soviet Asiatic regions, which traditionally had not played any part in US foreign policies.

In such a state of affairs, the British government deputed Louis Mountbatten to the subcontinent to arrange the transfer of power to the South Asians. A very suave person with a royal background and prestigious service experience in Southeast Asia, Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas Mountbatten, at the age of forty-six, accepted the assignment reluctantly and with a number of preconditions. An amiable person, it was intended that he would use his persuasive powers on the South Asian leaders. However, it is an irony that Lord Mountbatten developed such close relations with the Congress leadership (particularly Nehru), that he compromised his own stature as the last viceroy in India. Such a partisan relationship cost both Pakistan and Mountbatten heavily. In fact, Mountbatten's own appointment had much to do with the INC since Krishna Menon, a close associate of Nehru, had recommended Mountbatten's

name to Stafford Cripps as the successor to Lord Wavell. Nehru believed that Wavell was a great impediment to the INC and his replacement by Mountbatten suited his plans. 'Aware that Mountbatten's usefulness would be destroyed if India's Moslem leaders learned of the genesis of his appointment the two men had agreed to reveal the details of their talk to no one. Menon revealed the details of his conversation with Cripps in a series of conversations with one of the authors in New Delhi in February 1973, a year before his death.'⁶²

A day before the partition plan was announced, Attlee gave the details in advance to US Ambassador Douglass in London. According to the plan, the two independent dominions of India and Pakistan were to come into existence in August 1947. Attlee hinted at a possible division of Bengal and Punjab between the two countries, with the transfer of assets to be supervised by the British Indian Army so as to avoid bloodshed. The plan was announced by Attlee and Mountbatten simultaneously in London and New Delhi on 3 June 1947.⁶³ The US government was not completely prepared for this news, though it expected imminent Indian independence. The establishment of Pakistan, as envisaged in the 3 June plan, was a turning point and the State Department avoided adopting any open stance. Marshall even took serious note of a news item quoting Holdsworth G. Minnigerode, consul at Karachi, that consideration was being given to establishing an American embassy there.⁶⁴

In the meantime, Henry F. Grady took over as the first US ambassador to India on 25 June 1947, and called on Nehru to gauge his views. Nehru believed that Pakistan had 'seceded with the approval of India because India does not wish to force it to remain'. However, the INC president hoped that like India, Pakistan would agree to the retention of Mountbatten as the governor-general of both the states. Sensing American fears of a possible close relationship between India and the Soviet Union due to the appointment of his sister as the Indian envoy to Moscow, Nehru expressed his desire for assistance from both the superpowers.⁶⁵

When Ambassador Grady called on Mountbatten, the latter expressed his desire to remain the governor-general of both dominions and asked the US envoy to see Jinnah in the near future. In this context, he suggested the possibility of a US mission in Karachi responsible to the American embassy in New

Delhi. Mountbatten wanted to use this American card to convince Jinnah of his own candidacy, Grady noted: 'I gathered Viceroy would like US to make an early commitment to Jinnah [for] some kind of diplomatic representation to Karachi as an aid to him in his negotiations with Jinnah.'⁶⁶ The State Department was interested in developing a full-fledged diplomatic relationship at ambassadorial level given the geo-strategic location of this Muslim nation-state.⁶⁷ By the time Ambassador Grady met Jinnah on 10 July 1947, the British prime minister had already introduced the Indian Independence Bill in the House of Commons on 4 July.⁶⁸ Jinnah 'was most cordial . . . and hopeful [that] US would aid Pakistan in its many problems'. He gave Grady the schedule of the forthcoming session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and the formal transfer of power on 14 August. Grady noted: 'Jinnah pointed out reason Mountbatten must transfer power to Pakistan first is that this must be done while he is still Viceroy, since when he transfers power to what Jinnah insists on calling Hindustan, he will automatically become Governor-General [of] that dominion. It is significant Mountbatten will be Chairman [of] Joint Defense Council which will undoubtedly continue well into next year.' Jinnah expressed his desire for a prompt exchange of ambassadors with the United States. However, when Grady asked Jinnah 'if he had any matters to take up with me he said "not at this time"'. Grady, in the same message, recommended a presidential statement expressing good wishes to the president of the Constituent Assembly at an opportune time. Presumably however, Grady did not push Mountbatten's candidacy to be joint governor-general of both countries.⁶⁹

Following Grady's advice, George Marshall issued a statement welcoming the establishment of India and Pakistan.⁷⁰ When Consul Lewis presented the statement to Jinnah in Karachi on 9 August 1947, the latter in his capacity as the president of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, welcomed Marshall's feelings towards the sovereign state of Pakistan. He reiterated his interest in establishing an ambassadorial relationship with the United States.⁷¹ Most probably, the Quaid was then thinking about sending M. A. H. Ispahani as the first ambassador to America. The formal request for an exchange of ambassadors between the USA and Pakistan was made by Mohammad Ikramullah, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, on

6 August 1947, in a letter to Ambassador Grady. He transmitted it to Washington DC and was answered affirmatively through a telegraphic message on 9 August. The Karachi consulate was raised to the rank of embassy with effect from 15 August, whereas M. O. A. Baig presented his credentials as the chargé in Washington on behalf of Pakistan on 28 August. Ispahani, the first ambassador to the United States, presented his credentials to acting Secretary of State Lovett on 3 October 1947, and the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the United States entered a new phase.⁷² In the meantime, President Truman extended his best wishes to Jinnah and Mountbatten on the occasion of the independence of the subcontinent.⁷³

10 The US Congress and the Subcontinent

South Asian political-economic affairs echoed in the US Congress occasionally during the 1940s but not frequently or regularly. Under pressure from their constituents, consisting of American liberal church groups and a few select members of academia and the press, a small number of Congressmen would occasionally issue a policy statement on India, generally to be inserted in the Congressional records. The devastation caused by famines in the 1940s or the subcontinent's geo-strategic importance were emphasised in such statements. In addition, the question of the naturalisation of South Asian-Americans, long declared ineligible because of their origin in 'the barred zone,' found scattered support among American legislators. Generally, the south, midwest and southwest remained indifferent to India-related issues. Throughout the 1940s there was never a full-fledged debate on India either in the House or the Senate. On the other hand, the American press exhibited an increased interest in South Asian developments. On the whole, India remained a State Department preserve with routine dispatches travelling to and fro. Even the White House lacked any consistency under FDR, while the Truman administration manifested a belated and inadequate interest in Indian independence. The lack of proper information on this part of the world, accompanied by an official unwillingness to provoke a British reaction, gave the Indian question a low priority in US policies – and this was even more pronounced in the case of the Pakistan movement. Pakistan, as seen in earlier chapters, became an accepted fact only when the attempts to implement the cabinet mission plan were completely exhausted.

GEO-POLITICS

Statements can be found on the subcontinent by US Congressmen in 1942 when the 77th Congress was in session. On 14 April, John J. McIntyre of Wyoming requested the speaker to

insert in the *Record* a resolution which had actually been passed by George W. Vroman, American Legion Post No. 2 of Casper, Wyoming. The resolution, highlighting the Indian geo-military significance in the conduct of the war, urged early self-government for the subcontinent. With a potential Japanese threat to India, an early solution of the Indian political crisis was stated to be of 'paramount importance' for the Allies, given that their vital sources might fall into the hands of the Central Powers. Moreover, in the light of America's own ideals of freedom and democracy as restated in the Atlantic Charter, the statement made it a moral obligation for the US government to seek the same for the Indians. It demanded 'the immediate freedom for India under any terms necessary to secure their cooperation at this time' and urged the US government through the Congressional representatives 'to take any action necessary through the regular channels of our Government to convey these sentiments to the Imperial British Government.'¹

Certain urban-based church organisations provided platforms for the Congressmen to air pro-nationalist feelings. Senator Claude Pepper of Florida made a speech at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC on 28 September 1942, the text of which was included in the *Congressional Record*. His emotional speech underlined the need for closer cooperation between the British and the Indians to defeat the Axis powers so as to make the world safe for 'honest-to-God democracy everywhere'. While praising the official American policy as embodied in the Atlantic Charter or overall in the execution of the war, Pepper desired a united Indo-British front. However, he avoided making any reference to the nationalists' demand for complete freedom for the subcontinent. The statement cannot be described as a critique of British imperial policies, in addition to which it was non-suggestive and non-specific.² The most significant statement regarding India, signed by about 200 prominent Americans, was presented before the US Senate by Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma on 6 October 1942. It was originally a resolution sponsored by a committee headed by Dr Guy Emery Shipler with Robert Norton as its secretary. The statement began with the general opinion of the people of the United States who viewed 'the situation in India with great alarm because it threatens the victory of the United Nations'. Referring to the importance of

the subcontinent to the allies in the war and more specifically the future of China, it rightly observed:

Failure to use the full might of India's 400,000,000 people in the all-out war efforts against the Axis would be paid for by the lives of Americans and of our allies.

We are well aware of the efforts of all parties to reach a solution and of the immense difficulties involved. We are bound by the closest ties with our British allies in their gallant struggle for human freedom. We are in fullest accord with the people of India in the legitimate aspirations for self-government.

We, therefore, urge that President Roosevelt tender the good offices of the United States in cooperation with other members of the United Nations to obtain the full participation of the Indian people in the war and to assure their political freedom.

The signatures included famous authors, churchmen, journalists, businessmen, artists, politicians and other known citizens. Most belonged to church organisations or press and academic institutions. Some of the noted figures were as follows:

1. Louis Adamac, author, Milford, NJ
2. Dr Henry A. Atkinson, general secretary, World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, New York.
3. Douglas Auchincloss, editor, New York.
4. Eugene E. Barnett, general secretary, YMCA of the USA and Canada.
5. Louis Bromfield, author, Lucas, Ohio.
6. Van Wyck Brooks, author, Westport, Connecticut.
7. Pearl S. Buck, author, Perkasio, Pennsylvania.
8. Richard J. Cronin, lawyer, New York.
9. Dr Tyler Dennett, former president of Williams College, Hague, New York.
10. W. E. B. Du Bois, professor of sociology, Atlanta University.
11. John Erskine, author, New York.
12. Dr Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina.
13. Freda Kirchway, editor of *The Nation*.

14. Dr Max Lerner, professor of political science, William College, Williamtown, Mass.
15. Dr B. E. Mayre, president of Atlanta University.
16. Dr Reinhold Niebuhr, professor, Union Theological Seminary, New York.
17. Gifford Pinchot, former governor of Pennsylvania.
18. Arthur Upham Pope, director of School for Iranian Studies, New York.
19. Revd Adam Clayton Powell Jun, City Council, New York.
20. William L. Shirer, journalist, New York.
21. Richard J. Walsh, editor, *Asia*, New York.
22. Walter White, secretary of NAACP, New York.
23. Dr Stephen S. Wise, president of the American Jewish Congress.³

Senator Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina, in the fall 1942 session of the US Senate, requested the insertion of two editorials in the *Record*, which were originally published by the *News and Observer* of Raleigh, North Carolina. Josephus Daniels, the author of both 'The tragedy of India' and 'Imprisonment of Gandhi is most deplorable' regarded the continuity of the Raj as a betrayal of the Asiatics who genuinely desired independence and democracy within their territories. 'The tragedy of India', appearing on 15 August 1942, had warned the US government against any undertaking in India that might imply strengthening British colonialism, except for waging a war. The editorial observed: 'It is unthinkable that this republic [the US government], entering this war to uphold and advance democracy, should uphold Britain's present attitude toward India or its long domination and exploitation of that country.' The editor took an appreciative view of the on-the-spot reportage of Raymond Clipper, who had visited the subcontinent in March-April, 1942, 'to take a first-hand view of what was going on' and had felt that for the Asians the war meant freedom from oppression in Europe.⁴

Commenting on Gandhi's imprisonment in the wake of the Quit India Movement, the newspaper warned the Americans against being used by the British. The Americans must not put 'their life in jeopardy to continue the Empire of Britain or the Netherlands or any other European country long exploiting

weaker peoples. The people in India, in Africa, and in all other parts of the world now governed from abroad have as much right to order their own way of life as have the people of Britain and the United States.' The editorial then predicted: 'If, when the war is won, independence to all does not follow, it will sow the seed for future wars. People will die rather than be subjected to rule imposed from abroad.'⁵ Such press reports and statements were presented before the Congress for inclusion in its proceedings, but interestingly there was no debate on them. Even the reproduction of such statements was sporadic in the 1940s leaving the impression that the subcontinent was not a 'major' concern for American legislators. Even the petitions by Americans or South Asian expatriates failed to cause any discussion on the political situation in British India. At the most, they would find some space in the *Appendix to the Congressional Record*.

On 29 October 1942, Senator Charles L. McNary of Oregon presented an appeal before the US Senate sent to him by Ramlal B. Bajpai, the president of the executive committee of the India League for Freedom and Democracy. Bajpai's letter accompanied an editorial from the *Washington Post* of 15 October 1942, entitled, 'What next in India?'. Bajpai, in his brief letter, tried to impress upon Senator McNary the need to initiate a debate on India in the Senate, 'to forestall grave dangers and humiliations to the United Nations. We cannot afford to let imperialistic blindness misguide and endanger American people too long, neither can we remain complacent over the plight of Freedom-seeking peoples of Asia. Japanese are already seeking to play the role of Lafayette by offering help in India's fight for freedom.'⁶

'What next in India?', the balanced editorial from the *Washington Post*, took the British to task for delaying a resolution of the Indian crisis, hampering the Allied war effort and causing a volatile situation in the country which was favourable to the Japanese. Questioning the war objectives of the Allies with reference to the Atlantic Charter, the paper observed: 'If India does not get her freedom, then this war of freedom which we are waging would be a fraud and a delusion. Americans realise these implications of the trouble in India. And that is why the disturbance in the great Subcontinent has created and will continue to create profound misgivings in this country.' The Cripps declaration, unless accompanied by 'deeds' was not sufficient if India's massive support was required in the war. The United States and

China could play the role of mediators between the British and the South Asian leaders, yet the status quo must be dismantled. The editorial, written on the authority of T. A. Raman, former London editor of the United Press of India, felt that the situation was permitting the Japanese to make inroads in India. It also felt that Gandhi's Quit India Movement was no longer peaceful, as he himself had acknowledged. The *Post* cautiously warned the US government not to get too embroiled in the Indo-British dispute by suggesting: 'We should be endangering the common victory if we questioned the British attitude that order must be maintained in India, and we should be compounding that danger if we permitted the Indian problem to become a source of dissension between Great Britain and the United States.'⁷

Bajpai sent a similar message and a copy of the same editorial to Senator Reynolds of North Carolina, along with a brief news item regarding Gandhi's criticism of American policy in the monthly *India Today*. Accusing the American government of collaboration with the British government over events in India, Gandhi was reported to have said: 'You have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot therefore disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India.'⁸ Gandhi's message was somehow smuggled out from where he was in detention, yet it failed to arouse any interest in the US Senate and was allowed to be included in the proceedings. Even the occasional press statements reproduced by the US legislators in the House were only meant to be recorded in the proceedings. India's significance in the Far Eastern war theatre, particularly with reference to the Burma Road to China, echoed in the House of Representatives, when Jeannette Rankin of Montana presented a press report, 'Solution of India question seen as military necessity', written by Robert P. Martin and published by the *Washington Times-Herald* on 21 November 1942. The commentary had stressed that Indian cooperation was vital to win the war against the Japanese and pointed to the activities of pro-Axis groups inside the subcontinent in the wake of the Congress revolt. The article had taken serious note of British empathy toward Indian nationalist sentiments.⁹ The House did not proceed to discuss the Indian question at all.

Congressman Karl E. M. Mundt of South Dakota made laudable efforts in the mid-1940s on behalf of the South Asian nationalists, highlighting the political stalemate and horrific famine conditions in the subcontinent. He was of the view that the

'solution to the problems of India and Asia are of vital importance in the Gargantuan tasks of winning our war in the Pacific and helping to develop a new era of prosperity and peaceful advancement in that section of the world.'¹⁰ Representative Mundt presented a full-length press article before the House, written by Louis Fischer and published in the May issue of *Common Sense*. Fischer felt that the crunch of a Japanese invasion of the subcontinent would be unprecedented political agitation led by Subhas Chandra Bose, 'the storm of Indian politics'. According to Fischer, the rebel politician would form an independent or free India with the help of the Japanese and the Indian National Army (INA). Tracing in detail the 'exotic' life-career of Bose, the erstwhile president of the INC, Fischer analysed his role as a flamboyant politician seeking cooperation from the Nazis and Japanese to fight the Raj. Fischer, who enjoyed a close rapport with Gandhi, Nehru and Azad, tried to draw a denunciation of Bose from these leaders who, despite their differences with the rebel, were reluctant to label him a traitor.¹¹ Bose, quoting from his interviews with Gandhi and the latter's writings from the *Harijan*, felt that the Indian leader took the Japanese to be aggressors, not deliverers.¹² Yet, the continued British oppression of the Indians, according to Fischer, was resulting in pro-Japanese feelings among different levels of the society. No doubt many people in Bengal were turning to communism in the wake of British imperialist policies. Fischer felt that the British were becoming weak and the future depended largely on the USA and the Soviet Union. Since the British were reluctant to withdraw from their colonies, it would leave enduring scars on the Asiatic mind against the Western countries. In other words, Fischer argued that the stalemate in the subcontinent was more or less a global issue, necessitating a new American approach. However, in an otherwise brilliant analysis based on his personal interviews in India, the influential American journalist failed to take the Muslim factor into consideration.

FAMINE AND THE US CONGRESS

Occasional statements on famine conditions in India were made in the US Congress by a few legislators – but apparently

without any impact on the White House or the State Department. The famine question was considered both on humanitarian and geo-military grounds, but did not become an important issue. When Representative John M. Coffee of Washington raised the issue of starvation in India, the House debated it in the light of the much-quoted 'four freedoms' and India's geo-strategic significance in the war. Making it a moral issue, he felt that:

there is a limit to the silence which should be impressed upon us by good taste. A sense of justice and humanity transcends tact and diplomacy and adumbrates good manners. It may be circumspect and politic to refrain from indulging in criticism of our British ally with regard to its negligent treatment of the starving peoples of Bengal, in India, but it is the part of a warm-hearted, altruistic nation to register vigorously its protest, at continued starvation amid plenty, of the suffering millions of our fellow human beings who inhabit the unhappy sub-continent of India.

Representative Coffee questioned the contrasts in Indian life where on one hand there were princes who were some of the richest in the world, and on the other hand there was 'the sorry spectacle of thousands dying weekly of starvation'.¹³ He reproduced a newspaper article, entitled 'Speak up for India' written by I. F. Stone, an emotional outburst over the apathy towards the subcontinent. Despite the weekly death-toll of 100,000 people in Bengal and Assam, the British and the American officials were little moved. Stone wrote passionately:

I am sick of silence on India . . . India is our bridgehead on the Asiatic continent for war against Japan . . . Every emissary our Government has sent to India since the war began has come back worried and critical . . . We western progressives are being compromised in the eyes of the East by our uneasy reluctance to speak out. In the long run Anglo-American relations will be hurt not helped, by leaving the Indian role to fester.¹⁴

Representative Karl Mundt, a sympathiser of the South Asian nationalists, was critical of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (Unrra) which had excluded the famine-stricken from the relief fund. Mundt raised the issue in

the House and wrote to Dean Acheson, the Assistant Secretary of State who represented the USA on Unrra, and to Governor Herbert Lehman, its director-general. Mundt reproduced his appeals to Acheson and Lehman before the House, generating a debate in which a few other legislators participated. India, according to Mundt, had not been 'considered eligible for benefits through U.N.R.R.A. due to the fact that her territory had not been occupied by enemy troops and that consequently she would not be considered a liberated area . . . I feel very definitely, however, that the exclusion of India whether by intent or by accident of language is highly unfortunate and entirely unwarranted.'¹⁵ Mundt acknowledged in the debate that he was moved by the press report on famine and the petitions sent to him by the India League of America, headed by J. J. Singh – who had referred to India's war contribution, the Burmese refugee burden on Bengal and the bombardment of the subcontinent by the Japanese as the major factors in the deteriorating food situation in the eastern subcontinent.¹⁶

NATURALISATION OF SOUTH ASIANS IN THE UNITED STATES

Another issue to come before the Congress was the naturalisation of South Asian immigrants who had resided in the United States for a long time yet had no citizenry right due to the immigration legislation of 1924 which had declared the subcontinent a barred zone. Congressmen Langer and Celler took the initiative of introducing a new bill in December 1943 to permit the naturalisation of approximately 3,000 South Asians who had entered the USA before 1 July 1924, yet were still deprived of this right. The South Asian organisations in the USA and their American sympathisers had been in the forefront of the campaign which included letters and telegrams in the press and lobbying on Capitol Hill.¹⁷ Congressman Langer, while introducing his bill (No. S. 1595), felt that while celebrating the one hundred and fifty-second anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights, America should truly manifest itself as an 'asylum for the disowned and oppressed of the human race'. Most of these individuals, according to Senator Langer, were anyway married

to native-born American citizens and had raised families which entitled them to citizenship.¹⁸

The bill remained unattended until Representative Emanuel Celler of New York took up the issue in the House on 7 March 1944, introducing a bill (No. H. R. 4415) to equalise the status of South Asians under the Immigration Act of 1924 and the Nationality Act of 1940 stipulating the establishment of an immigration quota and citizenship rights. Celler, a great advocate of South Asian independence, who held his own reservations about Pakistan, believed that in the light of the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, South Asian-Americans must no longer be excluded. Celler went to great lengths in appreciating South Asian war contributions in men and material and questioned the stigma of 'lesser breed' labelled on Indians. In the light of the 'preachments of democracy' it was imperative that South Asians be discriminated against no more. He argued that only a few hundred Indians annually would benefit should the proposed bill receive approval, which would pose no economic or societal threat to other Americans. His bill would lift the bar on Indian immigration to the United States besides doing away with Section 11 of the Immigration Act of 1924, thus allowing citizenship to South Asian-Americans.¹⁹ Celler was the guest speaker at a reception held in the Town Hall, New York on 13 April 1944, under the auspices of the India League of America. He questioned the US policy of segregation and exclusion against Indians on moral and ethical grounds. He acknowledged the Indian share in the war and felt that Americans must come up to their high ideal of democracy and liberty. 'It is not a special privilege we accord the Indians in establishing for them an immigration quota nor is it an act of condescension from our favored heights. It would be, rather the acknowledgement of our sincerity in our battle cries, a renewal in the faith of our founders.'²⁰

INDEPENDENCE AND THE CONGRESS

During the last days of Wavell's viceroyalty, it was becoming evident that the British would eventually leave the subcontinent. However, many Americans including Representative Celler did

not properly acknowledge the Muslim demand for Pakistan. The statements in support of South Asian freedom read as confirmatory affidavits justifying the INC's policies. There was an information vacuum on Pakistan in the United States and Indian independence was presented and demanded as synonymous with a united India. Either there was not enough awareness or interest in Pakistan or there was a mixed feeling of suspicion and hostility prevalent among the concerned quarters. In 1946-7, Pakistan was considered uneasily on Capitol Hill, an enigma which permeated subsequent USA-Pakistan relations for many decades to come. 'Partition' was reluctantly accepted, for it was taken as incontrovertible that there was a supra-imposed cultural, regional, historical and political unity of India.

Pre-independence statements in the US Congress focused on issues like the return of American soldiers from India, the information gap in America on India, the interim cabinet in India and the eventual independence itself. Representative Dewey Short of Missouri reproduced a long letter from an American soldier stationed in India proposing the withdrawal of any remaining American troops from the area on economic, climatic and political grounds. The letter was presented before the House since its author was a constituent of Short, who had himself recently chanced to travel to India. The soldier highlighted the health hazards in Bengal and Assam as well as American casualties during the riots in, for example, Calcutta. He had concluded the letter on the note: 'We certainly agree with the shouts of some of the more exuberant Indians during the recent riots, "Let the Americans quit India, too."' ²¹ Celler, too, gave a similar reason for getting the American troops out. He felt that the natives were unable to distinguish between British and American men in uniform and the situation was being further aggravated by political instability and worsening food conditions. Celler observed unequivocally: 'Famine threatens all of India. Our troops should be enabled to clear out. The hungry Indians will wreak vengeance upon British and Americans alike. They will regard the American doughboy as alien as the British Tommy.'²²

Representative Celler lamented the apathy in the American media toward the subcontinent and its problems. The lack of mutual information hindered a proper appreciation of each

other's problems and prospects and therefore resulted in false images.²³ He quite candidly observed:

The average American sees the Indian either as a bizarre turbaned person or as an untouchable in a loin cloth. The picture of the American the Indian has is hardly more accurate or flattering. Americans are either raucous illiterates or racketeers. Such misconceptions hardly serve to build up friendly understanding relations between the two peoples.

