

Onus On Indian People

It seems clear that the British Government last week decided, as a result of conferences with Lord Mountbatten, on the broad outlines of a plan for the transfer of power to Indian hands a year hence. The plan will be disclosed to Indian party leaders—according to present arrangements—on June 2. It is essential for the Indian people to understand clearly why the British Cabinet are producing a plan, and what precisely it means. The Labour Government abandoned their efforts to secure agreement among the parties in India when the Muslim League refused to enter the Constituent Assembly; they announced on February 20 that they would hand over political authority by June, 1948, "to some form of 'Central Government, or in 'some areas to the provincial 'Governments, or in such other 'way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people." That is the position facing India today. Believing as they do in the soundness of the scheme for an Indian Union devised by the British Cabinet Mission, Mr. Attlee's Government are likely to make one last powerful appeal to Indian political party leaders to stand by the Union constitution. But if that appeal falls on deaf ears—and evidence is unhappily accumulating to the effect that it will—then the British authorities must decide to whom power is to be handed over. It is generally assumed that, since both the main political parties agree to a division of the country if an Indian Union is unacceptable to one of them, the Viceroy will announce proposals for partition on communal lines. But there can be no question of Whitehall "imposing" any constitution of this type on India. The final arbiters must be the Indian people themselves, and provision will undoubtedly be made for consulting the elected representatives of the people and for the setting up of two or more Constituent Assemblies should circumstances warrant that step.

NEED FOR ORDER

Since the final decision must lie with the Indian people themselves, it follows that the British Government cannot suggest any scheme which would place areas of the country where one community predominates under the control of another community. In other words, if the Union of India

plan is scrapped, partition must be on strictly communal lines irrespective of present provincial boundaries. The need for a speedy settlement is imperative, since the new Indian constitution must be ready to function by June of next year, and little time is left for adjusting the very complicated issues which are bound to arise from a division of the country. Fears have been expressed lately, both in India and in England, of an imminent collapse of the Indian administrative machine. It is true that several 'highly disquieting factors exist in some provinces, such as the formation of private armies for the protection of one community against another, but throughout the major part of the country there is no sign of deterioration. It should, however, be made clear that so long as British authority remains, all the forces responsible for law and order will be used to prevent the employment of violence to decide what should be settled by democratic methods. The whole object of the plan which Lord Mountbatten is bringing to India is to ensure that the transfer of power will be peacefully accomplished, and that India will not lapse into chaos as the result of conflicting claims. There must be no resiling from that position; peace must be firmly preserved during the transition stage.

PARTITION

All messages from London stress the intense desire of the British Government that India should remain united. For that reason the Viceroy is expected on his return to press strongly upon the Indian leaders the need for unqualified acceptance by both sides of the Cabinet Mission's scheme. Any decision to partition the country must be theirs and theirs alone; the British Cabinet can be no party to the dismemberment of the structure which their authority has built up during the long period of the British connection. Unfortunately the signs are that the Muslim League is hardening in its insistence on Pakistan despite clear evidence that there must be a drastic revision of provincial boundaries before the emergence of the new State or States. The situation has not been eased by Mr. Jinnah's statement last week that he is still "deadly "against the partition of Bengal and the Punjab and we "shall fight every inch against "it." This assertion is difficult to reconcile with the fact—and we have every reason to believe it is a fact—that Lord Mountbatten carried with him to London general agreement on the principle of division. The Vice-

roy's scheme could not possibly have included a Pakistan comprising the whole of the provinces listed in Groups B and C of the British Cabinet Mission's plan. Moreover, the Muslim League's original idea on the partition of India was that there should be an adjustment of provincial frontiers. It may be that Mr. Jinnah is fighting a last ditch struggle against something which he knows is inevitable, but his attitude does not contribute to an easy solution.

A CORRIDOR

Even more unhelpful at this stage is Mr. Jinnah's demand for a corridor through Hindustan to connect the eastern and western Pakistan States if India is partitioned. The Muslim League's insistence on a separate homeland for Muslims can at least be understood; it is based on fears of being swamped in an India which is predominantly Hindu and on the democratic right of self-determination. However greatly one may deplore the Muslim League attitude and its inevitable weakening of India's position in the world, the Muslim case is one which not even the Congress can challenge provided it is the wish of an overwhelming proportion of the Muslim people. But a Muslim homeland connotes precisely what the words mean—a homeland for Muslims, not an area or areas where there is a huge minority of non-Muslims. By no flight of imagination can a corridor stretching for nearly a thousand miles through predominantly Hindu territory be termed part of a Muslim homeland. The lessons of history are plain. Corridors have an evil reputation as breeders of trouble; statesmen now realise that the Polish Corridor was a profound mistake and that by cutting eastern Germany in two it laid the foundations of war. Yet the vital fact about the Polish Corridor was that it was Polish; Mr. Jinnah's corridor would not even have the justification of being predominantly Muslim. The problems of a divided India will be serious enough in all conscience without adding to them by a completely untenable proposition which cannot be defended on grounds either of population figures or of political wisdom.

The Times of India

Monday, May 26, 1947

ON THE EVE

Need For Calm And Restraint

On the eve of a momentous development in India's history, two main issues face the Indian people. The first is that in the choice which must be made, the decision will lie solely with the Indian party leaders. Secondly, whatever the choice may be, the Indian people must make up their minds to accept it loyally and calmly; the alternative is to plunge the country into a maelstrom of civil strife which can lead only to disaster. It is therefore essential, at so critical a time, to place these two cardinal points plainly and unequivocally before the Indian public. There is still a tendency in this country to allege that the British Government are to give an "award" or in some other way are to force a constitution on India. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Whitehall has declared its intention to abdicate authority not later than June of next year. The constitutional scheme for India's future put before the Indian parties as the result of the Cabinet Mission's visit has been rejected by one of those parties and is therefore—unless that party changes its mind—null and void. But the British Government must hand over power to those in a position to receive it; they cannot, despite what some prominent Indian leaders think, leave India to chaos. Their own declared purpose is to transfer authority to a Union of India, that is, to a body representing the whole country. If one of the Indian parties rejects that scheme, the only choice left to the abdicating power is to ask the parties to agree to some arrangement whereby the transfer may proceed peacefully. The alternative is to settle the dispute by force in the shape of civil war. That entails a very grave risk, since civil strife would mean not only much unnecessary bloodshed, loss and suffering to the Indian people, but it would constitute a threat to world peace. Internecine warfare in one country is a standing invitation to other countries to intervene.

NO IMPOSITION

At one of his prayer meetings in New Delhi last week Mr. Gandhi propounded the question: "Could the British dare to impose Pakistan on an India temporarily gone mad?" Many

will agree with Mr. Gandhi that only an India temporarily gone mad could insist on what the Congress leader calls the vivisection of the country. But the difficulty is that what Mr. Gandhi terms madness is not a new phase in the Indian political scene; it has been growing steadily for years. It was first mooted at the Round Table Conference nearly two decades ago. There is no point now in speculating on whether, if the Congress had treated the Muslim League differently when provincial autonomy was instituted, there would today have been no demand for Pakistan. The fact is that Pakistan in some form or other is as much a part of the Muslim League's political creed as freedom from foreign control is the essence of the Congress faith. It was only by recognising that fundamental principle that the British Cabinet Mission was able to evolve a scheme for a Union of India wherein the predominantly Muslim provinces were permitted to group themselves in a sort of sub-federation. Both Mr. Gandhi and the Congress have conceded the right of the Muslims to autonomy if they so desire. Only the other day Mr. Gandhi made a personal appeal to Mr. Jinnah on the issue of unity, and

failed. The British Government cannot "impose" Pakistan on anybody; they are as keen as Mr. Gandhi to maintain the unity of the country. Proof of that desire is to be found in the Cabinet Mission's plan and we have not the slightest doubt that a strong plea for the proposed Indian Union will form the initial theme of the transfer proposals which Lord Mountbatten will disclose to the Indian leaders on Monday. If the British plea is rejected, the responsibility will lie not with the British Government but with the Indian party leaders. It would be no solution for the Labour Cabinet to hand over power to the Interim Government, since the Interim Government is itself divided. Only the Government of India Act and the presence of the Viceroy keep it together.