In addition, he remarked that the Indians had made a major contribution to the war and enjoyed a favourable trade balance with the United States. Yet British restrictions did not allow a direct commercial relationship with the Americans, to many of whom such information was not known. The British, Celler asserted, controlled and exploited the information channels for their own interests, which necessitated the establishment of an Indian information service in the United States. Without this facility, India would remain 'an enigma' to the Americans who, in the meantime, were being misinformed by British propagandists. He quoted the example of the recent visit of Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the sister of Nehru, which went largely unreported in the American press. Such an arrangement, he said, would help Indians understand that many Americans were genuinely interested in South Asian freedom. Celler was appreciative of the Associated Press and United Press for their gradually increasing coverage of Indian politics.²⁴

Five weeks later, Celler once again brought the 'India question' to the notice of the House when he reproduced a telegram to Prime Minister Attlee sent by prominent Americans headed by Pearl S. Buck, Louis Fischer and J. J. Singh. The signatories included: John Gunther, A. Philip Randolph, Representative Celler, William Ernest Hocking, James Warbasse, Representative Charles LaFollette, John Childs, Oswald Garrison Villard, Mark Starr, John Haynes Holmes, Roger Baldwin, Harry Laidler, Lewis Carey, Arthur Garfield Hays and Bruce Bliven. The statement originating on 28 February 1946, urged the prime minister to allow the British cabinet mission to take incisive decisions like the formation of an independent 'caretaker' government to convene a constitutional convention. The continued tension, otherwise, would affect British relations both

with the USA and the Soviet Union. These prominent Americans requested clemency toward the personnel involved in the Indian naval mutiny.²⁵ Celler himself was instrumental in sending a personal letter to Nehru expressing his support for the INC and the hope that it would be able to deliver the Indians from British rule. He reassured Nehru that there was a 'strong healthy opinion in the United States' sympathetic to Indian nationalists – mostly held by liberals who felt that the INC, in the post-script to elections would replace 'British misrule'.

Celler viewed the Pakistan movement very critically and felt 'disturbed' about it: 'We are as disturbed as you that the Moslems desire independent Pakistan, which would comprise three provinces in the northwest and two in the northeast . . . It is the usual dodge of the British – "divide et impera". To us it seems unthinkable to have two free Indias – Hindustan and Pakistan.' Citing the American civil war experience, Celler seems to have justified the use of force to stop the 'partition' of the subcontinent. He believed that the differences between the Muslims and Hindus were like those of the thirteen American colonies which were brought together by independence and then by the constitution. He suggested a similar panacea for the subcontinent, where the British withdrawal must be followed by the framing of a constitution. Attacking Muslim aspirations, Celler confided in Nehru:

If all reasonable efforts fail to bring the Moslem League into line and one or more of the Moslem areas wish to secede, they can do so. I am confident that eventually sober judgement will prevail and they will come back into the new Indian Federation. It is utterly inconceivable that there can be a successful Moslem movement. It would be likened to the tail wagging the dog. The economic and political problems involved would be insurmountable and eventually any enthusiasm for Pakistan would evaporate.²⁶

Celler felt that the Americans stood strongly for Indian freedom as it was the dire need of the time to ensure political stability in Asia.

These observations on Pakistan leave no doubt about Celler's sincerity with the INC. His letter reads like an official document written by a Congressite such as Sardar Patel, committed to the creation of a very Hinduised India. Celler's partisan views on

Muslim politics may be used as a case study to assess how influential Americans felt about Pakistan when a strong pro-India lobby had already come into existence. Such a legacy has proved disadvantageous to Pakistan since its inception. Indians have accused Pakistan of a developing dependence on the super-power but have chosen to ignore the fact that it was the INC and India that have traditionally enjoyed a favoured position *vis-à-vis* Pakistan in North America.

From time to time Celler expressed his solidarity with the INC leadership in the US House of Representatives. He would go to great lengths to elaborate Nehru's stance on Indian political developments, and Nehru was frequently presented as the only voice for the entire subcontinent,²⁷ long before independence came to South Asia. After Prime Minister Attlee's announcement of his plan for the independence of the subcontinent on 3 June 1947, two Congressmen expressed their views on it the very next day. Representative Celler felt that 'fast and furious history' was being made in India and while enthusiastically welcoming the partition plan dwelt on its economic prospects for the United States:

There are great possibilities of enhanced trade between the United States and India, and it points up the need for the setting up of a commission to consummate eventually a treaty of peace, commerce, and navigation with either one India or two Indias [sic.]. We have sent an Ambassador to India, which indicates our vast interest in this great domain, and if there are to be two countries, we may have to send another Ambassador. But, in any event, we should focus our attention to a great degree upon India, because we are losing much if we do not do so.

Mindful of the lack of information on and interest in the subcontinent in his own country, Celler acknowledged: 'Too little, unfortunately, is known by each of the other. Most Americans still think of India as a land of minarets and performers of the rope trick. Indians in the main look upon Americans as rough cowboys and bathing beauties.' In his usual style, Celler called Pakistan 'a mistake . . . and a rank appeasement of Jinnah,' adding his scepticism about its future: 'Thus Pakistan would be like two arms without a body. It could not exist as a nation. Then again the Hindus and Sikhs are demanding and will get a

further partition on these Provinces, especially Bengal and Punjab. Thus Pakistan will be a truncated Pakistan.'²⁸

Representative Rankin of Mississippi produced before the House Clement Attlee's statement of 3 June along with those of Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh which were broadcast the same day. He characterised Celler's remarks as 'hysterical'. Rankin found the British plan for independence 'satisfactory' and equally 'most distasteful to the Communists who are trying to use India to stir up trouble for Great Britain'.²⁹ His comments about the communists echoed the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union already explicit in their respective global policies. John Foster Dulles, US representative at the United Nations, in a statement in January 1947 had hinted at the possibility of communist infiltration within the Indian interim government by saying: 'In India Soviet communism exercises a strong influence through the Hindu [*sic*] government.'³⁰ A similar apprehension was expressed by Representative Ellis of West Virginia.³¹

Even after the proclamation of the partition plan on 7 June 1947, Emanuel Celler did not become reconciled to the idea of Pakistan. Voicing his anti-Pakistan views rather too harshly, the Congressman from Brooklyn once again took up the issue before the House on 19 June 1947, when he raised the question of annexation of the princely states to either of the South Asian young republics. He observed:

Mr. Speaker, Chickens are coming home to roost. Moham-mad Ali Jinnah, president of the Moslem League, by his dogged insistence and misdirected enthusiasm has secured Pakistan. He now issued a manifesto insisting upon the right of the Indian princes to declare themselves independent sovereign nations. One can imagine the confusion worse confounded with Pakistan, Hindustan, and over 580 small and large princely sovereignties. One would have to have a hundred different visas to travel across India.

Nehru stated that the recognition of the independence of any princely state by a foreign power would be regarded as an unfriendly act by the Congress Party.

This conflicting approach to the question of the independence of the princely states points to a bitter break between Hindustan and Pakistan. Jinnah, doubtlessly, is determined to have

as many of the princely states as possible join Pakistan in opposition to Hindustan. Hyderabad and Travancore, two of the largest princely states, have already declared their independence and have demanded that they become the inheritors of Great Britain's paramountcy.

India by culture, tradition, language, geography should be a single nation. The very idea of Pakistan and now the refinement of Pakistan into hundreds of princely states shows how wrong it was from the very beginning. As I said before, Pakistan is an engraved invitation to His Majesty's government to remain one nation. Its salvation and its progress depend upon the unity of India. Pakistan is a menacing and overshadowing cloud.

It is hoped that unity of India will be obtained by peaceful ways and that eventually Jinnah will be won over to the principle of unity, wiping out forever the cross purposes that have wrecked India.³²

Such a tirade against Pakistan by an influential American legislator leaves a bitter taste. Celler frequently lamented American ignorance about the subcontinent, yet he seems to have been suffering from the same disease – at least as far as the Muslim demand for Pakistan was concerned. A young republic like Pakistan from its very inception confronted both apathy and hostility.

11 The American Press and the Pakistan Movement

The general American apathy and lack of interest in South Asian affairs – and more specifically the inability to understand Muslim aspirations – left a great vacuum in information. The meagre size and scattered nature of the South Asian community in North America as well as its heterogeneous composition, left much to be accomplished. Since they did not have American citizenship they led a precarious existence, which had been exacerbated by the effects of Ghadr activism. Wisely, therefore, the community avoided confrontation with the North American authorities. When based in New York, Lajpat Rai had capably espoused the South Asian political cause under the auspices of the India League of America. His departure for the subcontinent and engagement in his monumental work, *Unhappy India*, followed by his anti-Simon Commission protest that eventually resulted in his death, placed the League and its organ, *Young India*, in an uncertain position. In the 1940s, while the South Asians in America were trying to launch the nationalist cause from various platforms, their major preoccupation was still the right to US citizenship. Thus, they operated on a double-track plan. The nationalist movements in the subcontinent, America's involvement in the Second World War and the resultant weakening of the Raj encouraged the expatriates in their lobbying efforts.

Like the US government and the Congress, the American press did not engage in any large-scale reporting on the subcontinent, although there were now more news correspondents and agencies involved than ever before. Since the 1920s and 1930s, Gandhi had largely dominated Indian politics in the eyes of most Americans, who usually had confused ideas about South Asians. Developments in the 1940s, as seen earlier, all resulted in more frequent reporting on South Asia, but the INC and Gandhi remained the focal points with only an occasional reference to the AIML and Jinnah. Muslims in the subcontinent during the formative years of the Pakistan movement (1940–47) were deeply engrossed in internal developments and unable to organ-

ise the mobilisation of American public opinion in their favour. The traditional American aloofness in global affairs was also a consideration until the closing phase of the Second World War. Moreover, Muslim membership of the South Asian expatriate community in the United States was very small. Pakistan therefore remained an enigma for most Americans even long after it had come into existence. Since the AIML leadership in the 1940s did not have the time to build up public relations in the United States, the pro-INC elements in America took advantage of this to project the Congress view-point – even at the expense of facts. Jinnah did send emissaries to the USA, but that was in 1946 when Begum Shah Nawaz and M. A. H. Ispahani toured America to inform Americans of the Muslim position.

Pro-INC activists tried to project the Pakistan movement as a 'separatist' and 'partitioning' activity engineered by privileged Muslim families with the connivance of the British. This view was further fostered by self-righteous assertions that in the twentieth century the AIML was trying to build a state on the concept of religion, presuming that intolerance and bigotry were dictating the fate of millions. In other words, the INC was presented as a democratic, secular and down-to-earth movement whereas the League was caricatured as a separatist and backward-looking organisation of Muslims from the exploitative classes which used religion at the behest of the British ruling class. In the same way, the Quaid was presented as a very westernised leader detached from the masses and in no way representative of Muslim Indians, either in his appearance or life-style. On the other hand, Gandhi appeared more 'native,' and thus more charismatic, commanding massive support among the Indians. His reclusive outlook and cult figure appealed to Americans who found in him an earthly alternative to their own mundane materialism. Gandhi's long marches, imprisonment and fasts made sensational news whereas Jinnah's constitutionalism remained misunderstood. Jinnah did not function as a political theorist but lived as a pragmatic statesman, whereas Gandhi engulfed himself in the theoretical and theological aspects of politics and proved very successful in public relations. Such a dichotomy in bilateral relations continued even in the post-1947 decades.¹

Given that the United States government was not willing to annoy Churchill by openly sympathising with the South Asian

nationalists, it was not until the end of the war and the weakening of traditional European colonialism that the Americans began to woo the emerging nations. With Churchill's departure, it became easier for the US government to take a more assertive stance on India. The first book to appear on Pakistan in the USA was by Norman Brown² and until now 'American diplomatic historians have paid only slight attention to the role of Jinnah in the struggle for the independence of the subcontinent.'³ The books by Hope, Khair and Hess appearing in the 1960s and 1970s tried to assess the ideas and leadership of the Pakistan movement, yet Indian authors like Venkantaramani attempted to portray the AIML as a partisan group by giving the entire credit to the INC.⁴

East Coast-based newspapers and magazines like *The New York Times*, *Asia*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, *The Nation* and *The New Republic* traditionally carried the news and views on the subcontinent contributed by the British and American news agencies. Sometimes, regular correspondents went on special assignments to submit periodic reports on geo-political developments in this part of Asia – particularly after India's entry into the war and the subsequent opening of the Assam-Burma Road. The South Asian English press carried frequent reports on American subjects, which multiplied when the USA joined the war with the Allies. However, 'Americana' made an 'exotic' matter both for vernacular and English newspapers and magazines across the subcontinent. After the political news, Roosevelt, war-related activities and Hollywood obtained the most coverage in the audio-visual media.

The first round table conference held in London between the South Asian leaders and British authorities was widely covered by *The New York Times*. Possibly this was the first time that Jinnah had been mentioned by that paper.⁵ Beatrice Barnby contributed a feature article on communal relations between the Muslims and the Hindus in a historical perspective. She stated that Muslim rule of the subcontinent since the 'Moghul invasion' was the background to the divergence between the two communities. According to her, the former rulers of India – the Muslims – wanted to ensure 'enlarged representation' *vis-à-vis* the Hindu majority.⁶ The failure of the round table conferences in 1932 and Jinnah's criticism of the British government was discussed by *The New York Times*, which discovered a mountain of

differences between Jinnah and Gandhi.⁷ Seven years later, the same paper acknowledged Jinnah as the spokesman for the Indian Muslims.⁸ Simultaneously, John Gunther compared the AIML and the INC with the former emerging as a powerful Muslim platform.⁹

The New York Times discussed the Hindu-Muslim question and the urgent need to resolve it before any solution could be ruled out. However, despite the reorganisation of the AIML as a representative Muslim body, the personal character of Jinnah was harshly criticised.¹⁰ A few weeks later, it emphasised the Muslim military factor in the British Indian Army which allegedly created difficulties for the British.¹¹ Nehru was usually discussed favourably in the American press and his own article was carried by *Atlantic Monthly*.¹² On the other hand, there was no detailed coverage of Jinnah or anyone else from the AIML in the American media. Whatever the American press wrote on South Asian Muslim politics was usually with reference to the British government or the INC. Articles by Congressites in American magazines either underrated the AIML or made passing references to it either as a splinter group or the protégé of the British government. K. A. Abbas, a Muslim Congress member depicted the AIML as the extension of Jinnah's 'overreaching ambitions'.¹³ Humayun Kabir, a noted Congressite, in another article in *Asia*, acknowledged the growing mass appeal of the League but felt that, nevertheless, many Muslims differed with its policies.¹⁴

The New York Times reported frequently on major Indian developments including the Lahore resolution.¹⁵ It appears that the most influential American newspaper was gradually recognising the dynamics of South Asian nationalist movements although, like other American élitist groups, it was slow to accept the credentials of the struggle for Pakistan. In the summer of 1942, *The New York Times* commissioned its well-known journalist, Herbert L. Mathews, to write a series of articles analysing political developments. He visited ten out of the eleven provinces in British India besides a number of princely states. He was surprised to discover the popularity and 'strength of Jinnah and the League', quite the contrary to what he had been told earlier. 'Pakistan' had given massive Muslim support to the AIML and he, concluded, had become an irreversible reality.¹⁶

Time, in its issue of 4 December 1939, contributed a piece on

India entitled 'Jinnah split,' accompanied by a portrait of the Muslim leader with the statement: 'Moslems come first'. Giving an account of Hindu-Muslim riots at Sukkur in Sind, the magazine reported that the communities in the subcontinent 'had shown themselves the most inharmonious group in the war-bound Empire'. The Hindu-Muslim conflict was analysed in detail and described as the main reason for the continuation of the 'Raj': 'Moslem-Hindu religious and social differences top the list of hindrances to Indian independence from British rule. Probably the most frequent and most telling answer Great Britain gives to demands for immediate dominion status is: "Once freed India would destroy itself in civil war"; the rift divides India as permanently as the Mississippi divides the U.S.' The article examined the religio-social differences between the two communities and produced a very interesting comparison based on generalisations: 'Socially, Indian Moslems are a solid, self-conscious minority group (just less than one-fourth of India's population); Hindus are a loosely-bound, sect-split, caste-stratified majority (three-fourths).' It acknowledged the economic power of the Hindus as the wealthier group, consisting of landowners, capitalists, shopkeepers, employers and capitalists, whereas the Muslims were predominantly peasants, artisans or labourers. Giving an account of the life-career of Jinnah, *Time* erroneously described him as a Hindu by birth who 'later developed into a rank communalist'. It continued:

Tall, slim, acquiline of feature and grey of hair, an immaculate dresser, an adroit lawyer, reserved yet with plenty of charm behind the tap when he chooses to turn it on, he has the enthusiasm of a youngster at 63, and the air of a queen's courtier in law court . . . His reasons are partly political partly religious. He is a minority leader, who wants both to curry favor with Britain and to avoid a 'freedom' in which Moslems are bound to worse enemies than to British.¹⁷

For its first-ever comparative analysis of South Asian Hindu-Muslim politics, it left much to be desired.

Two years later, *Time* commented on the walk-out of twenty-six Muslim Leaguers from the Indian Legislative Assembly in early November 1941 over the handling of India's defence by Linlithgow and stated that it 'seemed clearer than ever that if Britain wants more than lukewarm cooperation in fighting

World War II, she must do more than talk about settling India's problems'. The article described the AIML as the 'most important political party after Gandhi's India National Congress' and a garlanded picture of the Quaid accompanied the article. Apparently this weekly, to some extent, was informed about Jinnah's statesmanship.¹⁸

A year later, *Time* once again published a page-length article on South Asian politics accompanied by a photo that showed Jinnah delivering a speech next to a banner carrying a pro-Pakistan slogan in Urdu. The article was subtitled 'Rose petals and scrambled eggs' and began with the narration of a two-mile long procession of the AIML, led by the Quaid who was riding a truck followed by a massive chanting crowd: 'Never before in the League's hitherto pedestrian history had the followers turned out in such numbers. There was a parade two miles long. Showers of rose petals fell on Jinnah's mat of grey hair. Police guards on the roof tops saw to it that nothing heavier than rose petals was dropped.' For hours the unprecedented procession walked in the sweltering April sun in the Indian metropolis carrying big banners and maps in support of Pakistan, 'the most ambitious claim . . . a slogan to bargain against Hindu political domination'. The recent formation of the League ministry in the NWFP was presented as another proof of Jinnah's increasing strength. While expressing the usual scepticism over the economic viability of Pakistan, *Time* observed: 'Nevertheless, Jinnah at last dominated the areas he threatened to withdraw from the rest of India.' The report mentioned the decline of the INC due to mass arrests, including that of Gandhi who was anxious to get back into the political mainstream even after his '21-day fast had failed to gain him his freedom'.

Time's commentary presented a comparison between Jinnah and Gandhi, once again largely based on generalisations:

Monocled Jinnah, with his Bond Street clothes, his rich palace at Bombay and his Moslem belief in violence [*sic*], has gained power through reviving Moslems' vanished pride in their one-time imperial greatness and through brilliantly, if not always logically espousing Moslem grievances against Hindus. Gandhi, with his mysticism, his *dhoti*, his self-imposed poverty, his goats, his spinning wheel wants a united India, but he has lost power through the failure of his 'Quit India'

campaign and his pitiful attempts to meet India's economic ills through makeshift remedies.

Time felt that Puran Chandra Joshi, the secretary of the Indian Communist Party, was trying to attract the Indian have-nots on a massive scale by appealing to their emotions and advocating supra-communal economic revolution and in this way was gathering more support for his party. Within ten months – since 24 July 1942 – they were already challenging the Hindu Mahasabha as the third strongest party. Mostly consisting of young people, the party stood for economic reforms, abolition of the caste system and the end of imperialism.¹⁹

In the mid-1940s, *Time* was reporting more exhaustively and regularly on India-related developments.²⁰ Issues like the Simla conference, the viceroyalty of Lord Wavell, League and Congress conflict and the future of the princely states were major themes, and usually included portraits of South Asian and British leaders. The Wavell plan to establish an interim government in India consisting of representatives from various political parties was the focal point for the Simla conference held in the summer of 1945. This received detailed coverage from the magazine, which described it as the trial of statesmanship and wisdom where the future of India was at stake. Over-emphasising the appearances of the leaders and including pictures of Jinnah, Wavell and Khizr Hayat Tiwana (the Unionist premier of the Punjab) the article observed:

The Congress delegation, headed by President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, wore white caps, homespun *khaddar*. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, president of the Muslim League, wore an English-style hat, a smartly cut lounge suite. Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, Premier of the Punjab, a spearhead of India's war effort, was dashing in a snow-white, plumed turban. Tara Singh, leader of the warlike Sikhs, was resplendent in a bright blue turban. He carried a *kirpan* (carved Sikh sword).

After swearing the twenty-one delegates to secrecy, Lord Wavell inaugurated the conference on 25 June 1945, a day the astrologers had claimed otherwise 'inauspicious'.

One issue to be discussed was the nomination of Muslim representatives to the interim government, since the AIML

claimed to be representative of 99 per cent of Indian Muslims and the INC made it a matter of honour not to yield. Eventually, Jinnah had to suggest that the Wavell plan be dropped and both the INC and AIML negotiate directly over the formation of a new government. *Time* still felt that Gandhi was not being helpful in the resolution of the crisis, though he was always surrounded by crowds since his arrival in Simla. An exhausted Gandhi was occasionally intolerant of the mob and had assumed a rather ambiguous role in Simla:

Later Gandhi who for years has been playing puss in the corner, startled newsmen by announcing that he would not attend the conference. He explained that he would act as an advisor but, since he was not a four-anna-party member, he would not be a delegate. Four anna a year (about 8c.) are the dues paid by rank-and-file Congress party members. Gandhi, the Congress party's spiritual adviser, resigned from the Congress party in 1934.²¹

It is interesting to note that in the late 1940s frequent comparisons were being made between Jinnah and Gandhi by the American media. Gandhi, who had monopolised and personalised American coverage of India to a large extent, no longer enjoyed that distinction. One is equally struck by the importance attached to the appearances of the leaders.

The following week *Time* carried a picture of a worried Wavell on its cover, with the question: 'Could the bonds of Empire be tightened by loosening them?' In a detailed article on developments related to the Simla conference, there was a comprehensive commentary on the subcontinent. An accompanying map showed both Pakistan (Muslim India) and Hindu India, with Simla, New Delhi and Calcutta included in the proposed Muslim country. An unusually long article looked at India's past cultural achievements and the aspirations of its various political parties. In greater biographical detail, it discussed the career of Wavell and his efforts for self-government in the subcontinent. However, the socio-political heterogeneity in India presented an arduous task which needed more tangible efforts to resolve the stalemate:

The 21 Indians scarcely represented a nation at all. Chiefly Hindus and Moslems, they were members of violently hostile

religious communities, mutually contemptuous, mutually re-criminatory. But if they did not represent a nation, in the modern political sense, they represented something much greater. They represented India, one of the supreme symbols on the cultural horizon of mankind.

Although the cultural zenith in the past could not guarantee its modern political destiny, *Time* nevertheless found it appropriate to acknowledge the Indian cultural edifice at the outset of the report:

India, among nations, is the ancient of days. Before even China, there was India. Before human memory congealed from legend into record, India loomed from the unimaginable reach of time. Its landscape matched its origins – an immense wedge of the world, vast plains cracked by a too hot sun, vast jungles writhing with growth from too dense rains, vast cities melting under the unflagging onset of oblivion and the soft decay of stone itself, 400 million people pullulating in a too frantic drive to defeat the multiplicity of daily death . . . India, islanded by sea and land, and haunted by the hourly wanton foreclosure of life by death, looked within and found that its obsession was the soul and its creator, the problem of good and evil.