LEADERS' DECISION

That is the situation which faces India today. If the party leaders respond to the British call to adhere to the Cabinet Mission's plan—as we devoutly hope they will—the problem is solved. But if they do not, then it is for the Indian people of all communities peacefully to accept the inevitable. The ground has been prepared in recent months by Lord Mountbatten's patient and helpful conferences with party leaders. According

to reliable reports, he left for London with proposals for the transfer of power which had obtained the general consent of the various interests concerned. Since then, it is true, both Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi have made statements which are at variance with an agreed solution. Mr. Jinnah reiterated his earlier hostility to provincial partition in the event of Pakistan coming into being and made a preposterous demand for a corridor; Mr. Gandhi has increasingly stressed his belief in a united India, reverting to his former theme that the British should quit immediately, leaving the country to "God or anarchy." It is profoundly to be hoped that those Indian leaders charged with India's destiny will reach a decision bringing contentment to the country. For the grave truth must be recognised that this is their final chance to achieve a peaceful settlement.

GOVERNMENT'S DUTY

Among the masses of the people, whose fate is being decided by their accredited representatives, the paramount need is for calm and restraint. A continuation or intensification of the present disorders would not only do irreparable harm to the country itself, but would seriously damage India's prestige in the eyes of the world. This country is on the threshold of playing a big part in international affairs; her voice would go unheeded if she is rent with internal dissension, and she herself might become a focal point of world disturbance. Provincial Governments are wisely taking precautions to prevent outbreaks of rowdiness and hooliganism. That is essential, and we hope those in authority will use their powers to the utmost to stop disorders which can only do grievous injury. Statesmanship, not violence, is the need of the hour.

The Times of India

Monday, June 2, 1947

THE FINAL PLAN

If partition of India springs from the British Government's final plan to transfer power to Indian hands, then the responsibility will lie with the Indian people themselves. That, in effect, is the substance of the scheme which Lord Mountbatten submitted to the Indian party leaders on Monday. A division of the country on communal lines is certain in view of the declared policy of the All-India Muslim League, but the ultimate authority to decide the issue will be in some cases the people themselves, and in others their elected representatives. For that reason the British Government's proposals are democratic and fundamentally just. It is undoubtedly these characteristics which have induced Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the spokesman of the Indian National Congress, and Sardar Baldev Singh as the spokesman of the Sikhs, to broadcast their acceptance of the plan. "I have no doubt," Pandit Nehru declared, "that this is the right course," painful to him though it might be. Mr. Jinnah, the President of the All-India Muslim League, has not committed himself since he says the decision must lie with the Muslim League Executive, but in his broadcast he admitted that "on the whole the reaction in Muslim League circles in Delhi has been hopeful". However deeply we may deplore the splitting up of India, which seems inevitable, the price is well worth paying if it brings peace to the country. All the leaders have made strong appeals for peace and order, and Mr. Jinnah has taken the welcome step of calling off the Muslim League civil disobedience movement in the North-West Frontier Province. If the League executive accepts the plan, which it is likely to do—and which, for India's sake, we sincerely hope it will do—there will be no further cause for communal strife.

Lord Mountbatten in his broadcast declared that nothing he had heard for the past few weeks had shaken his firm opinion that a united India would be by far the best solution of the problem. But since there could be no question of coercing large areas in which the population was opposed to a united India, the only alternative to coercion was partition. According to the British plan, the existing Constituent Assembly will continue its work of framing a constitution for the large part of the country which it represents, while a new Constituent Assembly will be set up for those areas whose population declares for Pakistan. For the purpose of the two Assemblies the Punjab and Bengal will be divided by districts accord-

ing to the 1941 census figures—a procedure advocated in these columns and described by the Viceroy as "unassailable". But before the final decision on Constituent Assemblies is taken, the members of the provincial Legislative Assemblies (other than Europeans) are empowered at a special meeting to decide whether they wish to remain united. If the decision is to divide, boundary commissions will be set up in the two provinces to demarcate the boundaries "on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims" and to take into account other factors. The Sind Legislative Assembly will register its decision at a special meeting, while in view of the confused situation in the North-West Frontier Province it is proposed to hold a referendum of the electors to ascertain whether they wish to join Hindustan or Pakistan. A referendum will also be held in the Sylhet division of Assam, which is mainly Muslim, to decide which part of Bengal it should belong to if that province is divided. The weakest part of the scheme is in regard to the Sikhs who, as Lord Mountbatten points out, are bound to be split up by any partition of the Punjab, but that is a necessary evil which Sardar Baldev Singh has accepted. Incidentally, the census figures of 1941 accepted in the British Government's "notional" division give Calcutta to the Hindus and Lahore to the Muslims.

So much for the basis on which power is to be transferred. The British Government announce a new and dramatic proposal to speed up the actual transfer of authority. They are willing to anticipate the date of June, 1948, by the setting up of an independent Government or Governments at an earlier stage, and will introduce legislation during the current session of Parliament to transfer power this year on a Dominion status basis "to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this announcement." This is clearly Lord Mountbatten's plan to meet the Indian demand for a rapid transfer of power, and at the same time to avoid leaving the country to chaos by a British withdrawal before the new constitution is functioning. India as a whole, or its two main component parts, will therefore achieve complete self-government as Dominions before the end of this year. But that Dominionhood will in no way prejudice the right of the successor Government or Governments to declare themselves fully independent outside the British Commonwealth as soon as the task of constitution-making is ended. That may be before, or after, June, 1948. Here

again the free choice will rest with the Indian people. The position of the Indian States will meantime remain as in the Cabinet Mission scheme, namely, the States will be free to decide for themselves their position in the India of the future.

Both Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah in their broadcasts paid a high tribute to Lord Mountbatten for his part in the British Government's plan. There is no doubt that it represents a personal triumph for the Viceroy, and a fitting reward for the statesmanship and zeal which he has displayed in handling a most intricate problem. We can only hope that the Muslim League, despite Mr. Jinnah's dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the plan, will see the other parties in accepting it. For this at any rate may be said: the latest proposals represent the only method by which India's constitutional problem can be settled justly and peacefully. Its rejection by one party would almost certainly lead to disaster.

The Times of India

Wednesday, June 4, 1947

MUSLIM LEAGUE ACCEPTS

While the resolution, of the Muslim League Council accepting the British Government's transfer of power plan has certain qualifying phrases, the main point, about it is that it agrees to "the fundamental principles of the plan as a compromise." According to a report from Lahore, the Sikh leaders have also adopted the same attitude, with the proviso that the Sikhs would reject the plan only if the terms of reference of the proposed Punjab boundary commission were unsatisfactory. The Congress Working Committee has still to give its decision, but there is little doubt that it will endorse Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's acceptance—a course of action strongly urged upon it by Mr. Gandhi. Thus it can be said that Lord Mountbatten's scheme has secured the assent—in principle at least—of the three main political parties affected by it. That is the welcome dominant factor facing us today. No other plan for a solution of India's chief political problem has had so rapid and so complete approval from India's party leaders. The way is now open for implementation of the first part of the scheme, the reference to the Punjab and Bengal provincial legislatures of the issue of partition. Hard on the heels of the Muslim League decision, His Excellency the Viceroy has issued the procedure to be followed in both provinces. The machinery is beginning to gather momentum.

Mr. Jinnah's opposition to the division of the Punjab and Bengal in his broadcast speech on June 3 is reflected in the Muslim League Council resolution. "The Council," so the statement runs, "is of the opinion that although it cannot agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab or give its consent to such partition, it has to consider His Majesty's Government's plan for the transfer of power as a whole." Full authority is, however, given to Mr. Jinnah as the President of the League to accept the fundamental principles of the plan as a compromise, and to work out all the details "in an equitable and just manner." Reading between the lines, we interpret the resolution to mean that although the League still registers its objection to the division of the Punjab and Bengal, it will accept the plan as a whole because it embodies the principle of the partition of India which has long been the

dominant article in the League's political faith. In other words, the League will swallow provincial partition because the greater includes the less; they will accept the whole plan as a "compromise" even if they dislike certain aspects of it. That is a statesmanlike attitude, and the League leaders are to be congratulated on agreeing to a principle which, if partition is to come, provides the only fair and just method whereby it can be effected.

The main hurdle has been overcome, but it would be unwise to assume that from now onwards everything in the constitutional garden will be lovely. The Sikhs' leaders make it clear that their continued cooperation will depend on the boundary commission's terms of reference. There is a hint, too, in the Muslim League resolution that the work of the boundary commissions may assume prime importance, since Mr. Jinnah is empowered to see that details are settled in a just and equitable manner. According to the British Government's proposals, the boundary commissions will be set up by the Governor-General, "the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned." The commissions will have power not merely to demarcate boundaries on the basis of ascertaining the "contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims," but to take into consideration "other factors." Clearly, then, those composing the boundary commissions will have to be men commanding the highest respect, whose judgment can be relied upon by all parties. One thing more is essential. When the commissions have been appointed, all parties must resolve to abide faithfully by their decisions. If they do not, then the whole miserable business of communal strife, which should now disappear completely from the Indian political scene, may start all over again.

The Times of India

Wednesday, June 11, 1947

HYDERABAD AND TRAVANCORE

Two Indian States—Hyderabad and Travancore—have declared that on the date when the two parts of British India become Dominions, they will announce their independence. Other States may follow suit. Highly deplorable though this development may be, it can only be regarded as an inevitable concomitant of the partition of India. The real authors of the trouble are the political parties of British India which, by failing to compose their constitutional differences, brought division on the country. Yet one thing is clear. In this modern age there is no sense in rulers talking about the divine right of kings; that issue was settled by the British people—the foremost exponents of democratic government—centuries ago. It is also futile to imagine that any India State can isolate itself from the rest of the country by seeking to maintain the type of independence associated with sovereign nations. We are glad, therefore, to note that in his *firman* H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad takes a realistic view of the situation. His Exalted Highness points out that with the lapse of Paramountcy, Hyderabad State reverts to its original status. He gives as his reasons for refusing to join either of the proposed Constituent Assemblies the fact that his State is composed of both Hindus and Muslims and cannot therefore become part of Hindustan or Pakistan. But—and this is important—the *firman* says “the question of the nature and extent of the association or relationship between my State and the units in British India remains for decision at a later stage, when their constitutions and powers have been determined. Whatever form of constitution they ultimately adopt, it will be the desire of Hyderabad to live in the closest friendship and amity with both. Meantime, I and my Government will lose no opportunity of reaching, by active negotiation, working agreements on matters of common interest for the mutual benefit of all.” The *firman* makes it clear that the final decision will depend on what is considered to be in the best interests “both of Hyderabad and of India as a whole.”

That seems to us to point the way for the closer union in the future which circumstances will demand. Many Indian States will, for example, be associated with the Hindustan part of the country which may eventually describe itself as the Union of India. These States, together with the self-governing provinces, will have a common Centre to deal with federal subjects such as defence, foreign relations and communications—the subjects mentioned in the British Cabinet Mission's scheme. It is practically certain that the list will now be extended in view of the partition of India—the list was reduced to a minimum in order to secure Muslim League assent to the All-India Union—and in view of the need to co-ordinate the economic life of the country. There is not the slightest doubt that economic and political forces will operate in the future to bring into close integration all the units within the boundaries of the two Dominions or their independent successors. We are certain that the need for this close co-operation will be recognised by both Indian States and the units of what is now British India. None of them can remain isolated. It is too early yet to assess the full implications of the Hyderabad and Travancore pronouncements; all we can hope is that, whatever their present attitude may be, the affairs of the two States will be directed in such a way that they will contribute to a reunion in the future of all the autonomous units within this sub-continent.

The Times of India

Saturday, June 14, 1947

SWIFT ACTION

Preparing For Two Dominions

Both the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League have given their official benediction to the British transfer of power plan. No formal acceptance has come from the Sikhs, but it is understood that a meeting of Sikh leaders took the view that they would reject the plan "only if the terms of reference of the proposed Punjab boundary commission are unsatisfactory." The Muslim League Council reiterated its opposition to the division of Bengal and the Punjab, but agreed to the scheme as a compromise because it gave the League a separate Muslim State. The Working Committee's draft resolution placed before the All-India Congress Committee during the week-end regretted the "secession of some parts of the country from India" and hoped that when present passions had subsided, "the false doctrine of 'two nations in India will be discredited and discarded by all.'" Never before, as we pointed out last week, has so momentous a plan for India's constitutional future received such speedy approval from the country's main political parties, despite the fact that it involves departure from a principle—the unity of India—to which our biggest party, no less than the British Government, was passionately attached. Nevertheless the die is cast. The next stage is to carry out the "notional" partition of India so that two Dominions can come into existence by the middle of August. Lord Mountbatten has already issued orders for the summoning of the Bengal and Punjab Legislative Assemblies (minus Europeans) to take the fateful decision; the Bengal Assembly will meet on June 20. Brigadier Booth, commander of the Wana brigade, has been appointed by the Viceroy to supervise the referendum in the North-West Frontier Province. Events are indeed moving swiftly, but no swifter than is warranted by the short interval left to the authorities.

DIVISION

Dividing India politically will be a difficult business; its successful accomplishment must depend on the high quality of the boundary commissions no less than on the readiness of the parties loyally to accept their decisions. But immensely more complicated problems will arise from the division of India's assets and liabilities, the defence forces and communications. Every one of these pro-

blems bristles with difficulties. What is termed a "high power" Partition Committee has been set up to deal with these issues, presided over by the Viceroy and comprising four Members of the Interim Government, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. It is a remarkable tribute to the confidence felt in the Viceroy by all parties that His Excellency was put in the chair at their express request. Under this "high power" Partition Committee will function a myriad of sub-committees, each charged with recommendations on specific subjects. Their work will be guided and co-ordinated by the master committee at the top. Already the broad principles of partition have been indicated, and it is expected that the sub-committees will get down to their task this week. They will certainly require the wisdom of Solomon and the patience of Job. Take one problem alone, that of railways. Suppose—as is bound to happen—half a railway is left in one State with all its workshops and maintenance plant in the other. Some kind of arrangement will have to be made to service the bereft half of the line until its own workshops are ready—and that may take years in present conditions of plant shortage. Meanwhile the various committees of the Constituent Assembly—which will become the constitution-making body for the non-Pakistan portion of the country—are going ahead. The Union Constitution Committee recommends that the British model be adopted for the Union constitution, and that the powers of the Centre—now that the Pakistan areas are to be excluded—should be enlarged. It is certain that the loose compromise Centre of the Cabinet Mission's scheme will be replaced by one exercising far greater control of federal subjects.

THE STATES

As though the authorities at New Delhi had not worries enough, they are faced with another headache in the declaration by Hyderabad and Travancore that these Indian States will become independent when full political power is transferred to British India in August. The British Government's statement of June 3 briefly announced that the position of the Indian States would continue to be the same as that envisaged in the Cabinet Mission's scheme. They can federate with the Indian Union (or Unions)—as most of them will do—or they can enter into "fresh political relationship" with the Union. Congress circles are understood to be pressing the Viceroy to discourage Indian States from making declarations of "inde-

pendence" on the grounds that the alternative of sovereign independence for the States was never contemplated in any constitution for the whole country. The answer of the dissenting States will be, of course, that if India is to be partitioned they have the right to remain separate entities on the lapse of Paramountcy. But it would be manifestly absurd for any Indian State to assert an independence as complete as though it was situated in the middle of Africa, remote from India and its affairs. That is not what the British Government had in mind when they referred to "fresh political relationship." Nor is it what H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad means; his *firman* clearly says that his State will reach by active negotiation "working agreements on matters of common interest for the benefit of all." Nevertheless it is advisable for the British Government to clarify their attitude on this latest development.

TOLERANCE

We are glad to note that Mr. Gandhi stressed the need for tolerance in an address after one of his prayer meetings at New Delhi last week. He referred particularly to the treatment of minorities in the new Union of India, which, he said, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru refused to call Hindustan. The so-called caste Hindus, he declared, were on their trial. "Would they recognise and do their obvious duty, and give place to the least in the Union by affording them all the facilities to rise to the highest status? . . . Heaven forbid that the caste Hindus should so behave as to prove Mr. Jinnah's thesis that the Muslims and Hindus were separate nations." Mr. Gandhi's wise words apply as much to the attitude of the Union of India towards its Pakistan neighbours as to its conduct towards its minorities. The ideal before every Indian should be to prove, when the poison of communal suspicion has worked itself out, the essential unity of the country by a policy of friendliness and toleration. That cannot be done by anything savouring of coercion or vindictiveness, economically or in any other way. Again to quote Mr. Gandhi, the world is sick of the application of the law of the jungle; what it wants is "love for hate, truth for untruth, toleration for intolerance."