After this introduction to India, the various ethno-religious groups and their leadership were summarised, followed by the events leading to the Simla conference. More than half of the report discussed the poetic and military career of Wavell before he became viceroy. Wavell had toured and studied India for eighteen months and then returned to London to convince Churchill that some new constitutional measures must be undertaken in order to break the stalemate. He had some success in Whitehall and the India Office and went back with his plan – a revised version of the Cripps formula. Wavell, ‘the thickset, smiling, one-eyed, taciturn Englishman’ and ‘the latest scion of a long line of soldiers’ was sceptical of Pakistan, observing that ‘No man can alter geography.’ The conference seemed to end inconclusively as the question of representation of minorities and princely states proved a stumbling block, thanks to the stubbornness of the INC and Gandhi. *Time* rightly concluded that the whole of ‘Asia was astir. If Britain wished to keep India in

her commonwealth, she could only hope to tighten the bonds of Empire by loosening them.'²²

The next week, *Time* reported the failure of the Simla conference with Wavell accepting responsibility for it. The article candidly described the INC as 'the predominantly Hindu Congress party' willing to take office in the proposed interim government with the AIML staying out on the question of Muslim representation. The same issue quoted J. J. Singh's views on the Simla conference, that it was 'striking evidence of the desire of vast majority of Indians to work together and . . . an evidence of the continuing British policy of unduly emphasizing minorities'. The pro-INC South Asian expatriate and the president of the India League of America described the AIML's policy as 'coercion of the majority'.²³

Another development reported by the same magazine in elaborate detail was the cabinet mission to India, with a picture of A. V. Alexander, Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Stafford Cripps in consultation with Wavell in an accompanying picture. Two other pictures showed Jinnah in conversation with his sister, Fatima Jinnah, in their home in New Delhi and a pensive Nehru next to Gandhi. Erroneously, the magazine showed Emperor Akbar the Great as a Hindu, perhaps by confusing his portrait with that of some bearded Rajput raja, while Lord Clive appeared to be a look-alike of George Washington. Giving an account of the Raj and its architects over the years, *Time* felt that the British were finally prepared to leave the subcontinent but the questions were 'when' and 'how?'

Three-quarters of this report dealt with the biography of Jinnah – perhaps the most elaborate coverage of him in any American weekly before 1946. He was described as a 'man with an angora cap,' who enjoyed a massive Muslim following across the subcontinent. Quoting widely from Abdul Qayyum Khan of the NWFP, Shaukat Hayat and Firoz Khan Noon of Punjab, *Time* described the Quaid as being 'at the peak of his power,' and a man for whom the Muslims were ready to sacrifice their life and property. Like many other observers, the magazine pondered over the popularity of Jinnah, who looked so different and detached from the Indian Muslims and who had started his career as an Indian nationalist. 'How such a man at a fateful moment in history came to be the spokesman of millions of Moslim peasants, small shopkeepers and soldiers, is a story of

love for country and lust for power, a story that twists and turns like a bullock track on the hills.'²⁴ Retracing his family background, education at Karachi, Bombay and London, *Time* discussed Jinnah's transformation into a modern, westernised successful attorney quoting from Sarojini Naidu, an admirer of Jinnah and herself a great poetess, orator and Congress leader.

The report indicated that since Jinnah joined the AIML in 1913 he had combined a life-long loyalty to the party with an early belief in Indian political unity. When Gandhi tried to turn the INC 'into a powerful mass movement, Jinnah drifted out of the fold. Some Hindus think he lost his nationalist ardor when he lost his beautiful Parsi wife (he was 42, she was 18, when they were married) after their only child, a daughter was born.'²⁵ Since then he had lived his life 'austerely' both in Bombay and New Delhi. During the 1930s, his 'vitality and cold intelligence were turned more and more to the Moslem cause' until at the mass rally in Lahore on 23 March 1940, he spelled out his programme for Pakistan. He manoeuvred the AIML successfully throughout the 1940s, imbuing the Muslims with a new sense of self-reliance. The report went on to record a meeting which took place at this time:

A historic meeting with Gandhi on Malabar Hill in 1944 ended in an impasse. Even Gandhi's healer, Dinshaw Mehta, who massaged Jinnah for two hours daily during the meetings, could not rub out the wrinkles of obstinacy that made the skinny Moslem uncompromisingly demand Pakistan, made the skinny Hindu as uncompromisingly demand a unified India, with the Pakistan issue postponed until after independence.²⁶

Coming back to Jinnah's overwhelming popularity, *Time* observed: 'Victory arches go up, rose petals flutter down from the rooftops, richly bedizened elephants, camels, mounted guards of honor accompany the Hollywood float in which he rides. Today Jinnah, and not the hated Hindu Gandhi, is prima donna on India's stage.' Various hypotheses on the Hindu-Muslim conflict were considered and there was uncertainty about the viability of Pakistan. According to *Time*, Maulana Azad, the look-alike of 'a Kentucky colonel', considered the Hindu-Muslim conflict to be an economic and not a religious issue and that both communities lived in harmony in the villages. How-

ever, the article agreed with Dr Aziz in *A Passage to India*, that India was too divided to be one and even Akbar, the great Mughal emperor, had failed to inculcate harmony.²⁷

Other American weeklies such as *Newsweek*, *New Republic* and *Nation* contributed reports and commentaries on South Asian political developments during the 1940s. *Newsweek*, while discussing the Cripps mission, found most poor Indians little concerned about political issues. It described Stafford Cripps as 'the most sympathetic statesman ever to visit India on an official mission', who felt sympathetic toward 60 million Untouchables. Looking at the Indian stalemate from the point of view of the minorities, *Newsweek* took the example of Ambedkar whose underprivileged copatriots 'wanted a share in it'. After meeting Jinnah, Azad, Gandhi and the other Indian leaders, Cripps announced his plan offering Dominion status for India after the war with the right of secession for those areas that wanted to opt out of the federation. *Newsweek* described the Indian reaction to the Cripps proposals as 'a rumble of dissatisfaction', particularly from the INC, with 'stretched days of bickering' in the future.²⁸

In another issue, *Newsweek* contributed a column on Gandhi's frustration over the new developments – the arrival of American troops in India and some Congressites supporting Pakistan. About the Americans, he said: 'It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule, added to the British.' When C. Rajgopalachari of Madras, the influential Congress leader, advocated an accommodation with the AIML on Pakistan, Gandhi was furious. By using Vallabhai Patel, 'his trusted and ruthless chief lieutenant,' Gandhi hastened to chastise the 'apostates,' and accordingly the INC overwhelmingly rejected any such moves.²⁹ Although not a formal member of the INC, Gandhi monopolised its leadership and policies. In another issue, *Newsweek* discussed Rajgopalachari's formula and observed that it enjoyed the blessings of Gandhi. Such an observation was in direct contradiction to what the magazine had said in its previous issue. Moreover, it accused the Muslims of blocking India's freedom because they feared that 'they would be dominated by the far more numerous Hindus.' *Newsweek* misinterpreted the Cripps plan as 'the British offer of independence' and predicted a blood-bath in the future.³⁰ It expressed similar ideas about the relationship between Gandhi and Rajgopalachari and somehow gave the impression that the Madras leader – 'Gandhi the

Second' – on occasions made more sense than 'the Hindu leader'. The same issue wrote of a new Gandhi, who appeared more receptive to the Muslim political creed and even willing to cooperate with the British in the war efforts.³¹

The Gandhi-Jinnah talks on 8 August 1944, were briefly discussed by *Newsweek* which made a curious generalisation, that Jinnah had 'largely built his career on opposition to Gandhi' and held him responsible for the failure of the talks.³² The next month, the Jinnah-Gandhi talks were discussed in greater detail with pictures of both the leaders. Gandhi, barely clad in his *dhoti*, was described as 'Gandhi, the Hindu saint' whereas Jinnah, dressed in immaculate western dress, was described as 'Jinnah, the worldly'. In rather literary and flowing language, *Newsweek* commenced its article by describing the city of Bombay with all its contrasts:

Indians thronged Hornby Road, the main shopping street of Bombay. There were Hindus in soiled white garments, with their shirt tails hanging out; Moslems bare-headed or wearing fezzes; Parsees in shiny black pillbox hats; and a few Sikhs with yellow, pink and purple turbans. Through the city moved grimy red trolleys gharries looking like junked hansoms, and ancient Buick and Studebaker taxis.

That was Bombay – as crowded, as hot, and as unexciting as usual. But upon an exclusive Malabar Hill, in a house overlooking the Arabian Sea, the fate of India was being shaped. In the most important political development in two years, Mohandas K. Gandhi and Mohammad Ali Jinnah were meeting to agree on a formula for the division of British India into Hindu and Moslem states.³³

Roland C. Gask, writing for the magazine, described the talks between the two leaders as 'a vain attempt to compose their differences'. He reported that Jinnah had already rejected Rajgopalachari's offer as 'a shadow, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan'. Giving a biographical account of Jinnah who had by then reached the 'peak of his brilliant career' with a successful legal practice and a massive Muslim following despite his personal marital setback, and describing Jinnah's exquisite life-style at his luxurious Malabar Hill house, *Newsweek* provided its readers with some extraordinary detail:

He has smoked a pipe, expensive Havana cigars, and his own brand of hand-rolled cigarettes. As he converses, he fiddles with a monocle. Alternately suave and flashy, with extraordinary magnetism, determination, and incontestable incorruptibility, Jinnah nevertheless is a lonely man whose pride has deprived him of friends. Now he has no interests but politics, no company except his faithful sister Fatimah.³⁴

Reporting on the failure of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, *Newsweek* concluded: 'Thus the situation was just where it was before – except that the Indians themselves had once again demonstrated the British thesis that they could not agree on how to run their country.'³⁵ The British government in India under Wavell tried to take a limited initiative through the Simla conference on the basis of the Wavell plan, which gave more representation to Indians on the viceroy's executive council. By then the interned Congress leaders had been released and Wavell, instead of inviting Azad, sent the invitation to Gandhi, who came to Simla as a 'spiritual' leader and not a politician. As discussed earlier the conference ran into difficulties on the question of Muslim representation on the council. In fact, even before it started the INC leadership had complained 'that the Moslem League would get too much out of the deal: the proposals call for equal proportional representation of both religions in the Executive Council.'³⁶ After nineteen days of intensive deliberations on the issue of representation the conference ended and Wavell generously took upon himself responsibility for its failure. Nevertheless, *Newsweek* accused Jinnah of being 'separatist' and responsible for the wreckage.³⁷

Another issue of *Newsweek* not only discussed Hindu-Muslim differences but also drew attention to the political career of Jinnah and his efforts to make the AIML a movement to be reckoned with. Jinnah, according to the magazine, parted with the INC and Gandhi in the 1920s since he 'wanted direct, constitutional agitation for independence'.³⁸ In one way or another, both *Time* and *Newsweek* always contrived to discuss Jinnah's personal habits, intentionally looking for contrasts. They apparently felt uncomfortable with Jinnah's credentials as the unchallenged leader of the Muslims. Stressing his westernised life-style, both weeklies chose to forget that Jinnah, as he

frequently acknowledged, was the political and not the spiritual leader of the South Asian Muslims. To search for a Puritan or a spiritual leader in the person of Jinnah is futile. In the cabinet mission plan, Jinnah's political creed was discussed in terms of Muslim deprivation in India, where most of the jobs were held by the Hindus, but he was dissatisfied with these arguments.³⁹

The Simla conference and its failure were also discussed by *The New Republic* in an analysis contributed by H. N. Brailsford from London. Needless to say, the liberal American weekly had been pro-INC since the time when Lajpat Rai was stationed in New York and had developed a close relationship with Walter Lippman. Brailsford's article found the British concession under the Wavell plan 'tardy' and 'traditional'. He felt that the Indians had serious reservations about the viceroy's power of veto on the executive council, but this could be dealt with effectively only if the Muslims and Hindus were willing to cooperate. Under the plan, he argued, parity between the INC and the AIML was a thorny question since the Hindus were not afraid of being outvoted – even in Muslim majority provinces and in the services. The Hindus were not prepared for the other alternative – Pakistan – which Gandhi called the 'vivisection of India'.⁴⁰

According to *The New Republic*, the INC was a 'nationalist and not a sectarian party' while the Wavell plan had been based on the concept of sectarian representation. But, things were not so simple. 'Men who are Indians first and Hindus afterward,' according to Brailsford, 'may agree to buy national unity at this price. But there are orthodox and conservative Hindus who put religion first. Their spokesman is the Mahasabha, and it is already up in arms against the suggestion of parity. It will not accept an artificial minority for the Hindu majority, which forms nearly three-fourths of the population and is in education and industrial enterprise the more advanced of the two communities.'⁴¹ The Mahasabha factor had never been discussed by any magazine to date and the League's advocacy of Muslim representation was always tallied with the so-called secular pronouncements of the INC. The fact remains that the League faced a threat of Hindu revivalism, not merely from the strange Gandhian admixture of religio-political ethos, but also from a well-armed and aggressive Hindu organisation like the Mahasabha, not forgetting the regionalist conglomerations. Nevertheless, Jinnah and the League were convenient scapegoats. The

Pakistan movement was considered to be 'sectarian agitation' by Jinnah and Pakistan was presumed to be 'a bad solution'. It was interpreted as a necessary off-shoot of the process initiated by Lord Morley for separate electorates in the British 'subtle tradition of dividing to rule'. Religion, the basis for sectarian differences, was said by *The New Republic* to postpone economic and class issues. It suggested majority rule in the provinces with the centre dealing with matters such as foreign policy, defence and communications. The report summed up favourably for the INC, endorsing its refusal 'to be classed as a Hindu organisation'.⁴²

In a brief report carried in July 1945, *The Nation*, another liberal organ, had concluded that the initiative to end the stalemate rested with the British government. It predicted that India would attain freedom more certainly once the Labour Party had gained a majority in the British elections.⁴³ *The Nation*, like *The New Republic*, sympathised with the nationalists and through editorial notes and special reports voiced its support for the INC. It had its reservations about Muslim politics. As well as political events, however, Indian cultural and literary achievements occasionally found their way into the magazine.⁴⁴

Following the trail of events leading to the break-down of the Simla conference, *The Nation* felt that 'the main cause of the deadlock was the intransigence of the Moslem League and its leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah.' The commentary considered the Wavell plan to be 'fair' yet considered it expedient to suggest new provincial elections to determine the representative character of various political parties. In its traditional eulogy for the INC, the magazine felt jovial about the bright prospects for the government-INC relationship: 'A small flame of good-will has been lit; it would burn more strongly if the remaining political prisoners were released. But above all, some new initiative is needed to lift India out of the sterile morass of communal squabbles.'⁴⁵

Having placed the blame for the failure of the Simla conference, *The Nation* published an exhaustive tirade against the Quaid and the AIML, written by Uma Shankar. The author questioned the League's credentials as the representative of the Indian Muslims, calling it 'false'.⁴⁶ She felt that given the League's modest performance in the elections of 1936, Jinnah had no substance to prove his contentions. She forgot to take

account of the strides made by the AIML since 1937 when within almost a decade it had emerged as a mass movement. Repeating the INC's accusation against Jinnah, she generalised that 'the British allowed him to wreck the conference.'⁴⁷ In a few successive passages, she contradicted herself by coming to the defence of Wavell, whereas on the subject of Pakistan she wrote forcefully:

The British had good reasons for letting Jinnah wreck their scheme besides their traditional policy of playing off one section against another. The Moslem League is a reactionary force, representing landed interests. Furthermore, it opposes a united India, and India can be strong only if united. This suits the British, who for similar reasons rapport the Indian princes. It may be useful here to inject a point about Pakistan. On the surface Pakistan seems like a democratic solution for the minority problem. In actual fact, it would create more minorities and greater problems . . . Moreover, it is doubtful whether the majority of the Moslems support the Moslem League and want Pakistan.⁴⁸

Shankar found an added reason to explain British support for Jinnah – their effort to court the Muslim Middle East against any future 'possible Soviet influence'. Such statements were not corroborated by factual evidence. She was full of praise for Nehru whom she called 'India's youngest and most prospective leader,' whereas she repeatedly used harsh words against Jinnah. Her article ended on the same pro-Congress and anti-Jinnah note: 'As Mr. Rajgopalachari expressed it, the Congress Party would never have gone to Simla if he had known that the division would rest with the Moslem League. There is a new spirit in India today if Nehru and other observers are to be believed. Nehru has warned that there may be revolts; the present mood of India, he says is "To hell with anyone who tried to push us out of the way."⁴⁹

Such articles reveal the semi-truths and biased information which was being disseminated on the socio-political realities in the subcontinent. Surely these distinguished organs could have ensured the authenticity of statements before their publication. Perhaps they should not be solely blamed, since the feed-back on Indian affairs was partial and already partisan. The AIML itself was not able to establish a viable public information machine in

the USA to counterbalance misinformation on Pakistan – and not surprisingly the young republic suffered accordingly. There is no denying the fact that prestigious American magazines like *The Nation* supported the struggle for Indian freedom, though to them it was synonymous with the INC. Journalistic scholarship produced an interesting hypothesis about British insistence on the continuation of the Raj. Its own natural resources were limited compared to its traditionally extensive industrial and commercial network and consequently, since the late 1930s, Britain was facing economic competition from the USA and Canada. While it was becoming more and more dependent on its colonial empire, nationalist fervour and anti-imperialist groups at home were making things hard for Britain. It was anticipated that Britain could not delay the controversy and would have to find a *modus vivendi*.⁵⁰

Hindu–Muslim differences were a convenient scapegoat both for the British government and many organs of the American media. *Life* magazine, which specialised in photographic journalism, was no exception. For instance, in its seven-page long report on the subcontinent in the summer of 1946, there were many pictures of Indian leaders and princes and just a few paragraphs of text. Gandhi was shown walking with the support of two young women, or praying with some followers, whereas a full-page picture showed Jinnah in immaculate dress. A gathering of the Muslim League was followed by a full-page portrait of bejewelled Indian princes in session. Two empty chairs in an impressive hall with the Union Jack in the background pointed towards the winding up of the Raj. Praising the Wavell plan as an ‘unmatched’ gesture on the part of the British government, Jinnah was described as ‘the dynamic, bitter president of the Muslim League . . . The minority leader’. The report acknowledged Jinnah’s ‘relentless labor’ in fashioning the AIML ‘into a potent weapon capable, if he says the word, of plunging India into strife’. Pakistan was not considered to be an economically viable solution. *Life* also offered interesting observations on Gandhi:

In prison and out, the most potent figure in India for more than a quarter century has been stooped, scrawny, half-clad, little Mohandas K. Gandhi, whose religious mysticism and hardheaded politics have given him an undisputed hold over

India's Hindu millions. All these troubled years he fought for independence with every weapon short of civil war – boycotts, prayers, hunger strikes, virulent nationalism. A man of many paradoxes, he has shocked India by dwelling with the lowly untouchables, but he still has not wanted to abolish India's ancient, cruel caste system. He advocates industrial progress but works for the revival of India's decentralized cottage industries.⁵¹

There were similar references to Nehru, V. Patel and P. C. Joshi.

Returning to 'the British factor,' *Life* praised the decision on formal withdrawal, describing it as a voluntary decision by the British. However, analysing the economic factor in the next paragraph, it reported that Britain was already indebted to the subcontinent to the tune of \$5,200,000,000.⁵² Again, while endorsing the Labour government's decision to withdraw from India, it pointed to the mammoth task of reconstruction and development which faced the successors of the British in India.

As well as political developments and Hindu-Muslim differences, the poverty and devastation caused by famine in India were frequently reported in the American press. Consequently, a number of American humanitarian bodies were established to help the suffering Indians. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (Unrra) established in 1943 was founded by forty-four nations including India, yet India was not permitted to benefit from the relief. The United States was its main financier and American representatives like Dean Acheson had serious reservations about extending relief to India. Congressmen like Karl Mundt, and Bennet C. Clark raised their voice on Capitol Hill and well-known Americans like Pearl Buck of the India Famine Committee took up the issue with President Truman, who had earlier refused to receive the members of the India Famine Emergency Committee. The Truman administration was not quick to comprehend India's worsening food conditions – despite the fact that Herbert Hoover, a former president, and the newly appointed head of the Emergency Relief Committee, had made a brief stop in the subcontinent and recommended emergency relief.⁵³ Hoover's recommendations supported the request for American help which Attlee had made to Truman.⁵⁴ Finally, the Truman administration made an allocation of 132,500 tons of grain to India at a time when the

interim government was exploring the possibility of assistance from other countries, including the Soviet Union.⁵⁵

Throughout these years of trial certain American humanitarian groups, aided by the media, drew attention to the Indian food crisis.⁵⁶ The India Famine Emergency Committee, chaired by Pearl S. Buck, included the eminent scientist Albert Einstein, the journalist Louis Fischer, Sumner Welles, former Under-Secretary of State, W. Green, the president of the American Federation of Labor and others. The Committee placed an advertisement in *The New York Times* announcing: 'Among the world's starving people . . . Let us remember India'.⁵⁷ Regular news-reports on the subject had been appearing in the press occasionally.⁵⁸ The India Famine Emergency Committee sent a non-official fact-finding delegation to India on 17 June 1946, accompanied by George Jones of *The New York Times* and Phillips Talbot of the *Chicago Daily News*.⁵⁹ After touring India the mission, headed by Dr Theodore Schultz, appealed for American aid, yet was refused an audience by Truman.

In conclusion, however, it must be said that the political scene received the most frequent coverage. When the subcontinent was approaching independence, the reporting increased in momentum,⁶⁰ and this continued after 14 August 1947.⁶¹

12 Epilogue or Prologue?

American interest in the subcontinent during the 1940s definitely assumed a diverse and complex character. Besides the increased political interest on the part of the State Department, the White House under Roosevelt tried at several points to adopt a stance on the question of self-government for the region. The presidential interest manifested itself both privately and publicly and usually met a rebuff from Churchill. By the time the Truman administration came to power, South Asia was already on the threshold of independence. The American official interest in South Asian affairs emerged predominantly from geo-political and, to some extent, economic considerations. The traditional channels of information on the subcontinent were the American missionaries, academics, journalists and most of all the South Asian expatriates in the United States, and these were now enlarged by more frequent reporting in the media. Congressmen, American military personnel and numerous visitors on both sides gave their opinion about conditions in India, from internal political developments to war and famine.

The American troops in Karachi and elsewhere in the subcontinent were quite different from their British counterparts. The Americans would mix with the natives more freely and in some cases married local women. General Stillwell was against such marriages because of the restrictions on South Asian emigration to the United States.¹ On occasions American soldiers would play jokes on natives, such as the cameleers in Karachi.² Some people felt that because the American soldiers were high spenders they were spoiling the local shopkeepers, vendors and bearers.³ Their presence in the subcontinent brought a number of new messes, clubs and reading rooms in the sea ports, which facilitated intellectual contacts.⁴ During the 1940s, American trade with the subcontinent increased noticeably – with the balance of trade initially in favour of India.⁵ Another simultaneous development was the arrival of American Roman Catholic missionaries in this part of the world. Similarly, US specialists on India stressed the need for a better understanding of South Asia.⁶ However, organisations like the India League of

America remained clearly pro-INC with serious reservations about the AIML and the Pakistan movement.