The Times of India

Monday, June 16, 1947

BENGAL

The First Provincial Partition

Members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly on Friday took an historic decision. They decreed a second partition of the province, which this time results from the free vote of the elected representatives of the people and by the wish of the community which so bitterly resented Lord Curzon's famous edict. The whole procedure did not occupy more than an hour, and was marked by complete absence of excitement. Voting took place in accordance with the arrangements laid down in the British Government's transfer of power plan. Members were first asked to sit separately in two groups formed by the "notional" division of the province; they then sat together to take their final choice. At the first sittings the representatives of the non-Muslim majority areas decided by 58 votes to 21 that Bengal should be partitioned, while the representatives of the Muslim majority areas declared themselves against partition by 107 votes to 34. There was nothing surprising in these votes. It was the avowed policy of the Muslim League to incorporate a united Bengal in Pakistan, just as it had lately become the firm purpose of the Congress to split the province in the event of Pakistan being created. When the decision of the non-Muslim section was conveyed to the Muslim majority group, it agreed by another vote not to join the present Constituent Assembly—the only one in existence—but to associate itself with a new Pakistan Assembly. The way was then clear for a joint sitting of the two groups to take the final vote, namely, whether Bengal as a whole should join the existing Constituent Assembly if the two parts decided to remain united, or whether it should join a new Constituent Assembly. This procedure was outlined in the British Government's plan with the express intention of giving the whole legislative body an opportunity of declaring itself for or against unity, so that it could not later be said that the entire legislature (minus the Europeans) had no chance of expressing its view on the dominant issue. On a vote being

taken, 99 members (including four Anglo-Indians and an Indian Christian) were in favour of joining the existing Constituent Assembly, while 126 members (including five members of the scheduled castes and an Indian Christian) plumped for a new Constituent Assembly. That settled the matter.

PUNJAB NEXT

Bengal will thus be divided between Pakistan and the new Union of India. The boundary commission has still to carry out its task of demarcating frontiers but the main line of partition is clear; most of the jute growing tracts will go to Pakistan, leaving the chief industrial regions, including the city and port of Calcutta, in the Union. On Monday the Punjab legislature will be asked to take a similar vote on partition. There is little doubt as to how the decision will go; the Punjab, like Bengal, will declare itself in favour of a split, and for precisely the same reasons. Now that the main principle of India's future constitution has been settled, no useful purpose is served by delay; if partition must come, "twere well it were done quickly." No evidence whatsoever exists that if the issue of partition was postponed the final outcome would be anything different from what it is today. That may be a melancholy statement to make, but it is true. However greatly the average Indian, especially in regions removed from the affected districts, may for political, economic and sentimental reasons deplore partition, the fact remains that in Delhi the British Government's proposals were received with relief. Tension in a supercharged atmosphere disappeared. The League had got what it was prepared to make any sacrifice to achieve; the prevailing point of view of the Congress was well summed up by the greatest realist in the party, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose influence in determining the Congress attitude was profound. The Union of India, said Sardar Patel, had temporarily lost part of its territory, but it had gained tremendously in securing a more compact State, with the prime-essential of a strong homogeneous Centre. No-one with knowledge of the recent dissensions, divisions, frustrations and irritations within the Interim Government can refute that claim. The evils of partition are glaring, but the evils of non-partition in present circumstances would have been infinitely greater.

BURY THE HATCHET

With the fateful decision made, the time has come for both sides to bury the hatchet. The persistence of communal disorders in the Punjab, and to a lesser extent in the United Provinces is disquieting even if it can be understood. Trouble spread late to these provinces. It was aggravated by the undoubted fact that considerable concentrations of arms had been effected in preparation for civil war among a traditionally martial people. The original disturbances aroused deep-seated local passions which will take time to subside; meanwhile hoarded arms are being used in what one hopes is a final fling. Despite their constitutional pre-occupations, it is the imperative duty of the leaders to see that all ranks of their followers obey the call to peace. It is no less the duty of provincial Governments to take the sternest possible measures to put down lawlessness. In his speech at the All-India Congress Committee, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru accused British officials in the Punjab of slackness in this matter. That is a charge which is difficult to credit, but since it has been made it behoves the Governor of the Punjab to ensure that there is not the slightest foundation for it in fact. Nevertheless the main responsibility for restoring peace rests—and must continue to rest—on those who profess to control party discipline. It must be dinned into the rank and file of the parties that a new situation faces the country. The many complicated and difficult problems which lie ahead of both States require every ounce of co-operative and constructive energy that the people possess. The old era of fratricidal warfare is gone; it is, we hope, as dead as the dodo. To continue communal assaults and retaliation is not only meaningless; it is a direct obstruction to the welfare and prosperity of the free India of the future.

The Times of India

Monday, June 23, 1947

Indian Troops In Japan

According to a message from Tokio, the first detachment of Indian troops to return to this country is expected to leave Japan next month, and by the end of the year all Indian troops will have been withdrawn. This will leave Australian and New Zealand units as almost entirely the sole representatives of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force. There are probably good reasons for withdrawing the Indian brigade, especially now that the Indian Army is to be divided between the Indian Union and Pakistan. Nevertheless, it does seem a pity that a fighting service which played so magnificent a part in the war against Japan should cease its connection with the Allied garrison in that country.

Some time ago Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru refuted the charge that the stationing of Indian troops in Japan was part of India's "foreign policy", and that, therefore, it was repugnant to the majority of the Indian people. He quite rightly stressed the point that the sending of the Indian brigade to Japan was on an entirely different footing from war operations; it was intended to represent this country alongside its allies in the last World War. It is true that the Commonwealth Occupation Force was allotted a somewhat minor role in General MacArthur's scheme of things in Japan. Nevertheless, the Indian troops were excellent ambassadors of their country; correspondents in Tokio reveal that they created an extremely favourable impression among the Japanese people and the other Commonwealth forces. The 51st Punjab Regiment, for example, while engaged on guard duty, was especially popular, its faultless drill and turn-out when mounting guard being one of the sights of Tokio. India may therefore regret the withdrawal of so fine a representation of her armed strength.

The Times of India

Tuesday, June 24, 1947

PUNJAB DIVIDES

Following the example of Bengal, the Punjab Legislative Assembly on Monday voted—as expected—for the partition of the province. The procedure was the same as that adopted in Bengal, where the two sections adjourned to hold a joint meeting. The legislators representing the two "notional" divisions of the Punjab at first met separately, but Lala Bhimsen Sachar, leader of the Congress Party, and Malik Firoz Khan Noon, on behalf of the Muslim League Party, demanded a joint sitting of the sections before voting began. The joint session met place immediately, with the result that by 91 votes to 77 it decided to join the proposed new Constituent Assembly. Voting roughly corresponded with the population strength of the communities; according to the census figures the population of the Punjab in 1941 was 284 lakhs, of whom 57 per cent. were Muslims, 26 per cent. Hindus, and others, including Sikhs, 16 per cent. Those who voted for Pakistan included eight Muslim members of the Unionist Party led by the former Premier, Sir Khizr Hyat Khan Tiwana; two Indian Christians and one Anglo-Indian. After the vote was taken the two sections met separately. The Eastern Punjab section decided in favour of partition by 50 votes to 22, the Muslim minority voting for a united Punjab. The Western section, on the other hand, voted against partition, the Congress and Sikhs being in the minority. When these decisions were announced the Eastern section decided by a majority to join the existing Constituent Assembly, while the Western section voted for the proposed new Pakistan Assembly.

The problems which face a partitioned Punjab are much more complicated than those of Bengal owing to the existence of the Sikh community. That community, unhappily, will be divided between West Punjab, which will go to Pakistan, and East Punjab, which will remain in the Indian Union. The exact degree of the split will be left to the Punjab Boundary Commission, on which—as Lord Mountbatten stressed in his broadcast—the Sikhs will be represented. There will be profound regret at the partitioning of a province which, despite

the communal composition of its people, has hitherto led a vigorous corporate life, with the interests of the Punjab as a whole first and foremost in all its endeavours. The former Unionist Party administration, in which all communities were represented, was a model for the rest of India. But in the circumstances prevailing today—and especially after the tragic events of the past few months—partition was inevitable.

Yet partition can be justified only on the ground that it leads to communal peace. There must now be an end to the shocking disorders which preceded the Legislative Assembly's vote. The Assembly met while the fires caused by incendiarism were still smouldering in Lahore, Amritsar and other cities; while the sound of exploding bombs had scarcely died away, and while communal murders were still taking place. Reports indicate a lessening of trouble and echo the hope that, now the fateful decision has been made, fratricide will cease. But, as we said before, it is the imperative duty of party leaders to see to it that their followers stop all forms of communal warfare, the continuation of which is meaningless. It is also the duty of the Section 93 Government to take the sternest possible measures against those who disturb the peace of the province. Partition will be little better than a mockery if the Punjab does not return forthwith to normal conditions.

The Times of India

Wednesday, June 25, 1947

'ADHERE TO THE PLAN

The British Cabinet Mission's scheme for a united India was wrecked by reservations. It is the duty of the chief Indian political parties, who have accepted the British transfer of power plan, to see that a similar fate does not overtake the solution of India's constitutional problem which is now in process of implementation. The danger is not an imaginary one. Alternative proposals to certain aspects of the plan are now being put forward by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the Congress party leader in the North-West Frontier Province, and by the Akali Sikhs. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan announced on Wednesday that his party will boycott the referendum on the issue whether the people of the North-West Frontier Province should join either Pakistan or the Indian Union; he is prepared, however, to accept the referendum if it is altered so as to give the Frontier people the right to decide between Pakistan and "Pathanistan," by which is meant a separate independent Pathan state. There is nothing new in Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan's proposal to boycott the referendum. This suggestion has been mooted for some time; it was a familiar theme during his recent meetings in New Delhi with the Congress and Muslim League leaders. But the demand that the terms of the referendum should be altered so as to give the Frontier people the right to vote between Pakistan and "Pathanistan" raises a new issue which was never contemplated in the transfer of power plan. The proper time to raise it was before the plan was accepted.

Viewed dispassionately, an independent Frontier state does not appear to be a feasible proposition. The population of the North-West Frontier Province, according to the 1941 census, is just over three million, or slightly more than the figure for the city of Greater Bombay. Financially and in other ways, the province will be a liability to whichever section of India it joins. So small and economically poor a unit would not be able to stand by itself; it would be almost bound to come under the influence of one or the other of its more powerful neighbours, and might indeed become a source of great trouble and danger, especially if its leanings drifted away from this country. If the Congress Frontier party decides to boycott the referendum, leaving the field clear for those who wish to join Pakistan, that is its own affair with which nobody need quarrel. We do

not see, however, that there can be introduced into the referendum an entirely new principle which, by its immediate application, might well lead to civil warfare in the province. The holding of a referendum in the Frontier on the simple issue of whether the province should join the Union of India or Pakistan is liable, it must be

admitted, to cause trouble, but much greater disorder is certain to ensue if one party tries to go beyond the scope of a plan which has already been accepted by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League. It may be that Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and the Frontier Congress party will content themselves with boycotting the referendum instead of pressing for a change in its terms. Nevertheless, the language used by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan in announcing the party's decision is strongly to be deprecated at a time when feeling is running high. It is to be hoped that the All-India Congress leaders will strongly urge on the Frontier party not to precipitate a crisis.

Much the same advice should be given to the Akali Sikhs. The Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal, which represents the extreme wing of the Sikh community, has declared its repudiation of the transfer of power plan approved by Sardar Baldev Singh and by an unofficial meeting of Sikh leaders, including Master Tara Singh. A secret circular alleged to have been sent to Sikh organisations controlled by the Akalis demands the inclusion in a separate Sikh state of the Sheikupura, Lyallpur, Multan and Montgomery districts. These demands, if they are true, are fantastic. Sikhs constitute only about a quarter of the population in Sheikupura and Lyallpur, while in Montgomery they are sixteen per cent. of the population and in Multan a mere five per cent. Everybody sympathises with the Sikhs in the unhappy position in which they are placed by the Punjab partition scheme, but the Sikhs were loud in their demand for partition and cannot at this stage complain of its effects. It will be for the Punjab Boundary Commission to examine their case as sympathetically as possible. Now that the principle of the partition of India has been accepted, this is emphatically not the time for sections of the people to raise issues liable to disturb the peace of the whole country.

Orderly Basis Essential

The partition of India makes rapid progress. Last week the Punjab followed the example of Bengal by voting for division on the notional basis laid down in the British Government's transfer of power plan, and Sind became the first province to decide by a majority to enter Pakistan as a whole. Baluchistan has also decided to join Pakistan. Appeals to the people have still to be made in the North-West Frontier Province and the Sylhet district of Assam. While Sind's decision was inevitable in view of the Muslim League majority in the Legislative Assembly, no-one who has followed the history of the Punjab in recent years can view the splitting up of that famous province except with profound regret. In Bengal communal relations of late had seriously deteriorated, and the emergence of a predominantly Muslim League Ministry led to increasingly bitter attacks on the Government by an influential section of the provincial press and public. But in the Punjab things for long were very different. The province led the way at the start of provincial autonomy by fighting the elections on an economic instead of a communal basis, with the result that power passed into the hands of a party representing Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. It seems a far cry now to what many will regard as the halcyon days of the Unionist Party administration, headed by the late Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, with the late Sir Chhotu Ram as one of its pillars. True, the Unionist Party's record was not without blemish. It was inclined to discriminate against the urban business man and financier, but there was no communal bias in its composition. The party stood for that sturdy provincial patriotism which was the outstanding characteristic of the Punjab; people of all castes and creeds were Punjabis first and members of a religious denomination afterwards. Their premier loyalty was to the Punjab as a whole—to its traditions, its progressive spirit and its unity. The great irrigation and hydro-electric schemes which were outstanding features of provincial development demonstrated the essential integrity of the Land of the Five Rivers. Some day, one hopes, that unity will return.

MINORITIES

We again stress these facts for the purpose of recalling to the people of the future Union of India and Pakistan that par-

titution of the country does not mean the end of the intermingling of communities. Bengal and the Punjab may be divided, but there will still be millions of Hindus in Pakistan and millions of Muslims in the Indian Union. About a third of Sind's population consists of Hindus. There will be Hindu interests in Pakistan and Muslim interests in Hindustan. Partition of the country will reduce the minority problem, but it will certainly not do away with it. That by itself is one potent reason why the two Indias should remain on the best of terms. Mr. Gandhi has given a clear lead on the necessity for communal harmony and for the fair and friendly treatment of minorities in the Union. Speeches like those recently delivered by Mr. Purshotamdas Tandon, the Speaker of the United Provinces Legislative Assembly, are therefore all the more to be regretted. Mr. Tandon at Jhansi is reported to have called upon the youth of the Union "to take back those parts of the country which had been sliced away," and to have stressed the need for military preparedness to achieve that end. For a member of the Congress, which has agreed to partition, Mr. Tandon's remarks were bad enough, but they were doubly deplorable as coming from the Speaker of a provincial Assembly who is supposed to show no bias towards any of the parties represented in the legislature over which he presides. That is certainly not the way to create the confidence which Mr. Gandhi so rightly desires.

THE FRONTIER

Equally regrettable from the point of view of friendly relations between the two States are the efforts being made to alter certain aspects of the transfer of power plan. That plan was unreservedly accepted by the leaders, whose decision was later confirmed by the All-India Congress Committee, the Council of the All-India Muslim League and an informal meeting of Sikh notables. It is now too late for the Congress party in the North-West Frontier Province, for example, to demand that the issue of the Frontier referendum should be changed from Pakistan versus Hindustan to the Indian Union to Pakistan versus Pathanistan. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan bases his claim on the argument that since the province had the right to secede from the "weak Centre" contemplated in the Cabinet Mission's scheme, it must be allowed to choose freedom "from any Dominion." But this type of reasoning ignores the inescapable fact, as Mr. Jinnah points out in a statement from New Delhi, that the

terms of the Frontier referendum are a specific part of the transfer plan agreed to by all parties. To insist otherwise is to commit a breach of the plan, and for this reason it is regrettable that Mr. Gandhi should have encouraged the Frontier Congress in its attitude. Mr. Jinnah makes it clear that the Pakistan Constituent Assembly can frame a constitution in which the North-West Frontier Province will be an autonomous unit, "and as such the people of the province will be their own masters, regulating their own social, cultural and educational matters, besides the general administration of the province." That seems a fair and reasonable summary of the position. But apart from the ethics of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's proposal, it would seem impossible for the province to maintain existence as a separate state. With a population of just over three million and a deficit economy, it would inevitably cause trouble to itself and its more powerful neighbours.

TRANSFER PROGRESS

For the sake of the peace of the country, the All-India Congress should discourage efforts to break the agreement of June 3 by either the Frontier party or the Akhali Sikhs, who are agitating for a revision of the Punjab plan. A peaceful and orderly settlement is all the more necessary in view of the rapid progress being made with the transfer arrangements. The Bill constituting the two Dominions is to be introduced in the House of Commons on July 7, only a week hence. The Interim Government's Separation Committee, with the Viceroy as President, has become the Partition Council, composed of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan. All energies must be concentrated on this vast and complicated project and on the restoration of communal unity. It would be a blot on India's name both at home and abroad if the advent of the two completely self-governing Dominions found the country still torn by internal strife. That is a contingency which must be avoided at all costs.

The Times of India

Monday, June 30, 1947

NATIONAL ILLS

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Corruption, black markets, *pugree* and associated evils have of late years flourished in India. Governments have moved so haltingly against them that the average citizen has given up hope of being rescued from exploitation. If he can afford it, he pays extra here and a bribe there to get what he wants and to make life flow more smoothly. If he cannot give illegal gratification, he goes without his requirements and stoically bears the additional hardship. We have frequently demanded more drastic action against black marketeers and unsocial practices on the ground that they are tolerated and encouraged at India's peril. Our fears receive emphatic confirmation in the report of the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India for the year ended on June 30. All-pervading corruption, says the report, "is destroying the vitals of public life generally and the administrative machine in particular." It goes on to give a grim warning that, unless corruption's corrosive influence is countered rapidly and relentlessly, "controls will deteriorate progressively into handicapping the poor and law-abiding members of the community and all talk of a planned development will have to be abandoned."