The struggle for Pakistan was unfamiliar to most Americans who suffered from a number of misconceptions about its rationale. Communalism, Islam, separate electorates or even the AIML leadership were not at all clear to them. Even in the subcontinent and Britain, the Pakistan movement suffered from serious prejudices mostly based on misinformation. Long after independence Pakistan was still viewed as an off-shoot of Hindu-Muslim communalism or a machination of the British. All such presuppositions stemmed from an oversimplification of the Muslim demand for a homeland in a 'mythical' united India.⁷

To counteract such misconceptions and reservations and to introduce Pakistan as Muslim nationalism and not merely communal separatism, the AIML undertook a number of measures including the use of the press. The *New Times*, *Nawa-i-Waqt* and *Dawn* were launched to aid the Muslim cause and a number of distinguished intellectuals prepared tracts and treatises on Pakistan.⁸ Such publications in English as well as Urdu and Bengali ably tackled the INC propaganda campaign in the subcontinent, but had little visible effect elsewhere. After the failure of the cabinet mission, the AIML recognised the importance of publicising Pakistan in North America. The Quaid sent Mrs. Jahan Ara Shahnawaz and M. A. H. Ispahani to the United States as his special emissaries to give lectures on Pakistan and thereby counterbalance the INC campaign, and to participate in the United Nations conference as the official delegates of the AIML. The INC was already being represented by Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the well-known sister of JawaharLal Nehru.

Jahan Ara Shahnawaz, the daughter of Sir Mohammad Shafi, a founder of the AIML from Lahore and a leading barrister in the Punjab, had been in the Unionist government before joining the Information Division of the Government of India as the lady-in-charge of the women's section. Along with a fellow Punjabi Unionist, Sir Zafrullah Khan – later to become the first Foreign Minister of Pakistan – she was deputed to North America to attend the Pacific Relations conference at Mount Tremblon in Canada. In their official capacity, they were to represent India – an ally in the Second World War. She gave a

talk on her subject at the *Herald Tribune* forum in New York on 8 November 1942, and had meetings with Wendell Willkie and Salzburger of the *New York Times*. She was hosted by the Bajpais in Washington and later wrote in her autobiography that she was:

... surprised and pained to find that Congress propaganda against Muslim aspirations had been adverse and twisted, and people in America were completely ignorant of the social and political conditions prevailing in India. Strange and absurd questions were asked wherever I went, like: 'Why don't you Muslims quit India? You have no right to be there' and remarks like: 'India belongs to the Hindus.' Congress representatives, especially Mr. J. J. Singh and his band of workers, had been exploiting the ignorance not only of the average American citizens but of responsible officials as well. I was perturbed, and I realized that a great deal of counter-propaganda would be required to undo the mischief wrought by the so-called 'Indian patriots.'⁹

On her return to the subcontinent, she informed Jinnah of her impressions in North America and suggested counter-propaganda in the USA to safeguard Muslim interests. She felt the Quaid was already aware of the urgency through his 'representatives in New York'.¹⁰

It was four years before the next visit of Shahnawaz and M. A. H. Ispahani materialised on the instructions of Jinnah. Ispahani, coming from a Muslim business family, was a youthful confidant of Jinnah who subsequently became Pakistan's first ambassador to the United States. A man of strong conviction and the courage to express himself unequivocally, Ispahani was a successful orator and an accomplished author.¹¹ He and Shahnawaz were asked by Jinnah to explain the case for Pakistan to the UN delegations as well as to the Americans. Their tour lasted from October 1946 until late December when they reached San Francisco. In New York, they met Dean Acheson and the Under-Secretary of State, and attended a dialogue on Indian independence organised by the *Herald Tribune* forum. Ispahani and Shahnawaz spoke on behalf of the AIML and the INC was represented by Krishna Menon and Mrs. Pandit. It was the first-ever dialogue on Pakistani-Indian relations in the United States, auguring a lasting tradition in North America.

The Muslim League's representatives attended a luncheon hosted by Salzburger of *The New York Times* where Ispahani spoke at length on the rationale for Pakistan before an assembly of journalists.

Shahnawaz and Ispahani were also invited by some South Asian Muslim residents of Arizona and California and, despite dissuasion from Girja Bajpai on the grounds of the climate, they decided to go to Phoenix where they were received by 'seventy Muslims standing with garlands made of small chrysanthemum'.¹² Here she met Rustam Khan, a friend of her late father, who had organised a big mixed reception for them. During their stay in Arizona they met a number of expatriate farmers who had married Mexican girls. They even donated money for the AIML as they had done earlier for the INC. Shahnawaz and Ispahani then went on to Sacramento, the headquarters of the Muslim community on the Pacific Coast, where a local organisation called the Muslim Brotherhood extended them hospitality. Syud Hossain and other INC sympathisers in the USA had already been in contact with them and 'had filled their minds with so much wrong information about Jinnah and Muslim League that it took us two days to make them understand the Muslim case for division and for the realization of Pakistan'.¹³ Shahnawaz was asked by Rahmatullah, the secretary of the Muslim Brotherhood, to lay the foundation stone of a mosque in Sacramento which she did. They held meetings with South Asians settled in central California and then proceeded to San Francisco, 'one of the loveliest posts I had ever been to'. She was 'impressed by the sunny, hospitable temperament of the American people . . . I found that Americans were industrious and they were the type who, once they took up a cause, would not spare themselves to achieve success. They lacked an old and seasoned background, and were young in spirit'.¹⁴ In San Francisco, both Ispahani and Shahnawaz presented the case for Pakistan, much to the consternation of Lakshmi Pandit who claimed to be the *de facto* representative of the Indian interim government headed by her brother. While in New York, they were asked by Jinnah to join him in London, where he had been invited with Liaquat Ali Khan to take part in talks with the British government. They reported on their mission to the two leaders and were delighted to learn that 'our work in America had borne fruit. It had become clear that the American

Government had impressed upon the British Government that the situation in India should be tackled before it deteriorated further and the Muslim case should be given due consideration.¹⁵

The League did not have enough time or resources at its disposal to publicise the case for Pakistan in North America. Consequently, most Americans either remained largely uninterested in political developments in the subcontinent or were fed half-truths. Pakistan remained an unknown entity for many years until Pakistani expatriates and geo-political developments in the region added new dimensions and more information on bilateralism. Nevertheless, America played a definite, though largely invisible, role in the South Asian political destiny. The American revolution and the US constitution were held in great respect by South Asian nationalists. The US democratic ideals as personified by Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt encouraged the constitutionalists and radical activists alike, including the Ghadr interlude and Rai's India League of America. Similarly, the revolution paved the way for direct economic and diplomatic contacts with the subcontinent. The missionaries operated as efficient trans-cultural agents influencing a whole generation of Transcendentalists in New England. Whitman's 'Passage to India' or Thoreau's derivation from Eastern philosophies idealised a mystic and spiritual 'India' which many Americans tried to seek in *swamis* or intellectuals like Tagore, Har Dayal and Rai. Another kind of India, caricatured by a class of missionaries or occasional visitors, was reflected in writings like *Mother India* by Katherine Mayo. Hollywood productions were an amalgam of both the ideal and the impoverished India, based on Kiplingesque exotica. Gandhi or Gunga Din were the physical representatives of this new imagery, while the Quaid-i-Azam looked so western and 'un-Indian' by comparison. Although he was portrayed as an incorruptible and capable leader, his immaculate attire attracted too much attention and created unease – for it did not conform with popular American perceptions of Indians, Muslims included. This perhaps, was the Gandhi-Gunga Din syndrome at its best.

The supposition that India was one country-one nation and must therefore emerge as a single nation-state stemmed from such expectations, and ignored the heterogeneity in the subcontinent. Pakistan, unlike India, was a new name and Indian

Muslims were not a well-known community. Thus came the contradictions. The subcontinent was not a priority for the United States, it remained a British responsibility and in the British hour of turmoil the best thing was to avoid causing them extra grief. Roosevelt was undoubtedly under pressure both from within and without the USA to move his British cousins on the Indian question. He undertook certain measures in the years after the Atlantic summit, but these were always deflected by Churchill. Humanitarian support for the famine victims was totally inadequate thanks to the British and American bureaucracies.

America's entry in the war and Japanese victories in South-east Asia gave the subcontinent a new geo-strategic importance. Military involvement went along with political interest, which multiplied with the cold war. The American press reported more frequently on the region, yet the Congress barely took up the issue – and on the few occasions when it did there was no informed appraisal of the situation. The British and INC propaganda for an independent federated India found wide support in America but the American government did not push it too far and Pakistan was accepted as a reality by all concerned.

On the eve of independence, President Truman sent the following telegram to the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah:

On this auspicious day which marks the emergence among the family of nations of the new dominion of Pakistan, I extend on behalf of the American people sincere best wishes to you, and through you, to Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and the people of Pakistan. To you who have labored steadfastly for this day, and to the other leaders and the people of Pakistan fall profound responsibilities. I wish to assure you that the dominion embarks on its course with the firm friendship and goodwill of the United States of America. The American Government and people anticipate a long history of close and cordial relations with your country. We rejoice with you in the prospect for rapid progress toward the advancement of the welfare of the people of Pakistan, and look forward to the constructive participation of the new dominion in world affairs for the welfare of all mankind.

The Quaid's response was as follows:

The Government and the people of Pakistan and myself were deeply touched by the warm message of greetings and good wishes which you have sent on behalf of the American people to the Dominion of Pakistan. We greatly value this expression of friendship and good wishes and I have no doubt that this is the beginning of the long history of close and cordial relationship between Pakistan and the United States of America.

Pakistan as a political entity had come into existence in the wake of a host of problems. Lack of funds to run the administrative machinery; India's refusal to pay Pakistan's share in the military and civil assets; an influx of millions of suffering refugees; the Kashmir question and other crippling crises threatened the very existence of the young republic. The hawks in the INC predicted its premature demise whereas Pakistanis imbued with hope and fortitude looked for a bright future under the leadership of the Quaid-i-Azam, who was at an advanced age and in poor health. The independence celebrations in Karachi and elsewhere during the month of Ramadhan were solemn. Simple and austere ceremonies reflected Muslim respect for the month of fasting as well as an agony over the tribulations facing their country from its very inception.¹⁶

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. For a contemporary British account see, W. W. Hunter, *Our Indian Muslims: Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen?* (London, 1871); also Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims: A Political History (1858-1947)* (Lahore, 1947) and S. M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1970). K. M. Panikkar believed that the nineteenth century was a 'period of extreme Muslim depression' when they witnessed the complete annihilation of their *Sharia* and their political power. 'The alliance of Hindu merchants with the Company which gave Bengal to the British, still continued as the Hindus had not yet come to be identified with seditionists. Placed on a footing of equality, Hinduism had already begun to show signs of a great revival. Islam had to find a new policy or perish.' K. M. Panikkar, *A Survey of Indian History* (Bombay, 1956) pp. 227-8.

In the post-1857 era, the British viewed the Muslims with suspicion and fear, believing that the former rulers of South Asia would never accept the loss of their political power and particularly the Muslim aristocracy which was then considered to be the most depraved segment in the society. 'The most bitter and widespread hostility was reserved for the Muslim community. Almost universally they were regarded as the fomenters of the revolt and its chief beneficiaries . . . In the British view, it was Muslim intrigue and Muslim leadership that converted a sepoy mutiny into a political conspiracy aimed at the extinction of the British Raj. The British were also convinced that the Muslim community, though fewer in numbers, was far more hostile throughout the course of uprising.' Thomas R. Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt. India, 1857-1870* (Princeton, 1964) p. 298.

2. See G. F. I. Graham, *The Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (Karachi, 1974); Muhammad Yusuf Abbasi, *Muslim Politics and Leadership in South Asia 1876-92* (Islamabad, 1981) and K. K. Aziz (ed.), *Ameer Ali: His Life and Work* (Lahore, 1968).
3. For a detailed study of the All-India Muslim League see A. B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and Today* (Lahore, 1948) and Lal Bahadur, *The Muslim League* (Agra, 1954).
4. On the early career of the Quaid-i-Azam see Riaz Ahmad, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: The Formative Years, 1892-1920* (Islamabad, 1986), and Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Los Angeles, 1984).
5. The original title of the report is *Report of the Inquiry Committee appointed by the Council of the All India Muslim League to inquire into Muslim Grievances in Congress Provinces* (Lucknow, 1938).
6. *Report of the Inquiry Committee appointed by the Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League to inquire into some grievances of Muslims in Bihar* (Patna, 1939).
7. *Muslim Sufferings Under Congress Rule* (Calcutta, 1939).

8. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad (ed.), *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, vol. I (Lahore, 1952) p. 96.
9. A. H. Dani, *A Short History of Pakistan* (Karachi, 1984).
10. To pursue the argument further see, I. H. Qureshi, *The Struggle For Pakistan* (Karachi, 1982) pp. 1–21.
11. I. H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent* (The Hague, 1962) p. 61. For a very convincing intellectual work see, Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Lahore, 1964) and *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (Lahore, 1967).
12. It was suggested first by Allama Iqbal at Allahabad Session of the Muslim League in his presidential address in 1930, and was further propounded by a number of young Muslim intellectuals both in the subcontinent and Britain. Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1948); C. Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never* (Cambridge, 1933) and *The Millat and Menace of 'Indianism'* (Cambridge, 1940); and Sarfaraz Hussain Mirza (ed.), *Tasawwur-i-Pakistan Say Qarardad-i-Pakistan Tak* (Lahore, 1983).
13. Norman G. Barrier, *The Punjab Alienation of Land Bill of 1900* (Durham, 1900); Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (Lahore, 1925); and P. M. H. van Dungen, *The Punjab Tradition* (Lahore, 1972).
14. For a recent work on the Unionist Party see, Iftikhar H. Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan: A Political Biography* (Islamabad, 1985) and 'The Punjab Politics and the Ascendancy of the Unionist Party: 1924–1936', *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, Islamabad (July–December, 1980) pp. 102–121.
15. This is a rather new but intriguing thesis. See Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (London, 1974).
16. *Harijan*, 6 April 1940; also D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma* (Delhi, 1962) pp. 269–70.
17. B. R. Ambedkar, *Thoughts on Pakistan* (Bombay, 1941) pp. 242–3.
18. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 12 April 1941.
19. See I. H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, pp. 138–315; also Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Towards Pakistan* (Lahore, 1964).
20. The Pakistan movement has not yet been thoroughly researched either inside or outside Pakistan – indeed it would not be an exaggeration to say that by and large it is still a semi-explored realm. The steady decline of the social sciences together with a stereotypic approach to the humanities has meant that studies of the movement have been deficient in quality and quantity. Soon after independence in South Asia, the pioneering interpretations of pre-1947 history started to appear, mostly responding to the socio-psychological needs of the inhabitants of the young countries. The intransigence of the Hindu-dominated Congress and the imperialist policies of the rulers were presented as the main forces in the evolution of what was then defined as 'Muslim Separation in India'. Dr Ishtiaq H. Qureshi's well-known explanation of the Muslim political consciousness in the post-1857 era became a focal point for an entire generation of Pakistani writers. *The Struggle for Pakistan* became the representative of this particular school of Pakistani historiography.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh movement, Muslim League policies and the eventual summarisation of the entire Muslim experience in South Asia until 1947 on the basis of the two-nation theory became an easily

comprehensible, yet somehow too simplistic interpretation of the freedom movement. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad took pains to enhance the scope of the movement, dating it from the time of Ibn-e-Qasim, while S. M. Ikram very efficiently depicted the contributions of a number of personalities in the emergence of Muslim political consciousness. Professor Ahmad Hasan Dani dwelt on the cultural historicity of 'Pakistan' relating it to the Indus valley civilisation, while Aziz Ahmad analysed the intellectual and cultural heritage of the Muslims through their thousand years of history in the subcontinent to prove that despite being a different nation, they had made valuable additions to the splendour and glory of India. Khalid B. Sayeed, Abdul Hamid, K. K. Aziz, Waheed-uz-Zaman and other historians of the 1960s and 1970s further elaborated the Pakistan movement in the light of the Hindu-Muslim conflict. Left-wing historians or writers on Pakistan – a very small minority indeed – never felt comfortable with the above explanation of the movement. According to them, economic factors, class-conflict, Congress politicking and the imperial designs of the ruling hierarchy were the major causes for the great divide.

Likewise, Indian historiography presented very simplistic generalisations on the leadership of the Pakistan movement, and the 'separation' or 'partition' or 'two-nation concept' appeared enigmatic to several Indian historians. The Congress was given almost total credit for independence to the extent that the contributions of the League were either completely denied or relegated to a very inferior status. Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Bose and Maulana Azad were portrayed as the only luminaries while the Quaid-i-Azam, Allama Iqbal and many other veteran Leaguers were looked down upon. Indian hostility towards Pakistan was reflected in the historical writings on the Pakistan movement. Recently, however, Indian historiography seems to be flourishing in a diversified way, with regional and ethnic studies and an implied recognition of the Muslim struggle in South Asia now receiving some attention. Many, however, still attribute post-1947 problems and political débâcles inside Pakistan to the League's demand for an independent state in the 1940s.

In western historiography, Gallagher, David Page, Anil Seal and their associates have been digging up 'alternative' explanations of pre-1947 South Asian politics to add to the existing interpretations of Smith, Hardy, Jones, Tinker and other British writers related to the School of Oriental and African Studies and the London School of Economics. In the United States, the traditional Indic studies of pre-partition days at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University and the University of California included individual courses on Sanskrit or Indian culture. In the 1960s more comprehensive research on contemporary South Asia resulted in well-coordinated programmes at Harvard, or the universities in Chicago, Michigan, Utah and Carolina. Norman Brown and Palmer, two pioneer historians from the 1930s, were joined by a new generation – Ainslee Embree, Howard Wriggins, Ralph Braibanti, Thomas Metcalf, Wayne Wilcox, Lawrence Ziring, Ted Wright, Louis Depree, Leonard Binder, Craig Baxter and many others. Due to its size, political stability and cultural complexity, India has generally received more interest, though the University of Chicago and the University of California at Berkeley showed

considerable interest in Urdu programmes too. A new generation of historians like Barbara Metcalf, David Lelyweld and Emily Brown, along with Pakistani political scientists and authors settled in the USA or Canada, have been involved on an individual basis in new sub-disciplines regarding South Asia.

21. K. K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan: A Study in Nationalism* (Islamabad, 1977) p. 85.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

CHAPTER 2

1. The non-cooperation movement was launched by the Congress in October 1940 with a popular slogan: 'It is wrong to help the British war efforts with men or money, the only worthy effort is to resist war with non-violent resistance.' See R. Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, part II (London, 1944) pp. 248–249. The Muslim League welcomed the August offer to the extent that the British government had formally committed itself to take the interests of the minorities into consideration in such constitutional arrangements. It was a rather official recognition of the multinational formation of the subcontinent, amounting to a rebuke for the unilateralism spearheaded by the Indian National Congress. However, the League had its own reservations on the August offer as it fell short of the Muslim demand for Pakistan.
2. *Harijan*, 15 June 1940. Earlier, at the Haripura session of the Congress, Nehru observed: 'I have examined the so-called communal question through the telescope and if there is nothing what can you see?' S. S. Peerzada (ed.), *Leaders Correspondence with Mr. Jinnah* (Bombay, 1944) p. 104.
3. Jinnah to Gandhi, 15 September 1944, quoted in H. Bolitho, *Jinnah* (London, 1954) p. 149.
4. T. A. Raman, *Report on India* (New York, 1943) p. 84. It might be relevant to mention here the later suspicions of Raman's thesis due to his close relationship with the British government.
5. According to the 1941 Census of India, 14 per cent of the population were literate.
6. The business communities of the Parsis and the Gujaratis grew in the post-First World War years with better trade opportunities opening up both in the Middle East and the Far East. The British government also gave fiscal autonomy to India and the portfolios of industries in the provinces were mostly looked after by the natives.
7. In 1935, India had a developed textile industry of 365 mills, mostly owned by Indians. The industrial establishment in India then employed 3½ million workers with the number reaching 5 million by 1942. Besides railways, textiles and tea, the mining and steel industries also developed during the twentieth century with the largest steel complex in the British Commonwealth operating at Jamshedpur – the famous Tata Works established by American experts but owned and managed by Indians.
8. Raman, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 74–124.

10. Churchill, as a young subaltern, had ventured into the tribal areas of Malakand and Mohmand agencies in the NWFP in 1896. He was involved in an incident while in India, hurting his shoulder, which became 'a grave embarrassment in moments of peril, violence, and efforts,' causing a life-time agony. He fought in India against the tribal Pushtuns 'destroyed the houses, filled up the wells, blew down the towers, cut down the shady trees, burned the crops and broke down the reservoir in punitive devastation' yet was full of praise for swarthy Pathans. He liked their valour and fighting skills in a Kiplingesque way, and in fact Kipling's works had left a strong impression about India on Churchill who said of him, 'India brought us together.' Churchill was an imperialist who believed totally in 'manifest destiny' and 'the white man's burden'. For details see Winston S. Churchill, *My Early Life* (London, 1930) pp. 107-54. Also, Lord Moran, *Winston Churchill, The Struggle for Survival* (London, 1966).
11. C. H. Philips and Mary D. Wainwright (eds), *The Partition of India, Policies and Perspectives: 1935-1947* (London, 1970) p. 18.
12. According to Nanda, even the Lahore Resolution was an officially sponsored move. B. R. Nanda, 'Nehru, The Indian National Congress and the partition of India, 1945-1947', in *ibid.*, p. 168.
13. Humayun Kabir, 'Muslim politics, 1942-7', in *ibid.*, p. 391; also, D. A. Low, Review of J. Glendovan, *The Viceroy at Bay*, *South Asian Review*, IV, no. 3, April 1973, p. 257.
14. Philips and Wainwright, 'Introduction,' in *op. cit.*, p. 11.
15. Z. H. Zaidi, 'Aspects of Muslim League policy, 1937-47,' in *ibid.*, p. 264. See J. B. Kriplani, 'League and the war effort', *National Herald*, 5 October 1941.
16. M. A. H. Isphani, 'Factors leading to the partition of British India', in *ibid.*, p. 348.
17. Raman, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
18. Lord Linlithgow (1887-1952) had extensive experience of service in the subcontinent in the 1920s and 1930s before being designated as the viceroy in 1936. He had been the chairman of the Royal Commission of Agriculture in India in 1926-8 and chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms during 1933-4. His tenure as viceroy from 1935 to 1943 was a very 'volatile' period in party politics in the subcontinent. He served British imperial interests very successfully by following a non-committed policy, leaving problems for his successor, Lord Wavell. For more on his relationship with Jinnah, see Waheed Ahmad (ed.), *Jinnah-Linlithgow Correspondence, 1939-43* (Lahore, 1978). For a favourable account of Linlithgow's political career, see John Glendovan, *Viceroy at Bay, Lord Linlithgow in India 1936-43* (London, 1971). Wavell summed up his predecessor's problems as follows: 'I think his trouble in India was that he is too wedded to efficiency to make allowance for Indian inefficiency, and never grasped that the Indian thinks and acts a great deal more with his heart than his head.' Penderel Moon (ed.), *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal* (Oxford, 1973) p. 118. For a comprehensive work on Linlithgow, see Syed Ali Gower Rizvi, *Linlithgow and India. A study of British Policy and the Political Impasse in India, 1936-43* (London, 1978) pp. 223-42.