Deterioration in public morality is already so bad that the Reserve Bank Directors are correct in describing a campaign against corruption as "the most urgent and serious problem" that will claim the attention of the new Governments of India and Pakistan. Controls undoubtedly have been partly responsible for the recent swift growth in corruption. But there have been many other factors—scarcity of supplies, the huge amounts of money in circulation as a result of war-time contracts, the desire to share in those contracts with their quick and big profits, and laxity of control consequent on the tremendous increase in Government and quasi-Government staffs. In present economic conditions controls of some sort seem bound to continue for a long time. In any case their removal will not automatically end corruption. The infection has spread so widely that nothing but the most ruthless action will provide a cure. Takers and givers of bribes alike should be severely punished. Appeals for public co-operation in stamping out corruption cannot bring the desired results. The unsocial elements have so strong a grip and have been allowed such comparative immunity that the ordinary man is helpless against them: he either pays up or does without. Determined Government action, however,

will restore public confidence and self-respect. Arrest and conviction of the men behind the rackets which now disgrace the country, would soon bring the whole illegal structure toppling.

The Reserve Bank report also focuses attention on other urgent problems. One is that of increasing agricultural and industrial production "in order to arrest the progress of inflation characterised by wages and prices chasing each other." Adequate augmentation of food crops seems to the Directors to be an indispensable condition for India's survival as a solvent unit. This is no new argument, but it is welcome to see it again presented with such authority. As the report says, "if the cost of living is not reduced to a reasonable figure and if further deterioration in the economic condition of the middle class and the other poorer sections of society with fixed incomes is not stopped, any kind of planned industrialisation will prove impossible of achievement." The Governments of India and Pakistan must apply themselves wholeheartedly to remedying the economic *malaise* if their people are to be saved from greater suffering. Long-term "grow more food" schemes must be speeded up. Action must be taken against agitators disturbing industrial peace and further reducing production, while, at the same time, the lot of industrial workers is improved and every encouragement given to the establishment and expansion of industries. Realities and not ideologies must be the guiding principles for the Governments. The last Central Budget has taught the country a bitter lesson of the dire results of failing to integrate the objective of raising the status of the common man with the measures proposed to attain it. The Reserve Bank report vindicates our forecasts of the damaging results of the drastic new taxation on industry. "There seems little doubt," it says, "that the severity of the last Budget is defeating its own purpose and is hindering the formation of capital for productive purposes." With the whole economic outlook bleak, neither India nor Pakistan can afford to make this mistake again.

The New Commanders

Commanders for the three arms of the fighting forces in India and Pakistan have been selected by the Provisional Governments of the two Dominions. Under the plan outlined by the Partition Council at the beginning of July, India and Pakistan will each have "operational control" of their own armed forces from August 15.

Until, however, they are properly organised, these forces will continue to be under the Commander-in-Chief with the title of "Supreme Commander", subject to a Joint Defence Council consisting of the Governors-General and the Defence Ministers of both Dominions, with the addition of the Supreme Commander. The forces which the newly appointed commanders are to take over on August 15 will be very ill-balanced affairs, comprising units assigned to them on an arbitrary basis. They will later be subjected to a "combing out" process in order to assign the personnel properly to each of the two States. The duty which devolves upon the new commanders is therefore a highly responsible one; they will have to create from the hotch-potch placed in their charge a properly organised and effective modern fighting force. That will be no easy achievement.

Nevertheless, the new commanders inspire confidence. In Lt-General Sir Rob Lockhart, India will have as her land forces chief a soldier of first-rate organising ability, who left the Southern Command recently to become Governor of North-West Frontier Province during the referendum. His opposite number in Pakistan will be Lt-General Sir Frank Messervy, at present G.O.C., Northern Command, who had a distinguished war career in North Africa and Burma. The naval and air force commanders—Air-Marshal Sir Thomas Elmhirst and Capt. Hall, R.I.N. for India, with Commodore Jefford, R.I.N., and Air Vice-Marshal Perry Keen for Pakistan—are senior British officers well-known in their respective services in this country. The most interesting development is the promotion of three Indian brigadiers to the rank of major-general—a sign of the shape of things to come. Brigadier Cariappa becomes Deputy Chief of the General Staff for India; he was the first Indian to command a battalion, was for a time commander of the Bannu Frontier Brigade Group, and took an important part in the reorganisation of the armed forces. Brigadier Mohammed Akbar Khan, who will command the Sind Area, belongs to a martial family and rose from the ranks, while Brigadier Maharaj Shri Rajendrasinhji, who is to command the Delhi Area, is a cousin of the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar and was the first Indian to win the D.S.O. during the last war.

The Times of India

Friday, August 1, 1947

NEARING "D DAY"

Indian States And Accession

With little over a week to go before the two Indian Dominions formally come into being, the tempo of events at Delhi was last week speeded up. The Indian Constituent Assembly adjourned on Thursday to meet at midnight on August 14 so as to usher in the day of India's independence. A reminder of the progress made with the partitioning of the armed forces was the appointment of commanders for the navy, army and air force in each of the two Dominions. But even more impressive than these developments was the rapid advance of the States towards accession to the Indian Union. It will be recalled that a week ago Lord Mountbatten, in his first and last address to the Rulers and ministers of Indian States as the Crown Representative, strongly advised the States to accede to one or other of the two Dominions for purposes of defence, foreign affairs and communications. This, as the Viceroy pointed out, would leave the States with all the independence they required as far as their own internal affairs were concerned. The draft Instrument of Accession, which was formally approved last week, gives constitutional shape to Lord Mountbatten's suggestion. In the schedule attached to the Instrument each acceding State empowers the Dominion legislature to make laws for defence, external affairs and communications; major ports and lighthouses also come under Union control. What precisely happens over accession was explained in a radio talk by Sardar K. M. Panikkar, Prime Minister of Bikaner. Under the British system the States and the rest of the country were held together by Paramountcy; with the lapse of Paramountcy the States and what is known as British India would automatically have fallen apart. To avoid the chaos envisaged by the Viceroy, the two Indias—the Dominions and the States—must come together voluntarily in a federal Union. For example, when the Indian Dominion is constituted, it becomes a Union for certain specified purposes by the accession of Indian States. The States acceding to the Union are therefore entitled to a voice in deciding policies on subjects common to both the Union and the Indian Dominion.

ACCESSION

Most of the Indian States are contiguous with the frontiers of the Dominion of India. By August 15 it is expected that all except a few of these States will have signed the Instrument of Accession. Included among them will be Travancore, over which a bitter controversy has raged ever since the Dewan's announcement that on the lapse of Paramountcy the State would become independent. Much of the heat engendered by the controversy, culminating in a murderous attack on the Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, is deeply to be deplored. It was evident to any thinking man that what really mattered was the degree of independence claimed by the State; nobody need have supposed that a Princely unit in the Indian sub-continent could behave as though it had no relation to the rest of the country, and that it could assume a sovereignty as complete as that of, say, China. To begin with, the British Government had clearly indicated that they would not recognise any Indian State as a Dominion, since to do so would not have been a practical proposition. There was only one course left for the States to follow, and that was to come to some arrangement on certain common subjects with the neighbouring Dominion. Whatever claims were made on behalf of Travancore by Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar some months ago, they have since been modified in the light of the Viceroy's counsel and the patent facts of geography. The attitude of a few States, including Hyderabad, has still to be defined at the time of writing, but it need not be assumed that a satisfactory settlement will not be achieved. Hyderabad from the start stated that it would co-operate in essential matters. The few States in the Pakistan area have been informed by Mr. Jinnah that they are free to make their own decision.

THE SIKHS

Fortunately there were signs last week that political and communal excitement was dying down, as the country as a whole approached "D Day." An unexpected flare-up occurred in Bombay, while an undercurrent of unrest continued in Calcutta and the Punjab. The North-West Frontier Province, happily, has accepted with calm the result of the referendum; that by itself is a tremendous gain. Yet one big hurdle remains to be surmounted, namely, acceptance of the Boundary Commissions' awards.