19. For more on Franklin D. Roosevelt and his domestic policies see James McGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (New York, 1956) and *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (New York, 1970).
20. Margret W. Wilson to FDR, 8 January 1936, Box O.F. 48-11, (India), *Roosevelt Papers*, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York (hereafter Roosevelt Papers).
21. FDR to S. Early, 21 January 1936, *ibid.*
22. William Phillips to S. Early, 2 February 1936, *ibid.*
23. It happened in August 1938 and, a year later, in August 1939, Babu Rao Patel, president of the Film Journalists Association of India, requested an audience with FDR, but was refused so as to avoid publicity.
24. L. Natarajan, *American Shadow Over India* (Bombay, 1952) p. 12.
25. William E. Curtis, *Modern India* (New York, 1905) p. 464.
26. Claude H. Van Tyne, *India in Ferment* (New York, 1923).
27. Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*, 2 vols (New York, 1927 and 1930).
28. M. K. Gandhi, *The Truth About India* (Stockton, 1929). He actually called it a 'Drain Inspector's Report'.
29. Lajpat Rai, *Unhappy India* (Calcutta, 1928). Other titles like *Father India* and *Uncle Sam* by contemporary writers were intended to defend India.
30. For example, see J. T. Sunderland, *India in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom* (New York, 1928).
31. In a sociological survey done in 1928 on American 'receptivity' toward foreigners, the results showed Indians to be highly undesirable. About forty nationalities had been mentioned on the list and questions varied from acceptance of such foreigners in matrimonial relationship, neighbourhood, as personal friends or as US citizens. Only 1.1 per cent would allow marriages with 'Hindus' whereas 19.1 per cent respondents would exclude Indians 'from my country,' and 13 per cent would let them live in the neighbourhood. For details see, Emory S. Bogardus, 'The measurement of social distance', *Readings in Social Psychology* (New York, 1947).
32. 'India seems to occupy the most inferior status in the eyes of the United States. This is apparently due, at any rate in part, to unfavourable opinion of Indians prevalent in some influential quarters of the United States.' K. Rao, 'Indians overseas', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, May 1944, as quoted in M. Abul Khair, *United States Foreign Policy in the subcontinent (1939-1947)*, vol. 1 (Dacca, 1968) p. 17.
33. They looked after eighteen orphanages, ninety-three hospitals and managed more than 200 dispensaries across the subcontinent. For more data see J. I. Parker (ed.), *Interpretative Statistical Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church* (Chicago, 1938).
34. A. Guy Hope, *America and Swaraj: The U.S. Role in Indian Independence* (Washington, 1968) p. 14.
35. For related information see, *Foreign Relations of the United States (State Department Papers)*, 1941, vol. III, pp. 201-207.
36. A. Guy Hope, *op. cit.*, p. 15. Similar initiatives were suggested from various forums by sister organisations like the Methodists in the UK who tried their maximum both in the USA and the subcontinent, through their powerful fraternal links, to create a strong pro-Allies fervour in these areas. See *ibid.*

37. Ibid., pp. 16–17. Such opinion groups, reflecting predominantly missionary attitudes toward constitutional deadlock in the subcontinent, put pressure on the White House and State Department to use the personal offices of FDR to convince Churchill to take a lenient stand *vis-à-vis* the Indians. Even the names of Joseph Stalin and Chiang Kai-Shek were recommended to help resolve the deadlock between the British and the South Asian nationalists. Generally, such groups were cautious about taking up sides with either of the parties. On one hand they favoured the British civilising role 'in the modernization of the Sub-continent' while, on the other hand, they seemed to be sympathising with the nationalists. However, a few American missionaries strongly advocated the continuation of the Raj, even at the expense of gaoling or executing leaders like Gandhi and Nehru on charges of sedition. For details see *ibid.*, p. 16.
38. *State Department Papers* quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 23–4.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 24–7.
40. Patrick Lloyd, a correspondent from California, wrote to Hull that an American initiative to make the British more receptive toward the South Asians should be undertaken despite racist objections in the USA itself. Treatment of the Afro-Americans and criticism from the outside world must not deter America from upholding the rights of the subjugated people. He observed: 'It will be difficult for you to serve with the full confidence of the British, when they look at the way we in America treat our negro brothers, but perhaps it will quicken our consciences to do more in that direction.' Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 30.
41. According to Tagore, the South Asian struggle for independence was similar to those of native Americans (Red Indians) and Afro-Americans for equal rights. Rai dwelt on race-related themes in the American context in his *Unhappy India*. Nehru, in his strong anti-imperialist style, sent a telegram in 1942 to Max Yergan who headed a New York-based Committee on African Affairs, observing:
'ALL GOOD WISHES FOR SUCCESS AGAINST FASCISM IMPERIALISM AND ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUE FREEDOM EVERYWHERE RECOGNITION EQUAL RIGHTS TO ALL RACES AND PEOPLES'. Gandhi was more direct in his appeal to President Roosevelt when he equated British exploitation of Afro-Asian colonies with the American treatment of Afro-Americans. For his message see, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1942, vol. I, pp. 677–8.
42. They sent a telegram to FDR on 10 August 1942, protesting against the arrests and repression in British India and demanded the release of the political prisoners, independence of the subcontinent and membership of the UN at par with other nations. It was claimed to have been signed by 175 members.
43. White had recommended the following eminent blacks for consideration:
 - i) Ralph Bunche of Howard University
 - ii) W. E. B. Du Bois, the writer
 - iii) Elmer A. Carter, editor of *Opportunity*
 - iv) Carl Murphy of the Afro-American Newspaper Company
 - v) A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping-Car Porters and
 - vi) Roy Wilkins of the NAACP.

44. For details see Hope, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–3. Murray had felt that the inclusion of a black in the commission could lead to more difficulties even in the USA itself.
45. Certain influential newspapers and periodicals like the *New York Daily Press*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *The Nation*, *New Republic*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Christian Science Monitor* and *Asia* gave favourable coverage to the cause of the South Asian nationalists. South Asian leaders like Nehru were trying to reach the American public as early as 1940 to remind them of the historic responsibilities that lay before America as ‘the burden of the future’. *Atlantic Monthly* (April 1940) quoted in B. Prasad, *The Origins of Indian Foreign Policy* (Calcutta, 1960) pp. 176–7. For a study of the American media portrayal of political developments in the subcontinent until the mid-1930s see Harnam Singh, *The Indian National Movement and American Opinion* (Delhi, 1962).
46. According to J. J. Singh, there were about 4,000 South Asians in the USA in 1946, 95 per cent of whom were uneducated. 3,000 of them lived on the west coast as farmers, whereas 500 lived in the New York area with 300 in Detroit and the remaining 200 scattered all over. J. J. Singh, *India and America* a pamphlet published by India League of America (New York, 1947) p. 11.
47. Haridas T. Muzumdar, *America’s Contributions to India’s Freedom* (Allahabad, 1962) p. 13.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
49. For details see D. S. Saund, *Congressman From India* (New York, 1960).
50. On British efforts to manipulate world opinion in the Allies’ interest during the Second World War see William Stevenson, *A Man Called Interpid. The Secret War, 1939–45* (London, 1978).

CHAPTER 3

1. John K. Fairbank, *The United States and China*, 3rd ed., (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) pp. 248–9 and 306–309. Also Paul Varg, *The Making of a Myth. The United States and China*, (East Lansing, 1968) p. 14; and Iftikhar H. Malik, ‘The Emergence of American Imperialism and China Policy: 1898–1913’, *Strategic Studies*, Summer 1983.
2. For a related study see Joan Hoff Wilson, *American Business and Foreign Policy, 1920–1933* (Boston, 1973); and Akira Iriye, *After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921–1931* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965).
3. For an intimate study see Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York, 1973).
4. Bingham to FDR, 5 January 1937, Bingham Folder, *Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York.
5. Joseph Kennedy to FDR, 30 September 1939, Kennedy File, *ibid.*
6. Roosevelt to Mrs. Roosevelt, 21 August 1941, *ibid.*
7. Pearl Buck to FDR, 10 January 1941; and FDR to Pearl Buck, 31 January 1941, *ibid.* Thomas Whittemore, president of the Byzantine Institute of Boston, wanted to see FDR before the Atlantic summit to convey a message from Gandhi. According to Gandhi, FDR was petitioned to

- prevail upon the British prime minister to make a pledge granting Indian freedom after the war. Gandhi had proposed that the American president make America's participation in the war conditional so as to obtain such a final commitment from Churchill. When Whittemore insisted on seeing FDR, the latter responded through Sumner Welles: 'I am too busy at this time.' FDR to Welles, 17 July 1941, *ibid.*
8. For an exhaustive study of this early period see Earl R. Schmidt, 'American Relations with South Asia 1900-1940', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Pennsylvania, 1955; and Diwakar P. Singh, *American Attitudes Towards the Indian Nationalist Movement* (New Delhi, 1974).
 9. Quoted in M. S. Venkataramani and B. K. Shrivastava, *Quit India. The American Response to the 1942 Struggle* (New Delhi, 1979) pp. 12-13. The same source mentions the State Department's traditional lack of interest in the subcontinent, citing the example of its 'silence' on V. D. Savarkar's letter to FDR, which was not acknowledged and, when probed by Ramlal B. Bajpai, Murray commented: 'Since no American interests appear to be involved in the subject of your discussion. I am sure you will appreciate that it would be inappropriate for the Department to comment thereon.' *Ibid.*
 10. Groth to the Secretary of State, 28 September 1938, *FRUS, 1938*, vol. I, p. 78.
 11. White to the Secretary of State, 29 September 1938, *ibid.*, p. 79.
 12. For details see Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, 2 vols (New York, 1948). He died in 1955.
 13. Venkataramani, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
 14. Fred L. Israel, *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long* (Lincoln, 1963) p. 214.
 15. Hope, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
 16. *FRUS, 1941*, vol. I, p. 705, fn.
 17. *Ibid.*, pp. 746-48. Hull was very conscious of criticism levelled against him for not openly supporting the cause of India's freedom or making the British agree to issue a statement granting Dominion status to the subcontinent. Hull tried to defend himself in his *Memoirs* by suggesting that his cautious policy stemmed from a dilemma: he could neither afford British hostility nor could he push the nationalists aside. Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 1452-83.
 18. Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (New York, 1944) pp. 301-302.
 19. *FRUS, 1941*, vol. III, pp. 176-7.
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 176, fn.
 21. Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, p. 460.
 22. *Ibid.*, pp. 511 and 520.
 23. Before FDR left on the *Indianapolis* for a visit to South America in 1936, she wrote to him: 'Do let me know if you've decided anything about Harry Hopkins, Ed Flynn, or Eddie Roddan. The people in certain positions seem to me very important these next few years.' Eleanor Roosevelt to FDR from Kansas City, 14 November 1936, See *ibid.*, pp. 601-603, 606-13, 657, 658. In 1936, FDR had given the impression to his wife that Hopkins might be his nominee for the presidential election in 1940. In 1938, FDR appointed Hopkins as his Secretary of Commerce, while Mrs. Roosevelt kept inviting the Hopkins frequently, particularly after the

- death of Mrs. Hopkins in 1937. Harry Hopkins recorded Mrs. Roosevelt's fondness for his daughter, Diana, in the following words: 'Just before Christmas in 1938, Mrs. Roosevelt came out to our house in Georgetown to see me. At that time I was feeling none too well. I had seen a great deal of Mrs. Roosevelt during the previous six months and the day she came she told me she thought I seemed to be disturbed and wondered if it was a feeling that something might happen to me and that there was no proper provision for you. She told me that she had been thinking about it a good deal and wanted me to know that she would like for me to provide in my will that she, Mrs. Roosevelt, be made your guardian.' *Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York, also quoted in Lash, op. cit., p. 658. Eventually, Mrs. Roosevelt took custody of Diana until Harry Hopkins married Louise May in July 1942.
25. Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York, 1950) p. 173.
 26. Eleanor Roosevelt felt strongly about some shortcomings of Harry Hopkins who 'frequently agreed with the president regardless of his own opinions, or tried to persuade him in indirect ways'. Quoted in Lash, pp. 659-60.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 661.
 28. Eleanor Roosevelt proved to be a very dynamic stateswoman with articulate opinions on contemporary issues and deeply involved in a number of internal and external issues. For her own ideas regarding the subcontinent see Eleanor Roosevelt, *India and the Awakening East* (New York, 1953).
 29. E. Sherwood, op. cit., p. 4.
 30. *Time*, 22 January 1945.
 31. Heinrich Benz and Schilling had been arrested by the British authorities in the subcontinent on suspicion and the State Department took up the issue with the British Foreign Office, India Office and the Government of India, which released them under American pressure. For details see *FRUS*, 1940, vol. III, p. 155.
 32. Lindsay to Moffat, 3 May 1938, *FRUS*, 1939, vol. II, pp. 349-50.
 33. Hull to Lindsay, 12 May 1938, *ibid.*, pp. 350-51.
 34. Mallet to acting Secretary of State, 30 December 1938, *ibid.*, p. 351.
 35. For the accompanying letter and the text of the draft see R. Walton Moore to Lothian, 10 October 1939, *ibid.*, pp. 352-64.
 36. R. Walton Moore to Lothian, 10 April 1940, *FRUS*, 1941, vol. III, pp. 189-91.
 37. For further details see Firoz Khan Noon, *From Memory* (London, 1966); Iftikhar H. Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan: A Political Biography*, pp. 21, 27, 30, 32, 43.
 38. Murray to Acheson (Assistant Secretary of State), 3 April 1941, *FRUS*, 1941, vol. III, pp. 191-4.
 39. Memorandum of conversation by the chief of the Division of Trade Agreements (Hawkins) with Sir Firoz Khan Noon, 4 April 1941, *ibid.*, p. 195.
 40. Acting Secretary of State (Welles) to the British ambassador (Halifax), 25 June 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 196-8.
 41. Memorandum of conversation by W. C. Parker of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 30 June 1941, *ibid.*, p. 199. Paul Alling was then the assistant chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, whereas Turkel

represented the Division of Commercial Policy and Agreements.

42. Noon to Murray, 1 July 1941, *ibid.*, p. 200.
43. Acheson to Campbell, 3 October 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 200–201.
44. No.711.452/49 of 15 December 1942, *ibid.*, p. 201.
45. Secretary of State to Consul-General (Wilson) at Calcutta, 24 March 1941, in *ibid.*, pp. 201–202.
46. A. A. Berle Jr. (for the Secretary of State) to Wilson, 5 May 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 202–204.
47. Consul-General to the Secretary of State, 2 July 1941, *ibid.*, p. 206; also see Brady to the Secretary of State, 14 May 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 204–206.
48. Pringle to Wilson, 25 June 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 205–206; and Brady to the Secretary of State, 15 July 1941, *ibid.*, p. 206.
49. The US Commissioner in India to the Secretary of State, 28 November 1941, *ibid.*, p. 207. Wilson, in his dispatch (No. 17), explained the delay in his reply to the Department's directive due to his change of status as well as residence from Calcutta to New Delhi.
50. Hull to Wilson, 16 September 1941, *ibid.*, p. 210.
51. Memorandum of conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State, 16 September 1941, *ibid.*, p. 209.
52. Memorandum by the chief of the Division of European Affairs to the Secretary of State, 28 October 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 210–11.
53. Hull to Wilson, 28 October 1941, *ibid.*, p. 211.
54. Hull to Winant, 29 October 1941, *ibid.*, p. 212.
55. Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State, 29 October 1941, *ibid.*, p. 212.
56. Halifax to Hull, 30 October 1941, *ibid.*, p. 213; also Hull to Halifax, 1 November 1941, *ibid.*, p. 213.
57. The British embassy to the Department of State (No.701.4111/1235), 17 April 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, vol. III, p. 170.
58. Hull to Halifax, 28 May 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 170–71.
59. Halifax to Welles, 28 June 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 171–72.
60. Welles to Halifax, 2 July 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 172–3.
61. Halifax to Welles, 15 July 1941, *ibid.*, p. 174.
62. Press release issued by the Department of State (124.45/14), 21 July 1941, *ibid.*, p. 174.
63. Hull to Winant, 16 September 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 174–5.
64. Hull to Winant, 30 September 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 175–6.
65. Linlithgow to FDR, 8 October 1941, *Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York.
66. 'In "Far Away" India' (editorial), *The New York Times*, 24 November 1941.
67. FDR to Linlithgow, 2 January 1942, *Roosevelt Papers*.
68. Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State (Berle) to the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State, 5 May 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, vol. III, p. 176.
69. Alling's note, 8 May 1941, *ibid.*
70. Memorandum by the Secretary of State of a conversation with the British ambassador, 7 May 1947, *ibid.*, p. 178.
71. Berle to FDR, 21 June 1941; and FDR to Berle, 26 June 1941, *Roosevelt Papers*.

72. Winant to Hull, 1 August 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, vol. III, pp. 178–9.
73. Memorandum by Berle to Welles, *ibid.*, pp. 179–80.
74. Draft of a telegram to the ambassador in the United Kingdom, 5 August 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 180–81.
75. Winston Churchill, *The Grand Alliance* (Boston, 1950) p. 427.
76. Churchill to Roosevelt, 25 July 1941, in *ibid.*, p. 427.
77. David Dilks (ed.), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan 1938–1945*, as quoted in Venkataramani, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
78. Elliott Roosevelt, *As He Saw It* (New York, 1946) p. 25.
79. *Ibid.*, for details, see pp. 35–7.
80. For the complete text of Churchill's speech, see Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai (eds), *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921–1947* (Bombay, 1957) pp. 517–8. Also, see *FRUS, 1941*, vol. I, p. 367.
81. Hull to Winant, 1 November 1941, *FRUS, 1941*, vol. II, p. 181.
82. The opening sentences in Ambassador Winant's telegram acknowledged the high expectations attached everywhere to the announcement of the Atlantic Charter. For details see Winant to Hull, *ibid.*, pp. 181–4.
83. Murray noted candidly: 'In view of the expressed views of the President regarding the policy of this Government in assisting Britain to defeat Hitler, it is believed that the President may wish to consider what steps in India may be taken to check the uncooperative movement in India in order that India may make a greater contribution to the presentation of the war.' Memorandum by Murray, 7 November 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 184–6. Murray attached a letter for the consideration of the president reviewing the Indian political situation and reiterating the need for an official British policy statement.
84. Memorandum by Welles to Hull, 15 November 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 186–7.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
86. The Secretary of State to the Commissioner in India, 25 November 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 187–8.
87. The Commissioner in India to the Secretary of State, 28 November 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 188–9.

CHAPTER 4

1. Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins. An Intimate History*, pp. 442–78.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 444.
3. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 455.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 458.
5. Memorandum by Assistant Secretary (Berle) to the Secretary of State (Hull), 20 December 1941, *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, pp. 593–7.
6. Memorandum of conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State, 28 January 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 597–9.
7. Memorandum by Berle to President Roosevelt, 29 January 1942, *ibid.*, p. 599.
8. Memorandum by FDR to Berle, 2 February 1942.
9. Memorandum by Leonard Parker of Near Eastern Division, 3 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 599–601.

10. Memorandum by the chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (Wallace Murray) to the Under Secretary of State (Welles), 5 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 601–602.
11. Secretary Hull talked about India with Lord Halifax only once, on 7 May 1941. For details see *FRUS, 1941*, vol. III, p. 178.
12. The reference was probably meant for Attlee and his Labour colleagues in the War Cabinet.
13. Berle to Welles, 17 February 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, pp. 602–604.
14. Welles to Winant, *ibid.*, p. 604.
15. *The Times*, 23 February 1942.
16. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 24 February 1942.
17. Soong to President Roosevelt, 25 February 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, pp. 604–606. The original letter is in the *Roosevelt Papers* at Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
18. *The Times*, 14 February 1942.
19. Thomas Wilson telegraphed from New Delhi on Chiang's visit mostly speculating on his meetings with the leaders. On 25 February, he reported: 'Nothing of value has yet been disclosed of Chiang's intimate talks with the prominent leaders.' No.51–740.0011 European War 19723, 25 February 1942.
20. See, *New York Herald Tribune*, 22 February 1942; and *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 February 1942.
21. Harriman and Matthews (Chargé in the UK) to Secretary of State, 26 February 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, p. 608.
22. Memorandum of conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State, 28 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 609–10. (It is amusing to note how Sir Bajpai felt that the US Senate's interest in the subcontinent was 'an outside opinion'.)
23. Memorandum of conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State, 4 March 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 610–11.
24. 845.24/25, press release issued by the Department of State 6 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 613.
25. 845.24/36, press release issued by the Department of State 9 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 613.
26. Churchill to FDR, 4 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 612.
27. See Winston S. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate* (Boston, 1950) pp. 209–11.
28. FDR, in his Washington Day Memorial Address on 23 February 1942, had reiterated US support for liberty and justice around the world. Elaborating on the Atlantic Charter, the president observed that it was not confined to trans-Atlantic regions, rather it stood for global disarmament, peoples' right of self-determination and the freedom of speech, religion as well as freedom from want and fear. The speech came as a general statement of American war objectives and was not essentially meant as a provocation for the British. In some American quarters it was seen as a presidential lead for Churchill on the Indian issue. See *The Nation*, 28 February 1942.
29. President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill, 10 March 1942, in *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, pp. 615–16; also in the *Roosevelt Papers* at Hyde Park New York; and L/PO/6/106/6:66 105–68 in Nicholas Mansergh (ed.), *The Transfer of Power*, vol. I (London, 1970) pp. 409–10. (Hereafter referred to as *The Transfer of Power*, I).

30. Francis Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers. The War and Post War Memoirs of Rt. Hon. Earl Attlee* (London, 1962) p. 201.
31. For the complete text of Churchill's address, see Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai (eds), *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution 1921-47*, vol. II; Amery to Linlithgow, 11 March 1942, L/PO/6/1066.6652-5 *The Transfer of Power*, vol. I, pp. 406-407 also pp. 519-20.
32. Welles to Wilson, 11 March 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, p. 618.
33. Roosevelt to Linlithgow, 14 March 1942, MSS.FUR. F.125/130, *The Transfer of Power*, vol. I, p. 445.

CHAPTER 5

1. For complete text, see Cmd.6219, 'Statement Issued with the Authority of His Majesty's Government by the Governor-General on August 8, 1940', *The Transfer of Power*, I, Appendix I, pp. 877-9.
2. 'Resolution passed by the Muslim League Working Committee at Nagpur, 27 December 1941', L/PJ/7/1816: of 176, *ibid.*, pp. 884-6.
3. 'Resolution issued by the Congress Working Committee At Bardoli, 30 December 1941', L/PJ/7/1816: ff 174-5, *ibid.*, pp. 881-3.
4. B. Glancy to Linlithgow, 23 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 230-31.
5. Note by Lockhart, India Office, 25 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 238-9.
6. Firoz Khan Noon to Leopold Amery, via Linlithgow, 28 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 270-71.
7. Hassan Suhrawardy to Amery via Viceroy, 5 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 325.
8. Sapru to Laithwaite for Viceroy and the Prime Minister, 2 January 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 3-5.
9. Amery to Linlithgow, 19 February 1942, *ibid.*, p. 209, and Amery to Linlithgow, 13 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 417.
10. For arguments, counter-arguments, amendments and other controversies, see *ibid.*, pp. 271-400.
11. For details see Gwyer and Appadorai (eds), *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 521-4.
12. For the text of the Congress resolution see *ibid.*, pp. 524-6.
13. For the text of the League resolution see All-India Muslim League, *Resolutions of the All-India Muslim League from April, 1942 to May, 1943*, Delhi, n.d., pp. 1-7.
14. *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, 14 April 1942.
15. For the defence of the League's rejection of the Cripps offer, see, I. H. Qureshi, *op. cit.*, pp. 178-80 & 182-4.
16. Amery to Linlithgow, 5 January 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 7.
17. War Cabinet Paper W. P. (42) 59, 'The Indian Political Situation, Memorandum by the Lord Privy Seal (Attlee)', 2 February 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 110-13.
18. Linlithgow was hesitant to prosecute Nehru as such a step could prove 'disastrous' for the British image in America. Linlithgow to Hallet, 24 February 1942, *ibid.*, p. 237.
19. War Cabinet Committee on India, Paper I(42) 4, 27 February 1942, *ibid.*, p. 257.
20. Amery to Hardinge, 2 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 283.

21. Amery to Linlithgow, 2 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 295.
22. War Cabinet Committee on India, Paper I(42) 10, 4 March 1942, note by D. T. Monteath, *ibid.*, p. 318.
23. Amery to Linlithgow, 8 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 375.
24. Bajpai to Linlithgow, 12 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 415.
25. For instance, see Halifax to Eden, 20 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 448.
26. Welles (acting Secretary) to Wilson, 17 March 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, p. 619.
27. Wilson to the Secretary of State, 17 March 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 619–21. In a follow-up, Wilson mentioned the acceptance of the viceroy's invitation by Maulana Azad, Gandhi and Jinnah to meet Sir Stafford Cripps. Wilson to Secretary of State, 20 March 1942, *ibid.*, p. 621.
28. Halifax to Welles, 28 March 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 621–2.
29. Memorandum of conversation by Sumner Welles, 1 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 623.
30. See Merrell to the Secretary of State, 2 April 1942; Haselton to the Secretary of State, 3 April 1942; and Merrell to the Secretary of State, 3 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 624–6.
31. Bajpai to Linlithgow, 2 April 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 619.
32. Johnson to Welles, 4 April 1942, *FRUS*, pp. 626–7. The next day, Johnson transmitted General Wavell's direct appeal to FDR for the immediate delivery of war planes.
33. Welles to Johnson, 5 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 628.
34. For details, see Pinnell to Turnbull, 6 April 1940, *The Transfer of Power*, I, pp. 665–6.
35. Linlithgow to Amery, 7 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 691.
36. Johnson to Secretary of State, 7 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 628–9.
37. Quoted in Robert E. Sherwood. *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, p. 524.
38. Hopkins to Secretary of State, 9 April 1944, *FRUS, 1942*, pp. 629–30.
39. War Cabinet to Cripps, 9 April 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 707.
40. Louis Johnson to Secretary of State, 9 April 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, p. 630.
41. Kate L. Mitchell, *India Without Fable* (New York, 1942) p. 251.
42. *New York Times*, 8 April 1942.
43. Quoted in Sherwood, *op. cit.*, p. 530, also, Roosevelt to Hopkins, *The Transfer of Power*, I, pp. 759–60, and *FRUS, 1942*, pp. 633–4. There are minor variations in the text of FDR's letter as reproduced in Sherwood and *FRUS*.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 530–31.
45. This was the excuse Churchill used to express his inability to do anything regarding the Cripps mission. He also felt it physically impossible to convene a Cabinet meeting at short notice. For details, see Churchill to Roosevelt, 12 April 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, pp. 634–5.
46. Gowher Rizvi, *Linlithgow and India*, pp. 196–7 and 204–5.
47. 'The Indian Ocean is controlled by enemy; British shipping from India has been suspended; according to plan determined many days ago, British are retiring from Burma going north while fighting Chinese go south; Wavell is worn out and defeated; the hour has arrived when we should consider a replanning of our policy in this section of the world. Association with British

- here is bound to adversely affect morale of our own officers. Only the best should be sent and those who have failed elsewhere should not be dumped here as many have been in recent past.' Johnson to Secretary of State, 11 April 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 631.
48. Churchill to Roosevelt, 11 April 1942, *Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York; *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 632–3; and *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 739.
 49. Amery to Linlithgow, 11 April 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 756.
 50. For all the documents and resolutions related to the Cripps mission as well as a contemporary sympathetic biography, see Patricia Strauss, *Cripps, Advocate Extraordinary* (New York, 1942). Another primary source is the work by Professor Coupland, who was then engaged in research on Indian constitutional developments and was asked by Cripps to help him during the negotiations with the South Asian leaders. R. Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, 3 parts (London, 1942–43) and *India: A Restatement* (London, 1945).
 51. Kate L. Mitchell, *India Without Fable*, p. 295.
 52. Amery to Linlithgow, 24 April 1942; *The Transfer of Power*, I, p. 845; and H. Twynam to Linlithgow, 30 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 873.
 53. Amery to Linlithgow, 30 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 870–71.
 54. Johnson to Welles, 12 April 1942, *FRUS*, pp. 635–7.
 55. Welles to Johnson, 15 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 637.
 56. Welles to Johnson, 15 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 637.
 57. Johnson to Welles, 17 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 637–8.
 58. Johnson to Hull, 21 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 638–9.
 59. Madame Chiang Kai-shek to President Roosevelt, 23 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 639.
 60. Memorandum of conversation, by the Advisor on Political Affairs (Murray), 24 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 639–42.
 61. Johnson to Hull, 25 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 642.
 62. Hull to Johnson, 27 April 1942, *ibid.*, p. 645.
 63. Johnson to Hull, 28 April 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 645–6.
 64. Johnson to the President and Hull, 4 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 650.
 65. FDR to Johnson, 8 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 650.
 66. Johnson to FDR and Hull, 9 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 651.
 67. FDR to Johnson, 13 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 653.
 68. Merrell (the officer-in-charge at New Delhi) to Hull, 10 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 654.
 69. Memorandum of conversation by the chief of Near Eastern Division (Alling), 13 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 651–3.
 70. The consul at Bombay (Donovan) to the Secretary of State, 20 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 654–6; and, Donovan to Hull, 21 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 656–7.
 71. Memorandum of conversation, by Mr. Calvin H. Oakes of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 26 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 659.
 72. *Ibid.*, p. 661. The view is supported by a recent study. See R. J. Moore, 'The mystery of Cripps mission', *Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies*, vol. XI, no. 3, November 1973, pp. 195–213.
 73. *Ibid.*, p. 662.
 74. *New York Times*, 13, 14, 23 April 1942.
 75. *New Republic*, 13 April 1942, pp. 478–9.

76. *New York Times*, 11 April 1942. Rizvi does not believe in a 'conspiracy theory' of sabotaging the Cripps mission by Churchill, Amery and Linlithgow and challenges the views expressed by R. J. Moore. See R. J. Moore, 'The stopgap viceroy', *South Asian Review*, vol. VII, no. 1, October 1973, p. 57; and Churchill, *Cripps and India, 1939-1945* (Oxford, 1979) For Rizvi's viewpoint, see Gowher Rizvi, op. cit., pp. 225-36.

CHAPTER 6

1. Linlithgow to Roosevelt, 1 May 1942, MSS. EUR F.125/130, in N. Mansergh & E. W. R. Lumby (eds), *The Transfer of Power, 1942-7*, vol. II (London, 1971) p. 17. (Hereafter, *The Transfer of Power*, II).
2. For an American official version of Spry's arguments, see Memorandum of conversation, by the chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (Paul Alling), 13 May 1942, 845.01/189 in *FRUS, 1942*, vol. I, pp. 651-3.
3. Note by Mr. Spry L/10/6/105f: ff. 39-40, 5 May 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 89-90.
4. Linlithgow to Amery, 18 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
5. R. Lumley to Linlithgow, 25 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 117.
6. Johnson to the President and the Secretary of State, 4 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 648-65. Johnson's viewpoint on the Cripps mission was substantiated by Louis Fischer who visited India in August 1942. See *The Nation*, 16 September, 14 November 1942.
7. Hull to Johnson, 8 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 650-51.
8. Note by Mr. Pilditch, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, 26 May 1942, L/P&J/8/596: ff 138-43, Enclosure no. 2 to 90, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 130-31.
9. Merrell to Hull and Johnson, 21 May 1941, *FRUS, 1942*, pp. 663-9.
10. Merrell to Hull, 25 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 664-5. For the text of Nehru's letter, see *ibid.*, p. 665.
11. *Hindustan Times*, 27 May 1942.
12. Linlithgow to Amery, 27 May 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, p. 136.
13. Linlithgow to Amery, 28 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 144.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Amery to Eden, 28 May 1942, *ibid.*
16. Churchill to Hopkins, 28 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 145.
17. Amery to Churchill, 29 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 146.
18. Bajpai to Linlithgow, 29 May 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 145-6.
19. Churchill to Hopkins, 31 May 1942, *ibid.*, p. 156.
20. Hopkins to Churchill, 1 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 164.
21. Halifax to Linlithgow, 22 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 249.
22. Merrell to Hull, 4 June 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 667-9.
23. Hull to Merrell, 18 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 674.
24. Linlithgow to the Maharaja of Indore, Verbal Communication MSS-EUR.F.125/137, 3 June 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 174-5.
25. Donovan to Hull, 29 May 1942, *FRUS, 1942*, p. 666.
26. Memorandum of conversation, by the Under-Secretary of State (Sumner Welles), 1 June 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 666-7.

27. Hull to Donovan, 6 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 669.
28. Donovan to Hull, 8 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 669.
29. Jashwant Rao Holkar to Linlithgow, 28 June 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 285–6.
30. Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. II, p. 1482.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 1483.
32. Memorandum of conversation, by Hull, 3 June 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 667.
33. Memorandum of conversation, by Hull, 15 June 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 671–2.
34. Hull advised Merrell: 'It is imperative that the Department be kept as fully informed as possible regarding all factors affecting the internal security situation in India. A telegraphic report outlining the situation as perceived at present by you should be submitted. Your appraisal of the situation should be cabled at weekly intervals thereafter, with particular reference to such developments as may be occurring in connection with Gandhi's threatened mass civil disobedience. Any information of special significance should of course be reported immediately.' Hull to Merrell, 16 June 1942, *ibid.*, p. 673.
35. Linlithgow to Amery, 15 June 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, p. 214.
36. Jinnah's press statement issued from Bombay on 22 June 1942 was carried next day widely by the South Asian press. For official reportage see Linlithgow to Amery, 23 June 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 251–2.
37. For the complete text of Gandhi's letter, see Merrell to Hull, 21 June 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 674–6.
38. Gandhi to Roosevelt, 1 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 677–8. The original letter is at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
39. Roosevelt to Gandhi, 1 August 1942, *ibid.*, p. 703.
40. Cordell Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1490.
41. Merrell to Hull, 14 July 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 680.
42. *Harijan*, 12 July 1942.
43. Quoted in Merrell to Hull, 845.01/220, 16 July 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 682–3.
44. Merrell to Hull, 845.01/221, 16 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 683–5.
45. Merrell to Hull, 17 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 685–8; and Merrell to Hull, 18 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 688–9.
46. See Merrell to Hull, 21 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 680.
47. Merrell to Hull, 21 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 690–94.
48. Merrell to Hull, 22 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 694.
49. Merrell to Hull, 4 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 694–5.
50. Chiang Kai-shek to Roosevelt, 25 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 695–8; the original copy is at the Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
51. Memorandum of conversation by Sumner Welles, 28 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 698–9.
52. Sumner Welles observed: 'All of the information we have in the Department of State confirms the views expressed by Chiang Kai-shek that a desperately serious situation is going to break out in India after the meeting of the Indian National Congress on August 6. This is a question of vital concern to our own military and naval interest in the Far East. It would seem to me that the services of representatives of the American Government and the Chinese Government as friendly intermediaries be-

- tween the Indian National Congress and the British Government might serve in bringing about some satisfactory arrangement which would hold during the war period and could in any event in view of the critical nature of the situation now existing do no harm.' Welles to FDR, 29 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 700.
53. FDR to Churchill, 29 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 700.
 54. For Churchill's reply see Winston Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, pp. 507–508. Churchill, in a letter to Chiang on 26 August 1942, questioned the representative character of the Indian National Congress stating that there were 95 million Muslims, 45 million Untouchables and 90 million in the principalities 'none of whom are represented by the Congress, which is almost entirely a Hindu organization'. He categorically refused to 'accept the mediation of the President of the United States . . . on a matter affecting the sovereign rights of His Majesty the King Emperor'. Churchill to Chiang Kai-shek, 26 August 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, p. 830.
 55. FDR to Chiang Kai-shek, 8 August 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 700, and Roosevelt to Churchill, 9 August 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, p. 635. FDR, in his meeting with Campbell, showed him the draft reply prepared for Chiang by the State Department. In his discussion, the President spoke of India separately from the Far East and suggested the British and the Americans should make arrangements by which India would find its place in the Western orbit. 'The President said that after all, racially the mass of Indians were really the cousins of us Westerners (Aryans, Iranians).' Campbell to Cadogan, 5 August 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 576–7.
 56. Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1484.
 57. *Inqilab* (Lahore), 4 August 1942.
 58. Merrell to Hull, 5 August 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 702.
 59. Winant to Hull, 30 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 701.
 60. Attlee to FDR, 7 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 703–705. The president sent Attlee's message to Hull on 13 August, with a short memorandum stating: 'This came in five days ago from Attlee in the absence of his chief. Frankly, I think it is best not to reply to it. What is your view?' Answering FDR, Hull wrote on 15 August: 'You and other officials of this Government during past months earnestly laid before Prime Minister Churchill and other British officials the unequivocal attitude of yourself in favor of an adjustment on a basis that could and should be mutually agreed upon in the relations between the home Government of Great Britain and either officials or certain political leaders headed by Mr. Gandhi in India.' To Hull, as later mentioned in his autobiography, 'our attitude had not been one of partisanship toward either contender, and in these circumstances there was scarcely more to add in relation to the Attlee message.' Hull, *op. cit.*, pp. 1488–9.
 61. Merrell to Hull, 8 August 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 708.
 62. For more on the early developments under the Quit India Movement see Merrell to Hull, 9, 10 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 711–12.
 63. *Harijan*, 9 August 1942.
 64. Merrell to Hull, 11 August 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 712–14.
 65. Press release issued by the Department of State, *ibid.*, pp. 720–21.
 66. Chiang Kai-shek to FDR, 11 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 714–15. It was

characterised by Amery as 'Generalissimo's mischievous and ignorant intervention' and Churchill was asked earnestly by the Secretary of State for India to 'dissuade President in strongest terms from paying any attention' to it. Furthermore, he asked the prime minister to tell the president that the Congress claims to help the Allies were 'insincere eyewash', rather Gandhi had been talking in terms of welcoming the Japanese. See Amery to Churchill, 12 August 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, p. 674. Churchill himself felt very strongly about Chiang's letter and in a letter from Moscow, observed: 'I take it amiss Chiang should seek to make difficulties between us and should interfere in matters about which he has proved himself most ill-informed which affect our sovereign rights. Decision to intern Gandhi was taken by Executive [Council] of twelve, at which only one European was present.' Churchill to FDR, 13 August 1942, *ibid.*, p. 687. As the text of the letter suggests, Churchill reproduced Amery's terms and sentences in his own message.

67. FDR to Chiang Kai-shek, 12 August 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 715-17.
68. Memorandum of conversation, by the Under-Secretary of State, 12 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 717-18.
69. See Memorandum of conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State (Berle meeting with Bajpai), 22 August 1942; memorandum of conversation, by the Under-Secretary of State (with Halifax), 15 August 1942, memorandum of the conversation by the chief of the Near Eastern Division (with Bajpai), 4 September 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 725-9.
70. War Cabinet Paper W. P. (42) 318, 27 July 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 471-3.
71. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, 13 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 690-92.
72. Linlithgow to Amery, 28 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 475.
73. Linlithgow to Amery, 30 July 1942, *ibid.*, p. 500.
74. Amery to Linlithgow, 3 August 1942, *ibid.*, p. 652.
75. Eden to Amery, 14 August 1942, *ibid.*, p. 701.
76. Linlithgow to Churchill, 31 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 853-4.
77. Halifax to Amery, 30 August 1942, *ibid.*, p. 849; and Amery to Churchill, 1 September 1942, *ibid.*, p. 867.
78. Amery to Linlithgow, 1 September 1942, *ibid.*, p. 877. Four days later, Churchill himself reassured Linlithgow: 'We can of course deprecate at Washington in such a manner as probably to prevent the visits to India of Mr. Wendell Willkie and Mr. Sherwood Eddy. On the other hand, it is for consideration whether you could not captivate them and convert them if that is necessary. I had a great success with Wendell Willkie, with whom I took the greatest trouble. He is a good dining companion and very ready to see things through our eyes. He has been a good friend to this country and to the Alliance.

'I do not know Sherwood Eddy, but he is reported as friendly. I always make a point of seeing these prominent Americans and making sure that they get a good show, and the results have always been most satisfactory. Pray let me know how you feel about this.

'On no account however should any foreign visitors be given access to any of the internees.' Churchill to Linlithgow, 5 September 1942, *ibid.*,

- pp. 909–10. Linlithgow, in his reply to the prime minister, described Americans as ‘a difficult group to manage. Johnson lost his balance during Cripps’s visit and did a lot of damage. Luchlin Currie declined my hospitality on two occasions . . . he was closeted in prolonged conference with the most insidious of our Congress newspaper men and I am informed that this journalist provided a long memorandum which Currie carried off for the President.’ He found most of these Americans sympathetic to Congress which looked ‘to the possibility of intervention by the United States as a means of escaping from the impasse in which by their own folly and wickedness they have landed themselves’. Linlithgow to Churchill, 10 September 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 933–4.
79. Halifax to Eden, 16 September 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 969–70.
80. Wendell Willkie, *One World* (London, 1943) p. 131.
81. *The New York Times*, 27 October 1942.
82. *Ibid.*, 28 October 1942; also *Christian Science Monitor*, 27 October 1942.
83. *The New York Post*, 28 October 1942; also see Walter Lippman, ‘Mr. Willkie on Asia’, *New York World Tribune*, 31 October 1942.
84. For a detailed study, see Venkataramani and Shrivastava, *Quit India: The American Response to the 1942 Struggle*.
85. Resolution of the Muslim League Working Committee, 20 August 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 771–4.

CHAPTER 7

1. Memorandum of conversation by the chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (Paul Alling), 4 September 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 729.
2. Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State, 12 September 1942; and memorandum of conversation, by the Under-secretary of State (Sumner Welles), 24 September 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 733–5.
3. ‘Sir Girja struck me as a very unhappy man.’ Memorandum of conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State (Adolf Berle Jr.), 2 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 735–6. K. C. Mahindra of the India Supply Mission, a frequent visitor to the Department, pursued the implementation of the Grady report. He was equally critical of the British Raj and feared that if not redressed they would lead to a more chaotic situation in India seriously affecting the war efforts. According to him, many South Asians were convinced that the British neither could nor would solve the Indian question, thus inviting a resolute American intervention. See memorandum of conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State, 8 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 737–8.
4. Sumner Welles promised to convey the message to the president for his attention and felt optimistic about his response. Memorandum of conversation, by the acting Secretary of State, 2 October 1942, *ibid.*, p. 736.
5. Bajpai further urged the US Government to fill the position of American diplomatic representative at New Delhi as the ‘suspicion was arising that perhaps the British did not want the post filled; that if such was the case he hoped we would immediately reply that we saw no reason for the continuance of an Indian agent-general in Washington, and in that case he would

- gladly relinquish his post.' Memorandum of conversation, by the advisor on Political Relations (Wallace Murray), 13 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 741–2.
6. Linlithgow to Halifax, 22 September 1942, Nicholas Mansergh and E. W. R. Lumby (eds), *The Transfer of Power*, vol. III (London, 1971) pp. 15–17.
 7. Eden to Amery, 23 September 1942, *ibid.*, p. 28.
 8. Amery to Linlithgow, 3 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 80–81.
 9. Amery agreed to Welles' view that a simple announcement of the appointment would be enough, yet made it clear that the US government must tell the press that the commissioner would not be playing any mediatory role. Amery to Linlithgow, 7 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 107–108; also Halifax to Eden, 13 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 127–8; Eden to Halifax, 19 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 138–9.
 10. Extract from Mr. Richard Law's report on his visit to India, *ibid.*, pp. 252–6.
 11. Hull to Winant, 3 November 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 796. Also see Cordell Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1491.
 12. Winant to Hull, 4 November 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, p. 745.
 13. William Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy* (Boston, 1952) p. 6.
 14. Lindsay Rogers, 'Diplomatic yesterdays', (book review of *Ventures in Diplomacy*), *The New York Times Book Reviews*, 13 October 1953.
 15. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 345.
 16. Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1491.
 17. Hull to Phillips c/o Winant, 20 November 1942, *FRUS*, 1942, pp. 746–8.
 18. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 345.
 19. Amery to Linlithgow, 24 November 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, III, pp. 306–307.
 20. FDR to Linlithgow, 3 December 1942, *ibid.*, p. 335.
 21. *The Times*, 12 December 1942.
 22. Halifax to Linlithgow, 11 December 1942, *The Transfer of Power*, III, p. 359.
 23. Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 345–6.
 24. Churchill to Phillips, 15 December 1942, reproduced in *ibid.*, p. 347.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 348.
 26. *Ibid.*
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 350.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 351. Phillips found Wavell unassuming and forthright. 'I took an immediate liking to him, but felt that he was depressed, and perhaps, tried. I could not help wondering whether he was in sympathy with the Viceroy's stern policy towards Gandhi and the imprisoned thousands of his followers.' *Ibid.*
 29. Linlithgow to FDR, 18 January 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, p. 517.
 30. Interestingly, such observations testify an early impression transferred by the British on to the American diplomat who was a novice to Indian complexities. For full text of the report, see Phillips to Hull, 19 December (29?), 1942, *FRUS*, 1943, vol. IV, pp. 178–80. Hull wrote back: 'We know you will do an excellent job in New Delhi, but we are fully aware that one must not expect the impossible, particularly when the problems are such as those in India today.' Hull to Phillips, 1 January 1943, *ibid.*, p. 180.
 31. Phillips to FDR, 22 January 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 180–83.

32. Phillips to Hull, 25 January 1943, *ibid.*, p. 184, and Phillips to Hull, 27 January 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 184–5.
33. Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 353–8.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 359.
35. For the relevant document shown to Phillips see, Amery to Linlithgow, 1 February 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, pp. 569–70.
36. Linlithgow further observed at the conclusion of his message: ‘I think this had cleared the air and without so far as I can judge any impairment of the cordial relations existing between us. It is obvious that it was not a moment too soon to disabuse Phillips of any misconceptions he may have had about his work here. I dare say there will be some attempt on his part to return to the charge later, but we shall be better placed to deal with it in the light of talk reported above.’ Linlithgow to Amery, 11 February 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 652–4.
37. Quoted in Phillips to Hull, 12 February 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 191–2. Phillips complained of British censorship and in the wake of Gandhi’s fast and the resultant restrictions on American news correspondents. Phillips to Hull, 13 February and 15 February, *ibid.*, pp. 192–3.
38. Phillips to Hull, 16 February 1943, *ibid.*, p. 194.
39. Hull to Phillips, 16 February 1943, *ibid.*, p. 194.
40. Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State, 16 February 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 194–5.
41. Hull to Phillips, 17 February 1943, *ibid.*, p. 195.
42. Phillips to Hull, 18 February 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 195–6.
43. Linlithgow to Amery, 12 February 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, pp. 687–90.
44. Linlithgow to Amery, 19 February 1943, *ibid.*, p. 690.
45. Phillips to Hull, 19 February 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 196–7. Phillips saw the situation getting worse daily unless the king personally announced the unconditional release of Gandhi. Many prominent South Asians including Rajgopalachari suggested to Phillips that Roosevelt should make personal efforts to end the confrontation, since in the case of Gandhi’s death they feared unprecedented chaos and destruction in the subcontinent.
46. Linlithgow to Amery, 19 February 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, pp. 691–2.
47. Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State, 20 February 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 199–200.
48. In a marginal note Amery observed: ‘It is the effect on Indian mind of the new U.S.A. diplomatic machine in India. No Indian knew or cared what Wilson did or said. Again, it is my view that we have been unwise to allow any strong ambassadorial flavor to be injected into U.S.A. representation in India in face of the constitutional position and international status of India.’ Amery to Linlithgow, 19 February 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, pp. 698–9.
49. Halifax to Foreign Office and Amery to Linlithgow, 21 February 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 709–10.
50. Phillips to FDR, 23 February 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 201–203; also Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 360–2.
51. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

52. Phillips to FDR, 3 March 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, pp. 205–207. Earlier, Halifax had presented Sumner Welles with a message from Churchill to make it clear to Hull ‘that the British Government would not in any circumstances alter the course it was pursuing about Gandhi. Therefore great embarrassment between the British and American Governments would be created by any American intervention . . . He asked Halifax to lay the whole matter before Harry Hopkins.’ Welles informed FDR of the matter, who replied ‘that the United States Government would say nothing further now, but that, in the event that Gandhi died, he would have some statement to make.’ Cordell Hull, *op. cit.*, p. 1403.
53. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 364.
54. ‘We have had Phillips here in Bombay during the last few days . . . The main point in his mind seemed to be that, however great the difficulties were, and however badly political parties have behaved, something more must be done. He viewed it, he told me, from the point of view of Anglo-American relations, the consolidation of which was his greatest concern. Even if any further step failed, its effect on America would be good.’ R. Lumley to Linlithgow, 12 March 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, p. 793.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 794.
56. ‘Like most of the leading Moslem families, that of my host was in “purdah”. The women lived apart, and while we were at tea I noticed heads moving behind latticed windows on the second floor. No doubt I was a source of amusement. But it was clear that purdah was gradually being discontinued because many wives appeared at the large dinners dressed in their graceful saris of gold and silver tissue. I asked one lady how many different saris were included in her wardrobe. She replied that she did not know the exact number but probably these were well over one hundred.’ Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 367.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 371.
58. Phillips to Hull, 2 April 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, p. 210. In a rejoinder the same day, he expressed his frustration at not being able to see Gandhi and Nehru, which hampered his mission. ‘It would strengthen my request if I were in a position to say that my Government hopes that my request for permission to visit Gandhi and Nehru will be granted. May I have your views.’ Phillips to Hull, 2 April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 211.
59. Memorandum by the Advisor on Political Relations (Murray) to the Under-Secretary of State (Welles), 6 April 1943; and memorandum by Welles to Hull, 6 April 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 212–13.
60. Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 373–4.
61. Phillips found him resolute on Pakistan and ended his report: ‘He cordially distrusts Gandhi, but admits that until Gandhi’s attitude is known little progress can be made.’ Phillips to FDR, 7 April 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, pp. 213–14.
62. Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 378–9.
63. Phillips to Hull, 11 April 1943; and Phillips to Hull, 14 April 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, pp. 214–15.
64. Hull to Phillips, 14 April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 215.