The Commissions have completed the public part of their task and are now considering their decisions. That their findings will not satisfy everybody is already painfully apparent; a section of the Sikh community organised demonstrations and uttered threats plainly intended to intimidate the Punjab Commissioners. Defiant declarations that the awards will not be accepted peacefully unless they include certain concessions are still being made by some Sikh leaders. We have every sympathy with the Sikhs, but only a few months ago they were loud in their demands that the Punjab should be divided. In view of the population figures, some of the claims now being made by the recalcitrant leaders are manifestly untenable. The more sober elements in the community, led by Sardar Baldev Singh, have agreed to accept the Boundary Commission's awards as the best way out of an admittedly unhappy and difficult situation, and it is to be hoped that reason and common sense will prevail. It would be disastrous if, on the eve of the country achieving its long looked forward to independence, one community should embroil the two Dominions in a violent upheaval. We have every confidence that the strongest persuasion will be employed by all responsible people among the Sikhs—as among other communities—to ensure that the transfer is peaceful. The people who would suffer most by disorder would be the Sikhs themselves. Both Dominion Governments have made it clear that they will not tolerate violence and will take stern measures to suppress it. We can only repeat that it would be a calamity if the dawn of the country's greatest day was marred by unseemly conduct on the part of a community which has a record and traditions of which it may well be proud, and, moreover, a community which has undoubtedly a noble part to play in the free Indias of the future.

RESTORING ORDER

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The announcement of drastic steps to suppress violence in the Punjab and Bengal is in accord with the recent decision of the Partition Council. At its meeting on July 22 the Council stated the determination of the two Governments not to tolerate violence in any form in either territory. To this end a special military command was set up on August 1 in a number of Punjab districts; it was at the same time declared that the two Governments would not hesitate to authorise a similar organisation in Bengal should they consider it necessary. Clearly the object of the Bengal ordinance and the new measures enacted by the Governor of the Punjab is to attempt to end the long drawn out disturbances in those provinces before August 15. It would indeed be a poor start for the two new Dominions if they inherited the legacy of bloodshed which has for months afflicted Calcutta and several towns and districts in the Punjab.

The Bengal ordinance empowers any magistrate or senior police officer to shoot "any person who is found acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in a disturbed area"; it also prohibits the assembly of five or more persons and the carrying of weapons. For some time past Calcutta has been in a deplorable state. Last week Lord Mountbatten paid a hurried visit to the city to heal the breach between the Suhrawardy and Ghosh ministries which have functioned side by side almost since Eastern Bengal decided to join Pakistan. On the day the Viceroy was in Calcutta gangsters armed with a Sten gun attacked a bus in the Ballygunge district, killing eight people and injuring many others, while four gunmen raided a bank and shot the watchman dead. These are types of outrages with which Calcutta is now painfully familiar; there is no safety of life or property in the city. But more seems to be required than the belated decision to shoot homicidal miscreants at sight. Early this year the Bombay Legislature passed the Public Security Measures Act, which imposes capital punishment for communal rioters and provides special courts to dispose speedily of riot cases. In Bengal no such measure exists, with the result that people arrested in connection with riots have lain for months awaiting trial. Complaints have lately appeared in the Calcutta press about this delay in administering justice. It is rightly contended that the law has no terrors for men who are not promptly brought, to trial and punished when found guilty. Quick and exemplary punishment of those caught in

the act is a powerful deterrent to cowardly stabbers and gunmen.

Action on these lines is the main object of two of the three new Punjab Acts. The Punjab Special Tribunals Act is designed to enable speedy trial and punishment by special tribunals in certain cases, particularly those in which the offender is caught red-handed. The Punjab Disturbed Areas Act has been amended so as to make punishable with death the causing of explosions and the manufacture and possession of explosive substances; the amendment was found necessary in view of the prevalence of fatal bomb outrages. All these are very drastic measures, but they are fully justified by the crimes they are designed to suppress, and by the need for the restoration of order on the eve of independence.

An Unpatriotic Agitation

Leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha are fomenting trouble in several parts of the country. Since there is at present enough unrest in all conscience, anything which is liable to increase the prevalent tension is a positive disservice. Yet communally-minded Hindu leaders are carrying on a campaign of incitement in the U.P., Bihar and elsewhere, the result of which can only be to delay the restoration of that peace and tranquillity so badly needed today. The trouble in the U.P. seems to have abated, but the "direct action" movement against the Ministry has not yet been abandoned. In Bihar the agitation has only been "postponed" till the end of this week. Mahasabha leaders in Maharashtra have been appealing to Hindus to boycott the Independence Day celebrations "in protest against this humbug." And now they have called an all-India convention of Hindus "...to forge sanctions for the protection of their political and other interests and the realisation of a national home for Hindus or a Hindu Rashtra."

It should be obvious to any thinking man that this agitation is ill-conceived, ill-timed, unpatriotic and dangerous in its potentialities. The campaign is clearly directed against the Congress. The gravamen of the charge is that the Congress has agreed to the "mutilation" of India. The critics suggest no alternative. During the past twelve months we have witnessed the alternative to a division. As Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant remarked, the division of the country is "better than perpetual subjection." In any

case, partition is a fact which no-one can gainsay. Where then is the sense in protesting against it? In acquiescing in it the Congress has only bowed to the inevitable; it has also seen to it that the partition is equitable to Hindus as well as Muslims. Hindu leaders want "a national home for Hindus or a Hindu Rashtra." If by this they mean communal domination by Hindus, they are only crying for the moon. Hindu hegemony over the whole of geographical India is simply impossible; to seek to establish it even in the new Dominion of India is short-sighted, to say the least. That is the surest way to prevent any future reunion of the two parts of India. The Mahasabha should accept the position as enunciated by the U.P. Government: "We are getting the opportunity to mould the destinies of the country according to our own cultural traditions." There is, in the words of the U.P. Premier, "work enough for everyone of us; if we all co-operate, we can rehabilitate our past glory in no time." The Mahasabha is doing exactly the opposite.

To flaunt Hindu communalism at this juncture is highly undesirable. Millions of Muslims are left in the Indian Dominion and they are faced with the prospect of being deprived of weightage, special electorates and other privileges which they have enjoyed hitherto. Yet they have wisely decided to be loyal to the new State, have enthusiastically accepted India's national flag—which was anathema to them till yesterday—and agreed wholeheartedly to co-operate in the celebration of the advent of freedom. The Mahasabha, which professes to speak for the Hindu majority, ironically enough, seeks to throw a spanner in the works. No lover of India, and certainly not a lover of Hinduism, will try to mar the joy at the dawn of the country's independence. The Mahasabha leaders speak of forging sanctions. Sanctions against whom? There is no-one to obstruct them in shaping the future as they like, provided they are able to carry the people with them. The elections under the new constitution, based on adult suffrage, will probably be held in the latter half of next year. Nothing irrevocable can be done in the meantime. Why all this pother now? If this is the beginning of the Mahasabha's electioneering campaign, then it is eminently deplorable.

The Times of India

Thursday, August 7, 1947

By-Product Of Partition

The measures to meet the refugee problem, announced by the Partition Council, show a lively appreciation of the urgency and enormity of the task that faces the two Dominions right from the day of their separate existence. Strictly speaking, it is not an issue of partition; but it is nevertheless a bitter consequence of the forces that necessitated partition—a "liability" which both will have to bear. Unlike divisions in other parts of the world, the partition of India has not only not solved the minority problem but has brought in its wake a new headache in the shape of tens of thousands of victims of communal fury. This by-product of partition has two facets: one is the provision of immediate relief to the homeless and the destitute who have sought asylum across the dividing line; the other is to establish a state of affairs that will encourage the refugees to return to their homes and become normal citizens of the State from which they have fled in terror. The latter is a comparatively long-term process; restoration of badly shattered confidence must take time. Even so, it has to be tackled without undue delay, lest the malady should become chronic.

Both aspects of the problem will be borne in mind by the future Governments of India and Pakistan who have pledged themselves, through their accredited representatives on the Partition Council, to comprehensive measures of relief. These include rehabilitation of the victims—a stupendous task, considering the large number of refugees in the Punjab, the U.P., Bihar and Bengal—management of properties left behind, grant of compensation for loss sustained and punishments of offenders. Perhaps the most valuable among these is the undertaking that village officials and sub-inspectors of police will be held "personally responsible for the safety and protection of minorities resident in their respective areas."

While it is gratifying to find the Partition Council behaving as a trustee for the future, the minorities in both the Dominions, who are faced with a far from happy outlook, would welcome an assurance that the Governments of the two States will not pursue an aggressively communal policy. Promise of fundamental rights or disavowal of discrimination on religious grounds does not quite meet the case; it does not dispel the manifest fear that the one will be an Islamic State and the other a Hindu Raj. Although religion has lain at the bottom of the partition, it should not poison the future. Let those responsible for the two Dominions make this clear, and all will be well.