65. *The New York Times*, 20 February 1943.
66. *Ibid.*, 11 April 1943.
67. Quoted in Phillips to Hull, 16 April 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, p. 216.
68. Phillips to Hull, 19 April 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 216–17.
69. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 381.
70. Phillips feared a common sense of alienation and anger amongst the Indians, Burmese and Chinese that might eventually turn into an anti-western sentiment. Because of the war situation, it was further necessary that the USA do something to allay 'a growing dislike and distrust of the Occidental'. Phillips to FDR, 19 April 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 217–20, and Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 379–81.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 383. Linlithgow, after manoeuvring Phillips out of his insistence on seeing Gandhi, felt a deep sense of glee. In a rather relaxed manner he wrote to Amery from Dehra Dun commenting on the American envoy: 'I have had Phillips to stay with me in camp at Dehra Dun for three days. He left yesterday, and I understand probably leaves for America today. We had full general discussions, and I was I think able to make some impression on him. Now that I have seen him at such close quarters for this period I am left with the impression that a possible weakness in his make up is that his career has throughout been representational rather than administrative, and that he has the diplomat's very natural tendency to look for a compromise solution of any difficulty that may arise and to try to get across his instructions . . . Other impression I gained was that while personally charming and most friendly, I am a little doubtful whether he really gets down to the core of technical situation. But I think his visit to me here [has] been of real use, and may help to reduce risk of misconceptions.' Linlithgow to Amery, 26 April 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, III, p. 908.
72. 'There was an immediate rush for the doors to break the news; few remained to partake of my refreshments.' Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 383.
73. Phillips accused the British government of doing nothing to bring a reconciliation between the Hindus and Muslims, 'before Pakistan came into national consciousness through a Moslem referendum'. Phillips, like many others, could not foresee the historical and cultural diversities in a multinational subcontinent by just accepting India as one nation. *Ibid.*, pp. 384–5.
74. See *ibid.*, pp. 387–8; and Phillips to FDR, 14 May 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 219–22. Phillips' assessment of the situation received further impetus when the British refused to forward Gandhi's letter addressed to Jinnah. Jinnah in April session of the AIML, had said: 'Nobody would welcome it more than myself if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslims on the basis of Pakistan . . . If he has made up his mind what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me.' Gandhi's letter had been in response to Jinnah's statement yet by withholding it the Indian government made Merrell, Chargé at New Delhi, feel that it 'does not desire a solution of the deadlock'. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 26 May 1943, *ibid.*, p. 223.
75. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

76. Ibid., p. 390.
77. Churchill to Attlee and Amery, 23 May 1943, *The Transfer of Power*, II, pp. 1004–1005.
78. Phillips, op. cit., pp. 391–2.
79. Quoted in Merrell to Hull, 27 May 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, pp. 223–4.
80. Quoted in Phillips, op. cit., p. 393.
81. Ibid., pp. 393–5.
82. Hull, op. cit., p. 1496.
83. Phillips, to FDR, 30 September 1943, in Phillips, op. cit., p. 395.
84. Hull, op. cit., p. 1495. Hull feared that ‘pressure upon either side would probably result not in progress but only in exasperation and, with the British, in a possible disturbance of our unity of command and of cooperation both during and after the war.’ Ibid., p. 1491.

CHAPTER 8

1. Wavell to Churchill, 24 October 1944, Mansergh & Lumby (eds), *The Transfer of Power, 1942–7*, vol. V (London, 1974) p. 132.
2. Ibid., pp. 130–31.
3. For instance see, Archibald Wavell, *Allenby: A Study in Greatness* (London, 1940).
4. Penderel Moon (ed.), *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal*, p. 447. Wavell, then, wrote of Churchill: ‘A very curious chain of circumstances . . . forced on him my appointment as Viceroy as the only way of a difficult place [and] he was pleased to find it well-received and then horrified to find I had liberal views about India and was prepared to express them.’ Ibid., p. 23. Winant felt that Wavell’s appointment had taken place to appease American public opinion and quoted from the speech of the viceroy-designate at a reception hosted in his honour by The Pilgrims in London. William Phillips, then in London working with OSSAC held similar optimistic views about Wavell, yet noted that the new viceroy did not carry ‘an olive branch from Churchill’. Basing his information on a report by Lampton Berry, ‘the most competent political officer’ at New Delhi, Wallace Murray felt that the South Asians did not take Wavell’s appointment enthusiastically. Merrell had further elaborated on the theme by suggesting that South Asians were growing critical of FDR, and felt that Phillips had been unable to move either FDR or Churchill. Winant to Hull, 20 September 1943; William Phillips to FDR, 30 September 1943; memorandum by the Advisor on Political Relations (Wallace Murray), 4 October 1943; Merrell to Hull, 8 October 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, IV, pp. 227–31.

Before leaving on 19 October 1943, Linlithgow had confided with a close Indian journalist that ‘it was his firm conviction that British must continue [to] rule India for another 50 years. It would take at least that long, he said, for Indians to learn to govern themselves.’ Merrell to Hull, 18, 19 October 1943, *ibid.*, p. 231.

5. Moon, op. cit., p. 75. While the initial American assessment of the Indian response to Wavell was mixed, it was evident that the new viceroy would have to take an immediate decision about Gandhi, interned at the Aga

Khan House in Poona. Wavell's own statements fell short of South Asian expectations, yet it seemed that both the British and the INC were weary of stalemate. Gandhi's unconditional release on 6 May 1944, came about with an official statement issued at midnight observing: 'In view of the medical reports of Mr. Gandhi's health, Government has decided to release him unconditionally. This decision has been taken solely on medical grounds. The release takes place at 8 p.m. on May 6.' His release made it pertinent for officials at the US mission in New Delhi to seek the State Department's decision about FDR's letter in response to Gandhi's letter sent two years earlier. Merrell advised against delivering the letter, yet urged a new letter wishing Gandhi improved health and appreciating his desire to open talks with Jinnah for a Hindu-Muslim 'understanding'. Hull forwarded Merrell's letter to FDR for his instructions. Merrell to Hull, 19 February 1944; Merrell to Hull, 6, 19 May 1944; memorandum by Hull to President Roosevelt, 2 June 1944, *FRUS, 1944*, V, pp. 232-6.

6. Moon, op. cit., p. 63.
7. Merrell to Hull, 19 June 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, vol. IV, p. 224. However, Auchinlek, the new commander-in-chief of the British Indian Army and hitherto a victim of Churchill's wrath, felt warmly for William Phillips while acknowledging 'the lack of sympathy toward some of them [nationalists] in high quarters here and London'. Merrell to Hull, 2 July 1943, *ibid.*, p. 225.
8. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (New York, 1960) p. 125.
9. Sarvepalli Gopal, *Nehru*, vol. I, p. 19.
10. Wavell's memorandum of 15 July 1945, *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, vol. V (London, 1974) p. 1263.
11. Quoted in Gopal, op. cit., p. 304.
12. Wavell to R. G. Casey (Governor of Bengal), 1 January 1945, *The Transfer of Power*, V, p. 345.
13. *Ibid.* For Jinnah-Wavell relationship, see Sher Mohammad Garewal (ed.), *Jinnah-Wavell Correspondence (1943-47)* (Lahore, 1986) and Iftikhar H. Malik, 'Pioneering work', (Book Review), *Muslim Magazine*, 6 March 1987.
14. Minutes of the Indian Committee, 27 March 1945, *The Transfer of Power*, V, p. 765.
15. Wavell to Churchill, 24 October 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 131-2.
16. Moon, op. cit., p. 91.
17. Merrell to Hull, 26 August 1943, *FRUS, 1943*, IV, p. 297.
18. Memorandum by Murray to Cissel, 28 August 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 297-8.
19. Memorandum by Cissel to Murray, 1 September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 298.
20. Hull to Merrell, 3 September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 299.
21. Hull to Patton, 4 September 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 299-300.
22. Hull to Merrell, 9 October 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 304-305.
23. Churchill to FDR, 29 April 1944, *The Transfer of Power*, IV, p. 939.
24. Amery to Wavell, 12 June 1944, *ibid.*, p. 997. Churchill's request to FDR for American help in shipping wheat to India reached Washington on 29 April 1944. The next day, FDR, in his notation, advised Hull to prepare a draft 'after consultations with the Joint Chiefs of Staff'. Hull, after a meeting with the military heads, prepared the draft that was communicated to the

British government. Churchill to FDR, 29 April 1944; memorandum by Hull for FDR, 31 May 1944; and Campbell to Hull, 20 July 1944 in *FRUS*, 1944, V, pp. 271–4.

25. Halifax to the acting Secretary of State, 9 November 1943; Halifax to Morgenthau, 9 November 1943; Bajpai to the Secretary of State, 15 November 1943, and 15 December 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, IV, pp. 280–83.

The Indian government urgently needed silver from the USA to combat rising inflation in 1944. The correspondence exchanged between Washington, London and New Delhi coincided with US eagerness to formulate the Lend-Lease Program in an organised way through a direct agreement between the US Government and the Government of India. Besides, the US government was trying to persuade New Delhi to provide reciprocal facilities in food and other related equipment to the American troops stationed in the subcontinent. The Indian government was reluctant to do so by forwarding reasons based on high-cost-low-resources. See correspondence under 'Lend-Lease Aid to India and Reciprocal Aid: Consideration of Proposal. For Direct Lend-Lease Agreement Between the United States and India', *FRUS*, 1943, IV, pp. 246–79; and also, 'Agreement Between the United States and the Government of India, and Exchange of Notes Between the United States and the United Kingdom, Concerning the Lend-Lease of Silver', *FRUS*, 1944, V, pp. 248–68.

Finally, the agreement, entitled 'Special Lend-Lease Agreement Regarding Silver, concluded Between the United States and the Government of India', consisting of four articles was signed on 8 June 1944, stipulating lease of 100,000,000 ounces of silver to India for coinage on loan basis for five years. Bajpai signed on behalf of the Indian government and Lee Growley signed for the US government. For the text see the Administrator of the Foreign Economic Administration to the Under-Secretary of State (Edward R. Stettinius), 13 June 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 268–9. In a follow-up letter, Ronald Campbell assured the Department of State that if the Indian government could not pay back the British government would take over the responsibility. It was duly accepted by Stettinius on behalf of the US government. See Campbell to Secretary of State, 15 July 1944; and Stettinius to Campbell, 28 July 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 269–71.

26. Hull to Winant, 28 April 1943; Hull to Winant, 10 June 1943; Winant to Hull, 30 April 1943; Winant to Hull, 8 June 1943; and Winant to Hull, 30 July 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 289–292.
27. Winant to Hull, 27 August 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 292–3.
28. Memorandum of conversation, by Mr. Calvin H. Oakes, Assistant to Advisor on Political Relations (Murray), 9 September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 293.
29. Hull to Winant, 16 September 1943, *ibid.*, p. 294.
30. Murray to Phillips, 16 October 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 295–6.
31. Wavell to Amery, 11 July 1944, *The Transfer of Power*, IV (London, 1973) p. 1077; also, M. Hallett to Wavell, 20 July 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 1112–13.
32. 'As the war moves faster in Asia administration advisers are convinced that the ticklish problem of India which Roosevelt repeatedly has postponed must be tackled soon. Each time the President has discussed India with Winston Churchill he has received a blunt cold shoulder. Once, last year when United States Ambassador, William Phillips, after his return to

this country from India talked to the Prime Minister at F.D.R.'s request Churchill banged the table and said "I have always been right about Hitler and everyone else in Europe. I am also right about Indian policy, any change in Indian policy now will mean a blood bath." At about the time Phillips talked to Churchill he also submitted a report to President Roosevelt which would be the basis for any new United States proposals to Britain. In this report Ambassador Phillips, generally considered pro-British, made some critical statements about British policy. "It is time for the British to act" he wrote President Roosevelt, "this they can do by a solemn declaration from the King-Emperor that India will achieve her independence at a specific date after the war. I feel strongly Mr. President that in view of our military position in India we should have a voice in these matters. It is not right for the British to say this is none of your business when we alone presumably will have the major part to play in the struggle with Japan." *Washington Post*, 26 July 1944.

33. Halifax ended his telegram on the note: 'Mr. Hull then expressed extreme regret over the article and said he would at once read it and go into the matter. I propose to follow this up further.' Halifax to Eden, 26 July 1944, *The Transfer of Power*, IV, p. 1120. On 28 and 29 August 1944, Halifax sent more telegrams to Eden containing text of a new article by Pearson in which it was alleged that the British government had asked for the recall of William Phillips from General Eisenhower's staff and the recall of George Merrell from New Delhi. His Telegram No.L/P&S/12/4629: f 175 carried a State Department denial of any request from the British government for the recall of Phillips, whereas telegram R/30/1/4: f 1 contained the text of Senator Chandler's speech in the US Senate.

Hull had informed Phillips and Winant in London about Pearson's publication of Phillips' reports to FDR. Campbell and Halifax visited the Department to express their concern over the exposé and asked for an official American statement appreciating British policy. The American government was reluctant to do so, yet Hull advised Phillips not to approach the British any further on the Indian question as this could compromise his situation on the SHAEF further. In any case, after his views became known in India, the USA and the U.K., there was no possibility of his returning to New Delhi. For State Department archives see *FRUS*, 1944, V, pp. 239-47.

34. Wavell to Amery, 1 August 1944, *The Transfer of Power*, IV, p. 1141.
35. 'Apart from his allegation that we had asked for Phillips' recall and declared him *persona non grata*, he [Pearson] seems to have suggested that we wished to prevent Phillips reporting fully to the United States Government. We have of course never questioned nor interfered with Phillips right to report.' Eden to Halifax, 30 August 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 1231-2.
36. William Phillips, *Ventures in Diplomacy*, p. 389.
37. Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. II.
38. A Guy Hope, *America and Swaraj. The U.S. Role in Indian Independence*, pp. 82-3.
39. *Syracuse Post Standard*, 28 March 1966.
40. Quoted in Hope, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-4.
41. Memorandum of conversation by the chief of the Division of Near Eastern

- Affairs (Paul Alling), 10 April 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, p. 308.
42. Memorandum, 14 April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 309; also Bajpai to Berle, 24 April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 309. Bajpai, in his enclosed memorandum quoted from the text of the bill already approved by the Californian Senate that was originally meant for the Japanese, yet affected the Indians as well. Quoting from statistics, Bajpai felt that South Asian cultivators in California would become scapegoats for no crime whatsoever at a time when in India political opinion was already 'especially sensitive on the subject of the rights and privileges of Indian nationals resident overseas. The enactment of a law of the kind in question would come as a severe shock to all sections of the Indian public.' Memorandum, 24 April 1943, *ibid.*, p. 311.
 43. Hull to Warren, 28 April 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 312–13.
 44. Warren to Hull, 28 April 1943, *ibid.*
 45. Hull to Warren, 4 June 1943; Warren to Hull, 5 June 1943, Warren to Hull, 4 June 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 313–15.
 46. Hull to Warren, 19 June 1943; Hull to Warren, 7 July 1943; Warren to Hull, 8 July 1943; and Hull to Warren, 9 August 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 315–17.
 47. Hull to Bajpai, 9 August 1943, *ibid.*, pp. 317–18.
 48. Baxtert to Hopkins, 16 March 1942, *Hopkins Papers*, Book No. 5, Box No. 313, Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. The report consisting of eleven typed pages was dated 6 March 1942.
 49. 'How Strong Is Muslim Hostility to A Self-Governing India?', *Hopkins Papers*, Hyde Park, New York, pp. 1–2.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 51. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
 52. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
 53. 'The League position is clear in words at least, though many observers feel that Mr. Jinnah is using Pakistan as a bargaining point and will ultimately settle for a solution less drastic. So far the League has lost several prominent members, but an internal split has not occurred.' *Ibid.*, p. 8.
 54. *Ibid.*
 55. Welles to Grady, 4 May 1942, Group No. 96, No. 1 *Louis Fischer Papers*, Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
 56. R. Campbell to Eden, 26 July 1944, *The Transfer of Power*, IV, p. 1120.
 57. 'They gave various reasons: a deterioration of the economic situation, the loss of British prestige due to military defeats in the Far East, the failure of the Cripps Mission, Axis propaganda, etc. But the fact itself was never disputed. I asked a high Moslem official of the British government in India why Indians are so anti-British. He replied: "Why shouldn't they be?" This sums up a very widespread attitude. The Indians dislike the outsiders who rule them. They have disliked them for a long time; but of late the dislike has grown and the people are impatient.' Louis Fischer, 'Statement on India', 3 September 1942, Group 96, No. 1, *Fischer Papers*, Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, p. 1.
 58. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–5.
 59. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 60. Louis Fischer was indirectly arguing against the prevalent British viewpoint – that it was mainly due to mutual differences among the South Asians that they were reluctant to leave India so as to avoid chaos. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

61. Ibid., pp. 7–8.
62. Ibid., p. 9.
63. Ibid., pp. 9–10.
64. Such an analysis led Fischer to make a sweeping statement: 'The Moslems are admittedly less cultured, less intellectual and less mentally alert than the Hindus.' Ibid., p. 11.
65. 'The Moslem upper class, in other words,' wrote Fischer, 'which has never been popular among the Moslem masses is bidding for leadership of the Moslem middle class and the Moslem peasantry.' Ibid., pp. 11–12.
66. Ibid., p. 15.
67. The Advisory Board of the India League of America included the following notables:
 1. Dr Sudhindra Bose,
 2. Louis Bromfield,
 3. Godha Ram Channon,
 4. Dr M. N. Chatterjee,
 5. Dr Ananda K. Coomaraswamy,
 6. Dr John Haynes Holmes,
 7. Dr Syud Hossain,
 8. Dr John H. Lathrop,
 9. Profulla C. Mukerji,
 10. Pierre van Paassen,
 11. Vincent Sheean,
 12. Dr J. Max Weis,
 13. Oswald G. Villard,
 14. Dr Lin Yutang.
68. J. J. Singh to Eleanor Roosevelt, 20 May 1943, Box No. 1698, *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*, Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
69. J. J. Singh concluded his letter with the remarks: 'Therefore, I most respectfully [*sic*] urge that you kindly write about this in your valuable column so that State Department may recognize the urgency and necessity of this step and may ask Ambassador Phillips to make a statement.' Ibid.
70. Memorandum from FDR for Mrs. Roosevelt, 28 May 1943, Box No. 1698, *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York.
71. Ibid.
72. Eleanor Roosevelt to J. J. Singh, 27 May 1943, in Folder '100 Personal Letters', Box No. 1698, *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers*, Hyde Park, New York.
73. J. J. Singh to Sumner Welles, 23 November 1945, Group No. 96, Box No. 1, *Louis Fischer Papers*, Hyde Park, New York.
74. Fischer thus concluded his letter to Welles: 'I think you ought to make a strong statement on the matter, and the Carnegie Hall affair is an opportunity to do so under an adequate and appropriate spotlight. Please accept.' Louis Fischer to Sumner Welles, 25 November 1945, 'Sumner Welles Correspondence', Group No. 96, Box No. 1, *ibid.* The letter had been written on the pad of the Duane Hotel, Madison Avenue, New York.
75. Bajpai to the Department of State, 4 December 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, V, pp. 275–7.
76. The Department of State to Bajpai, 19 December 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 279–81.
77. Bajpai to Dean Acheson (Assistant Secretary of State), 22 December 1944, *ibid.*, p. 281.

78. Merrell to the Department of State, 28 April 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 281–3.
79. The Department of State to Merrell, 14 July 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 283–4.
80. DaLamont (Consul at Bombay) to the Secretary of State, 30 September 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 286–7.
81. William R. Peck to Dr J. M. Kumarappa, 11 January 1944; and press release of the State Department, 10 December 1944, *ibid.*, p. 290.
82. Hull to Merrell, 5 January 1944, and 12 May 1944; Merrell to Hull, 25 July 1944; Stettinius to Merrell, 12 August 1944; *ibid.*, pp. 291–6.
83. Memorandum of conversation of State Department officials with the British authorities, London, 22 April 1944; the Secretary of State to Winant, 3 June 1944; Winant to the Secretary of State, 8 July, and 22 September 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 297–302.

CHAPTER 9

1. Wavell, welcoming the appointment of Lord Pethick-Lawrence as the Secretary of State, invited him to visit India to acquaint himself with the situation. He observed: 'It is not easy to defend a system under which the Minister responsible for India has no first-hand knowledge of the country, and now that air travel is so quick and comfortable, the defence is even more difficult than once it was. Amery was very anxious to come out, but the times were not propitious.' Regarding his views on Pakistan, the viceroy felt that despite all the difficulties in the plan, it was clear 'that the League would win most of the Muslim seats at the elections, since the question for the average Muslim voters will be put in the form whether he prefers Islam to Hinduism . . . It is important to remember that we cannot disregard the Muslim League. Jinnah and his colleagues are most exasperating, but they command Muslim support all over India, and Jinnah's attitude is based on a genuine fear of Congress methods and Congress propaganda. I saw for myself at Simla that this fear is not by any means unjustifiable.' Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 5 August 1945, *The Transfer of Power*, VI (London, 1976) pp. 27–30. The Secretary of State acknowledged the fundamental changes in the situation since the Japanese surrender and felt that the Indian problem might be approached in 'a more comprehensive way' taken 'as a matter of greatest urgency'. Pethick-Lawrence to Wavell, 17 August 1945, *ibid.*, p. 83.
2. How far the Pakistan movement had attained the consensus of South Asian Muslims and to what extent it had become a force to be reckoned with, is evident from correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Government of India. For instance, most of the members of the viceroy's executive council, in their meeting with the Cabinet mission dwelt at great length on the popularity of Pakistan as the ultimate ideal for Indian Muslims. See 'Note of Meeting between Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy's Executive Council on Tuesday, 26 March 1946,' L/P&J/J/337; pp. 11–17, in *The Transfer of Power*, VII (London, 1977) pp. 6–13.
3. Quoted in Richard Hofstadter, et al., *The United States; The History of a Republic* (Englewood Cliffs, 1967) p. 809.
4. Quoted in *FRUS*, 1945, VI, p. 249.

5. Memorandum of William Phillips, 19 April 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 249–50.
6. Grew to Stettinius, 24 April 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 250–51.
7. Stettinius to Grew, 28 April 1945, *ibid.*, p. 251.
8. Grew to Winant, 17 May 1945, *ibid.*, p. 251.
9. John Balfour to the acting Secretary of State, 15 June 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 251–52. It promised the release of political detainees.
10. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 19 June 1945, *ibid.*, p. 252.
11. For an assessment of the Indian situation see Winant to the Secretary of State, 16 November 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 253–4.
12. Memorandum by Murray to the Under-Secretary of State (Stettinius), 11 November 1944, *ibid.*, p. 255.
13. Halifax to Eden, 20 January 1945, *The Transfer of Power*, V, pp. 425–6.
14. Grew to Merrell, 31 January 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, VI, pp. 256–7.
15. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 8 February 1945, *ibid.*, p. 258.
16. Halifax to the Secretary of State, 28 October 1945, *ibid.*, p. 262.
17. James F. Byrnes to Halifax, 7 November 1945; Memorandum of conversation by the director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs, 8 November 1945; Memorandum of Hackworth, 13 November 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 263–7. Another related issue was the proposal to open new US consulates at cities like Lahore and Poona, which did not receive any enthusiastic response either from the US government or the Government of India.
18. Memorandum of conversation by Murray, 28 December 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 281–2.
19. Grew to Dickstein, 9 February 1945, and 6 March 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 282–4.
20. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 9 February 1945, and 26 February 1945, *ibid.*, pp. 282–3.
21. FDR to Dickstein, 5 March 1945, *Congressional Record*, vol. 91, part 7, p. 9523.
22. Memorandum by Joseph Grew for President Truman, 9 June 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, VI, pp. 287–8.
23. Quoted in Merrell to the Secretary of State, 16 June 1945, *ibid.*, p. 288.
24. See *Congressional Record*, vol. 91, part 7, p. 9544; also, vol. 92, part 6, pp. 6543, 6918, 6933, 7077, and 7957.
25. For related correspondence between the US mission in New Delhi and the State Department on the subject, see *FRUS*, 1945, VI, pp. 269–80.
26. Byrnes to Merrell, 7 January 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, V, p. 77.
27. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 9 January 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 77–8.
28. The acting Secretary of State to Merrell, 14 January 1946, *ibid.*, p. 78.
29. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 28 February 1946; 1 March 1946; memorandum by the Assistant Chief of the Division of Middle Eastern Affairs (Berry) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Division (Henderson), 4 April 1946; in *ibid.* pp. 80–86.
30. Gallman to the Secretary of State, 26 February 1946; *ibid.*, pp. 82–4.
31. As quoted in Winant to the Secretary of State, 21 February 1946, *ibid.*, p. 79.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 15 April 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 86–7.
34. As quoted in Merrell to the Secretary of State, 10 June 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 88–91.

35. Ibid.
36. The Cabinet mission plan, announced in May 1946, stipulated proposals for the eventual transfer of power by dividing the subcontinent into three regions, two Muslim regions and a predominantly Hindu region. The majority in each region was to resolve any communal issue in addition to devising its own constitution. The INC which had been led by Nehru since July 1946 did not feel comfortable with such provisions, which were tantamount to partnership with the AIML in the interim government. For details see Chaudhari Muhammad Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan* (New York, 1967) pp. 61–2, also Aziz Ahmad, op. cit., p. 173.
37. Memorandum by the acting Secretary of State to President Truman, 30 August 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 92–3. The missions in New Delhi and Washington were elevated to ambassadorial status through a number of press releases in the autumn of 1946. See *Department of State Bulletin*, 3 November 1946, p. 827; *ibid.*, 24 November 1946, p. 971; and *ibid.*, 1 December 1946, p. 1001.
38. See Nehru's message to the Secretary of State on the food situation in India, 20 September 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, V, 94.
39. For the views of Dean Acheson, see Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation; My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969).
40. Acheson to Gallman, 30 November 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, pp. 97–8.
41. Acheson to Gallman, 3 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 99–100.
42. Acheson to Merrell, 7 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 100–101.
43. Merrell to Acheson, 10, 11 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 101–103.
44. Acheson to Merrell, 11 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 103–104.
45. Gallman to the Secretary of State, 12 December 1946, *ibid.*, p. 104.
46. See Acheson to Merrell, 7 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 100–101.
47. Byrnes to Merrell, 19 December 1946, *ibid.*, p. 106.
48. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 27 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 106–109.
49. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 29 December 1946, *ibid.*, pp. 109–12.
50. The statement issued on 6 December 1946, stated: 'Should a constitution come to be framed by the Constituents Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government would not contemplate forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling part of the country.' Quoted by Harnam Singh, *The Indian National Movement and American Opinion* (New Delhi, 1964) p. 375.
51. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 8 January 1947, *FRUS*, 1946, vol. III, pp. 136–7.
52. Sparks to the Secretary of State, *ibid.*, pp. 137–8.
53. For the complete text of the League resolution on HM government's statement of 6 December, see, 'Resolution passed by the All India Muslim League Working Committee, at Karachi, on January 31, 1947,' no. 333, *The Transfer of Power*, vol. IX (London, 1980) pp. 586–93. Also, *Dawn*, 26 January 1947.
54. The Secretary of State to the embassy in the U.K., 11 February 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, p. 141.
55. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 14 February 1947, *ibid.*, p. 141.
56. Macdonald (consul-general in Bombay) to the Secretary of State, 8 March 1947, *ibid.*, p. 149.

57. Quoted in *ibid.*
58. Dean Acheson (acting Secretary of State), to American embassy in the UK, 4 April 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 151–2. Merrell felt that most of the Congressmen had reluctantly agreed to the idea of Pakistan accepting the eventual partition of Bengal and Punjab abandoning 'the tenents which they have supported for so many years in their campaign for a united India'. Merrell to the Secretary of State 22 April 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 152–4.
59. The statement attributed to Jinnah about possible aggression from the Soviet Union and the proposed alignment with the USA could not be substantiated from any other contemporary source. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 2 May 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 154–5.
60. Asaf Ali, Nehru's appointee to Washington DC, interestingly 'made no reference to unity, on which his predecessor, Bajpai, had laid so much store'. Memorandum of conversation, by the Secretary of State, 26 February 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 147–9.
61. Merrell to the Secretary of State, 21 January 1947; and Marshall to the embassy in India, 22 January 1947; *ibid.*, pp. 138–9.
62. Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (Sahibabad, India 1985), p. 8, fn.
63. For the text of Attlee's statement, see *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 8th series, vol. 438, pp. 35–40; V. P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957) pp. 510–15. For the text of Mountbatten's broadcast, see Lord Louis Mountbatten, *Time Only to Look Forward* (London, 1949) pp. 10–13.
64. Marshall to the embassy in India, 20 June 1947. *FRUS*, 1947, pp. 156–7.
65. Grady to the Secretary of State, 27 June 1947, *ibid.*, p. 157.
66. Grady to the Secretary of State, 2 July 1947, *ibid.*, p. 158.
67. Marshall to Grady, 7 July 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 159–60. The implicit Soviet threat was already apparent from Grady's reports. See Grady to Marshall, 5 July 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 158–9, 160–61.
68. The bill was passed by the House of Commons and the House of Lords on 15 and 16 July, respectively without any amendments.
69. Grady to Marshall, 10 July 1947, *ibid.*, pp. 161–2. Mountbatten's desire to remain the governor-general of two separate independent states, notwithstanding how strange it might look, was impractical. He asked Ambassador Grady to take up the issue with the Quaid-i-Azam who, as quoted above, gave his reasons not to accept. Apparently, Grady was satisfied, as in his reports he did not question Jinnah's arguments. Mountbatten's pride was hurt and he did his most to hurt Pakistan's interests, although he was already partisan and Jinnah must have known this during these fateful months.
70. For complete text, see *Department of State Bulletin*, 17 August 1947, p. 336.
71. The consul-general in Karachi to the Secretary of State, 9 August 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, pp. 163–4.
72. For details, see *Department of State Bulletin*, 24 August 1947, p. 396; 31 August 1947, p. 438; and 7 September 1947, p. 480.
73. For the text of messages from President Truman, see *Department of State Bulletin*, 24 August 1947, p. 396.

CHAPTER 10

1. 'Self-Government for India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. John J. McIntyre of Wyoming, 14 April 1942, *Congressional Record*, vol. 88, part 8, 77th Congress, 2nd Session, 3 January 1942 to 20 April 1942, Washington DC, US Government Printing Press, 1942, p. A 1395.
2. Senator Claude Pepper of Florida, 'Participation of India in the war', 29 September 1942, *ibid.*, pp. A 3463–4.
3. Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma, 'Statement on India', 6 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. A 3583–A85.
4. 'The Tragedy of India', *News and Observer*, (Releigh, N.C.), 15 August 1942; and 'The Situation in India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina, 14 September 1942, *Congressional Record*, 77th Congress, 27 July to 16 December 1942, vol. 88, part 10, p. A 3266.
5. 'Imprisonment of Gandhi is most deplorable', *News and Observer*, 18 August 1942; and *Congressional Record*, *op. cit.*, p. A 3267.
6. Ramlal Bajpai to Senator Charles McNary, 24 October 1947, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, 77th Congress, 1942, p. A 3841.
7. 'It is to be hoped Americans in general will be equally sensible. Only as the violence is put down could the way be opened for a further exploration of a wartime settlement in the presence of the United States and China.' 'What next in India?', *Washington Post*, 15 October 1942; and *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, 1942, *op. cit.*, pp. A 3841–A 42.
8. 'Conditions in India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina, 12 November 1942, *ibid.*, pp. A 3952–A 53.
9. 'Solution of India question seen as military necessity', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Jeannette Rankin, 16 December 1942, *ibid.*, p. A 4373.
10. 'India's Soft Spot', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota in the House of Representatives', 29 May 1944, *ibid.*, p. A 2630.
11. Louis Fischer, 'India's soft spot', in *ibid.*, p. A 2630.
12. *Ibid.*, p. A 2631.
13. 'The tragedy of starvation in India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. John M. Coffee of Washington in the House of Representatives, 24 November 1943, *ibid.*, p. 5114.
14. I. F. Stone, 'Speak up for India', *ibid.*, p. 5114.
15. Karl E. Mundt to Herbert Lehman and Dean Acheson, 21 December 1943, *ibid.*, p. 10991.
16. J. J. Singh to Karl E. Mundt, 18 December 1943, *ibid.* Also, see *The New York Times*, 16 December 1943.
17. For details see Iftikhar H. Malik, *U.S.–South Asia Relations, 1784–1940: A Historical Perspective* (Islamabad, 1988) pp. 334–5.
18. He further observed: 'Since these Indians have voluntarily given up their former domiciles and cast their lot for better or worse with the land of their adoption in the name of human justice and American sense of fair play, it is only just that they be granted the right to become naturalized and saved from discriminating limitations due to the national-origin clause.' 'Naturalization of certain natives of India', 78th Congress, 1st Session, *Congressional Record*, Senate, 15 December 1943.
19. For the text, see Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler, 7 March 1944, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, p. A 1427.

20. 'Justice to our ally, India – repeal exclusion of her nationals', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler, 17 April 1944, *ibid.*, p. A 1834. Celler pinpointed the problems in the subcontinent as poverty, the caste-system and backwardness, yet did not find sufficient justification for British colonialism. Quoting Gandhi's famous statement on 'the hypocrisy of the offer of the freedom of the Cripps' mission' (Gandhi had called it a 'post-dated check drawn upon a tottering bank'), Celler felt that the Japanese were successfully alienating the Indians from the west. He strongly urged the naturalisation of South Asian-Americans in the United States and ended his speech demanding independence from the British: 'India must march with the free nations of the world, lest we slip again into the sham pose of the cynic which breeds defeat even before it has encountered the enemy.' *Ibid.*, p. A 1835.
21. 'Letter from a soldier in India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Dewey Short of Missouri, 22 January 1946, 79th Congress, Second Session, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, Washington, 1946, p. A 1150.
22. 'Get the GI's out of India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York, 26 February 1946, *ibid.*, p. A 959.
23. 'Whatever information we do manage to get about India is so colored by British propaganda that it hardly serves the purpose.' India-American Relations, Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York, 4 February 1946, *ibid.*, p. 559.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York, 11 March 1946, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, 79th Congress, Second Session, Washington, 1946, p. A 1247.
26. Celler to Nehru, 6 March 1946, in Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York, *ibid.*, p. A 1156.
27. 'Better people and more wealth – Pandit Nehru on India's aims', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York in House of Representatives, 25 March 1947, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, 80th Congress, vol. 93, part 10, Washington, 1947, p. A 1248.
28. 'India's freedom', Emanuel Celler, 4 June 1947, *Congressional Record*, 80th Congress, vol. 93, part 5, Washington, 1947, p. 6341.
29. See Representative John Rankin's statement on India in *ibid.*, p. 6342.
30. See Representative Celler's observation on India, 21 January 1947, *ibid.*, p. 489.
31. See Representative Ellis's statement, *ibid.*, p. 3297.
32. 'Chickens coming home to roost in India', Extension of Remarks of Hon. Emanuel Celler of New York, 19 June 1947, *Appendix to the Congressional Record*, 80th Congress, vol. 93, part 2, Washington, 1947, pp. A 2968–A 69.

CHAPTER 11

1. See Paul H. Alling (American ambassador to Pakistan) to George P. Marshall (Secretary of State), 22 March 1950, *Department of State Files*, National Archives, Washington DC.
2. W. Norman Brown, *The United States and India and Pakistan* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

3. Betty Miller Unterberger, 'American Views of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Pakistan Liberation Movement', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 5, no. 4, Fall 1981, p. 315.
4. Gary Hess, *America Encounters India, 1941-47* (Baltimore, 1971); M. D. Abul Khair, *United States Foreign Policy in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, 1939-1947* (Dacca, 1968); A. Guy Hope, *America and Swaraj*, op. cit. Also, Sheila McDonough (ed.), *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Maker of Pakistan* (Lexington, Mass., 1970). A recent and perhaps the first-ever full-length biography of Jinnah by an American came out in early 1984. See Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, op. cit.
5. *The New York Times*, 13, 15 November 1930.
6. Beatrice Barnby, 'Hindu or Moslem? - the undying problem', *The New York Times*, 28 December 1930.
7. *The New York Times*, 4 January and 22 May 1932.
8. *Ibid.*, 6 October, 5, 6, 7, 8 November, 9 and 14 December 1939.
9. John Gunther, *Inside Asia* (New York, 1939) p. 466, referred to in Unterberger, op. cit., p. 323.
10. *The New York Times*, 8 January 1940.
11. *Ibid.*, 25 February 1940.
12. Jawaharlal Nehru, 'India's demand and England's answers', *Atlantic Monthly*, 165, April 1940, pp. 449-55.
13. K. A. Abbas, 'Jinnah the enigma of India', *Asia*, August 1940, pp. 432-4.
14. Humayun Kabir, 'Even the Muslims disagree', *Ibid.*, pp. 435-8.
15. *The New York Times*, 23, 24 March 1940.
16. *Ibid.*, 7, 9 September, and 4 October 1942.
17. Erroneously the magazine characterised Jinnah as 'the greatest single force for disunity in all disunited India'. *Time*, 4 December 1939, pp. 32-3.
18. 'Walkout', *Time*, 10 November 1941, p. 30.
19. 'India', *Time*, 14 June 1943, p. 31. Also see *ibid.*, 15 March 1943.
20. See *Time*, 21 May 1945.
21. *Time*, 9 July 1945, pp. 35-6. Jinnah was said to have observed: 'We cannot accept the Congress party's right to choose the Moslem ministers either on principle or on the facts before us.'
22. 'India. Soldier of peace', *Time*, 16 July 1945, pp. 34-40.
23. 'India. False dawn', *Time*, 23 July 1945, p. 48.
24. 'India. Long shadow', *Time*, 22 April 1946, pp. 28-9.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
27. Equally serious and threatening for India was the famine that had already left millions dead and *Time* suggested a US loan to ease her economic burden. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
28. *Newsweek* published a picture of a long queue of Untouchable beggars asking for alms and described them as 'one of the great problems of restless India' and 'who are condemned to scavenging and other menial tasks'. 'Minority conflicts complicate Dominion program for Indians', *Newsweek*, 6 April 1942, pp. 39-42.
29. 'Gandhi chastises', *Newsweek*, 11 May 1942, p. 40.
30. 'Divided India?', *Newsweek*, 17 July 1942, p. 42.
31. 'Hindu meets Moslem', *Newsweek*, 24 May 1944, pp. 60-61.

32. 'Jinnah says no', *Newsweek*, 14 August 1944, p. 52.
33. 'India's leaders seek accord on proposal for independence. Some issues still divide Gandhi and Jinnah on partition into Hindu and Moslem states', *Newsweek*, 25 September 1944, p. 50.
34. 'Moslem success story', *ibid.*, p. 52.
35. 'India: Back to nowhere', *Newsweek*, 9 October 1944, pp. 56-7.
36. 'India. Second chance', *Newsweek*, 25 June 1945, p. 56.
37. 'India. Somebody failed', *ibid.*, 23 July 1945, p. 50.
38. 'India. Apostle of disunity', *Newsweek*, 3 June 1946, p. 43.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 44
40. It observed: 'Both alternatives are repugnant to the Hindus. They dislike the idea of Pakistan, but parity is a heavy price to pay for territorial unity. It means that one Moslem vote weighs almost as heavily as three Hindu votes.' 'Britain's offer to India', *The Nation*, 16 July 1945, p. 69.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
42. *Ibid.*
43. 'The Simla conference inches forward', *The Nation*, 7 July 1945, p. 2.
44. Virginia Mishnun, for instance, while reviewing *Home to India*, gave due credit to its author, Santha Ram Rau, who had come back to her native subcontinent at sixteen after spending ten years in England. Her autobiographical work covering the years between 1939-41 published by Harper's was viewed as an honest and 'unpretentious' account of a complex, cross-cultural experience. The reviewer observed: 'The slim volume has no statistics but is full of sense and sentiment. And it is one of the most understanding aids I have seen to the understanding in human terms of an important segment of Indian life . . . Humor and an inquiring, discerning mind helped her to find her own bearings, which, like those of every truly well-balanced person, appear to have a slight imbalance. The result of it all was the decision to come to America to find out how a democracy really works so that the knowledge might later be applied to India. Another equally important result was a book that sheds genuine light on the surface of one of the most talked about yet least understood countries in the world.' Virginia Mishnun, 'Return to India', *The Nation*, 14 July 1945, p. 45.
45. *The Nation*, 21 July 1945, p. 51.
46. Uma Shankar, 'Failure again in India', *ibid.*, 28 July 1945, p. 79.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
50. Andrew Roth, 'Britain's colonial squeeze', *The Nation*, 8 September 1945, pp. 617-19.
51. 'Indian leaders. As independence dawns they fail to agree on how to use their freedom', *Life*, 27 May 1946.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *The New York Times*, 23 April 1946.
54. Harry Truman, *Memoirs: Years of Decision* (New York, 1955) p. 469.
55. For a more detailed study, see M. S. Venkataramani, *Bengal Famine of 1943: The American Response* (Delhi, 1973).
56. *The New York Times*, 21 March 1946.
57. *Ibid.*, 28 March 1946, p. 20.

58. For instance, see 'Famine in India', *New Republic*, 4 March 1946, p. 24; *The New York Times*, 16, 18 and 22 February 1946; and *Washington Post*, 12 March 1946.
59. *The New York Times*, 10 July 1946.
60. See *Christian Science Monitor*, 16 August 1947; *Time*, 16 June 1947; *The New York Times*, 10, 11, 25 June 1947; Phillips Talbot, 'Report from New Delhi', *New Republic*, 14 June 1947; and Andrew Roth, 'Jinnah's new republic', *The Nation*, 13 December 1947, pp. 647–9.
61. See Bourk-White, 'Pakistan's struggle for survival', *Life*, 5 January 1948; *Newsweek*, 20 September 1948; *Time*, 20 September 1948; *The New York Times*, 12, 13 September 1948; and, *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 August 1948.

CHAPTER 12

1. C. F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, *Time Runs Out in the China–Burma–India Theater*, 3 vols (Washington, 1953–8) pp. 301–302.
2. These camel-cart drivers would bring various goods into the city from the surrounding areas and would usually be asleep while their camels went to the market. Sometimes the GIs would turn the camel backward without the driver knowing, until he found himself again in his own village. For details see Mildred A. Talbot to Walter S. Rogers (Institute of Current World Affairs, New York), 27 August 1947. (Unpublished correspondence of the Talbots).
3. Merle Curti, 'My discovery of America in India', *American Scholar*, autumn 1947, pp. 423–4.
4. R. L. Thurston, 'India on the threshold', *Bulletin*, vol. XV, no. 366, 7 July 1946, pp. 20–21.
5. M. Abul Khair, *United States Foreign Policy with Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent (1939–1947)*, vol. I, pp. 112–13.
6. Robert B. Hall, 'Area studies with special reference to their implications for research in the social sciences', *Social Science Research Council Pamphlet* 3, 6 May 1947; and R. L. Thurston, 'United States relations with the Government of India', *Middle East Journal*, vol. I, no. 3, July 1947.
7. For example, see David C. Mandelbaum, 'Hindu–Moslem conflict in India', *Middle East Journal*, vol. I, no. 4, October 1947.
8. M. R. T., *Nationalism in Conflict in India* (Bombay, 1943); *Nawa-i-Waqt*, weekly magazine, 22 April 1988; and Iftikhar H. Malik, 'India–Pakistan relations: a historical appraisal of divergence', *Regional Studies*, Spring 1987, pp. 94–102.
9. Jahan Ara Shahnawaz, *Father and Daughter, A Political Autobiography* (Lahore, 1971) p. 181.
10. One of them, mentioned by Mrs. Shahnawaz, was Muzaffar Ahmad, who was based in New York and kept Jinnah posted of such developments. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
11. For Ispahani's views on the Quaid-i-Azam, see M. A. H. Ispahani, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah As I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1966); and, Z. H. Zaidi (ed.), *M. A. Jinnah–Ispahani Correspondence, 1936–1948* (Karachi, 1976).

12. Shahnawaz, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 202–203.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 204.
16. An eye-witness account of the 14 August celebrations was provided by Mildred Talbot, who along with her husband, Phillips Talbot was in Karachi. Her unpublished letter meant for Walter S. Rogers in New York, began with an account of her flight from Bombay for Karachi, which was 'dry, hot, dusty and uninviting' after the military transit camps, clubs and open air theaters had been closed. She remembered the irate soldiers who, angered by slow-moving camel carts 'retaliated by turning the leading camel around while guide slept peacefully, thereby heading the entire caravan back in the direction from which it had come'. She was shocked by Jinnah's appearance 'so that little else registered on my mind during the evening'. On the other hand, she had all praise for Louis Mountbatten 'who looked every letter of his astounding name' with 'the ever-gracious Lady Mountbatten'. A few paragraphs later while describing celebrations in New Delhi the next day, she was excited by the spectacle and nothing depressed her there. Over-estimating Gandhi's influence she asserted: 'Apparently Pakistan is going to have Gandhi in braze as well as in the flesh, like it or not.'

Mildred Talbot noticed that in the Delhi celebrations Ambassador Grady was upset that Truman's message had been misplaced and was not read out. On Mountbatten and his 'real' self she observed: 'Only those of us who had been in Karachi and heard Mountbatten talk in the Pakistan Assembly could fully appreciate by contrast the sincere pleasure he was deriving from his Delhi experience. Here he was relaxed and at home among friendly companions. He displayed warm personal affection toward Nehru. His tones were rich and full, and his good wishes obviously heartfelt. The inimitable Mountbatten charm was turned on to "full".' Such observations, of course, were made by a young western bride, who admitted at the end of her nine-page letter: 'I had to get it down in writing to relieve the emotional pressure I had accumulated in these three days. If I have conveyed even a fraction of thrill I had from this experience, then I think you will not mind having taken the time to read this non-technical and purely feminine account of one of the real highlights of my life.' Mildred A. Talbot to Walter S. Rogers, 27 August 1947.

Phillips Talbot, also in a letter to Walter Rogers, characterised the third week of August 1947 as 'delirious' and 'tumultuous'. According to him, Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta showed 'a sudden unpredicted return to Hindu-Muslim unity and a warm overflowing of friendly expression toward Britain'. The reports from riot-stricken borders had not reached the cities yet. However, in India, he was amazed by the pro-British feelings, where eighteen months ago even an American flag was ripped down in the Royal Indian Mutiny. He believed that Attlee's decision was opportune, with 'a chance of bearing fruit'. He found the celebrations in Karachi rather subdued but acknowledged the problems of raising a capital from scratch. 'Among the Pakistanis there was a good deal of resentment arising from a belief that non-Muslims in Delhi had obstructed

the shipment to Karachi of even the simplest governmental equipment before August 15.' He described the birth of Pakistan as 'Jinnah's show' yet among the celebrants in the evening of 14 August 'there was a sense of quiet gratification that impressed me.' However, like his wife, Talbot went to great lengths in recounting the massive jubilations in India. He concluded his letter on an optimistic note: 'Independence may solve few of the nearly overwhelming problems facing the infant governments of India and Pakistan. But if even a portion of potential new energies are released and only some of the tolerance and goodwill shown during the last week remain, well wishers to the country can be more hopeful than before.' Phillips Talbot (Bombay) to Walter S. Rogers (New York) 29 August 1947 (unpublished letter with acknowledgement from the author).

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