The Times of India

Friday, August 8, 1947

Mr. Gandhi's Decision

Mr. Gandhi has announced his decision to spend the rest of his life in Pakistan—East Bengal, West Punjab or the Frontier. This is manifestly intended to cheer up the dispirited non-Muslim minorities of these areas. His presence will doubtless encourage refugees to return to their homes in Pakistan. Whether it will change the bleakness of their outlook is another matter. As a gesture of sympathy with their plight it is typically Gandhian. While it will in all probability improve the lot of the minorities in Pakistan, it cannot fail to have a beneficial effect on the condition of the Muslim minority in the Indian Dominion. Apart from the assurances already given by leaders of India and the steps taken by the Constituent Assembly to give effect to those assurances, the future policy of India will most assuredly be influenced by the presence of their great leader in Pakistan. With Mr. Gandhi working for the betterment of Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan, an inviolable obligation will automatically be cast upon his followers in India to be more than fair to Muslims. Those who believe that this is the most effective solvent of the minorities problem will therefore welcome Mr. Gandhi's decision.

There is another side to the matter. Mr. Gandhi today is a very disappointed man indeed. His followers may, and do, acclaim him the father of Indian freedom, but he does not see freedom in the era that dawns on August 15. He has lived to see his followers transgress his dearest doctrines; his countrymen have indulged in a bloody and inhuman fratricidal war; non-violence, khadi and many another of his principles have been swept away by the swift current of politics. Disillusioned and disappointed, he is today perhaps the only steadfast exponent of what is understood as Gandhism. His object is to prevent further killing of brother by brother. He deserves sympathy and support from everyone both in India and in Pakistan.

The Times of India

Saturday, August 9, 1947

Three Outstanding Problems

The week which ushers in this country's independence still leaves a number of outstanding questions unsettled. Two of these—the accession of the Indian States and the final frontiers between India and Pakistan—are likely to be finalised before August 15. Not so the important question of the division of assets and liabilities between the two new Dominions. At the final meeting of the Partition Council as at present constituted, it was agreed that the whole issue should be referred to a Board of Arbitration. This tribunal, it is understood, will consist of the Chief Justice of India, Sir Patrick Spens, as chairman, assisted by two other members, one representing the Government of India and the other appointed by the Pakistan Government. There will be disappointment at the failure of the machinery set up under the Partition Council to solve this problem amicably. As far as can be gathered, deep divergences of opinion on the division of assets and liabilities manifested themselves from the start, and despite the skilled advice which was sought by both sides, despite expert opinion on a highly complicated issue, no agreement could be reached. These assets and liabilities form a very important part of the economy of the two future Dominions. They include the public debt of India, the sterling balances, and assets such as the railways. In view of the impossibility of reaching an agreed solution, the best course is obviously the one which has been followed, namely, to remit the matter for decision to three eminent jurists, the chairman being an independent judge with no interest in either of the two States.

THE STATES

The two other problems which await solution before August 15 are the accession of the Indian States and the final fixing of the frontiers between India and Pakistan. Since Mr. Jinnah is not pressing the few States in the Pakistan area for a decision, interest centres mainly in the attitude of the States in direct relationship with India. It is clear that the great majority of these States will sign their Instrument of Accession and "standstill agreement" before August 15; many have already done so. By signing the Instrument of Acces-

sion, the acceding State becomes a unit of the Indian Union, and assigns to that Union all powers connected with defence, foreign affairs and communications, as well as a few ancillary subjects such as major ports. To that extent—and to that extent only—the acceding State surrenders its authority, although it will continue to work in the close co-operation at present obtaining between the States and British India. This co-operation will be ensured from August 15 onwards by a standstill agreement which will continue the present arrangements between individual States and the Union Government until a fresh agreement, to be reached by negotiation, takes its place. There will thus be no break in the continuity of the day-to-day relations subsisting between the States and the Central Government. The precise form of association of at least three States is still in doubt. These States are Hyderabad, Bhopal and Indore, but it need not be assumed that some satisfactory arrangement will not be reached with New Delhi, at least in principle, before the end of the week.

FRONTIERS

This leaves what is, from the point of view of the internal peace of the two new Dominions, the most thorny problem of all—the final adjustment of frontiers. The difficulties encountered here are evident from the delay in announcing the Boundary Commissions' reports. It was expected that the reports would be available last week; they have been left until almost the eleventh hour. The feeling aroused over the cutting of this Gordian knot is apparent not only in recent Sikh demonstrations in the Punjab but in the reported decision of Sikh representatives in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly not to participate in the work of that body until the results are known. To the same cause must be ascribed the persistence of communal outrages of a peculiarly vicious character in Calcutta. Conditions in that unfortunate city continue to be parlous. The general improvement which we noted in communal affairs last week was not maintained in the Bengal capital; in fact the situation deteriorated owing to the activities of armed mobs. With the double object of suppressing disorders before the advent of independence, and of taking precautions against fresh outbreaks consequent on the report of the Boundary Commissions, special security measures were announced in both Bengal and the Punjab. In Bengal, by virtue of an ordi-

nance, certain officers are empowered to order troops and police to shoot communal rioters at sight. In the Punjab the Governor has passed two Acts which make punishable with death the causing of explosions and the manufacture and possession of explosive substances, and set up special tribunals to enforce speedy justice in riot cases. These measures are in conformity with the decision of the Partition Council, embodying the desire of the two future Dominion Governments, to take drastic steps to preserve order.

CELEBRATIONS

Nevertheless, despite these tribulations, elaborate arrangements are being made to celebrate the advent of freedom in befitting fashion throughout the whole country. Programmes have been drawn up by provincial Governments and local bodies, and there is no doubt that the public will spontaneously acclaim so epoch-making an event. The greater is the pity, therefore, that the Hindu Mahasabha—according to report—has decided to hold protest meetings against the division of the country on August 15. It is true that most people in what was British India lament partition. There is no point in disguising that fact—it is the one blot on an otherwise acceptable landscape—but the vast majority will deprecate anything which tends to mar the harmony of the rejoicings. Muslims will join the celebrations in India and Hindus will participate in Pakistan. What the people of India should work for is the reunion of the country, and that will not be promoted by any section holding protest meetings, however deeply its members may deplore partition. The obvious task of the Mahasabha is to assist the cause of unity by reassuring the minorities of its desire to safeguard their interests, and by avoiding any exacerbation of feelings on so transcendent an occasion.

The Times of India

Monday, August 11, 1947

AN UNFORTUNATE DEVELOPMENT

An unfortunate development has occurred over the celebration of Independence Day owing to a directive issued by Acharya Kripalani, President of the Congress. At a press conference which he held in Karachi about a week ago, the Congress President dwelt on the necessity of Pakistan giving "a fair deal" to the minorities, and said that the Congress organisation as such would continue to exist both in India and in Pakistan. At the same time he advised the Hindus of Sind against mass, or even any kind of, migration, since in his view it was impossible suddenly to root out people from localities where they had been born and bred. All this was unexceptionable. But in a directive issued later from Lahore, contained in a circular to provincial Congress Committees in the Pakistan areas, Acharya Kripalani took a very different line. Declaring that "the hearts of all Congressmen and Congress sympathisers in Sind, East Bengal, West Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province are lacerated at the division of the country", he said that they were therefore in no mood to rejoice with the rest of India and there was no need for them to celebrate August 15 in the areas which had been separated from India. The Congress President's directive has, not unnaturally, brought a strong protest from a Pakistan spokesman in the person of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. The Pakistan Premier said that while the Muslim League authorities had given repeated and categorical assurances that the minorities in Pakistan would not only be protected but would be treated with justice and even generosity, the Congress leaders had not reciprocated these assurances with equal sincerity. On the contrary, he accused the Congress President of encouraging local Hindus in Sind "to look upon the Government of their State as alien," in addition to asking them not to participate in the celebrations.

These charges and counter-charges are most unfortunate, coming as they do a few days before August 15. It is difficult to understand why Acharya Kripalani issued a directive which practically forbids any

form of rejoicings by Congress members in Pakistan. As Sir Chimanlal Setalvad pointed out in a letter in our correspondence columns, the Congress is a party to the partition of the country. The Congress leaders agreed to division; in fact it was at their insistence that both Bengal and the Punjab were divided when the principle of a separate Pakistan was accepted by them. Muslims in India have agreed to take part in the celebration of Independence Day; in Bombay, for example, the Muslim League leader publicly stated that members of his party would join the rest of the population in the rejoicings. In the circumstances, it is to be hoped that the Working Committee of the Congress—if they have not already done so—will take up the matter with the President before August 15. It would, as we have said before, be deplorable if certain sections of the community refused to take part in the celebrations or actively opposed them, since action on these lines would certainly militate against the good feeling which should prevail between the sister Dominions.

The Times of India

Tuesday, August 12, 1947

WISE WORDS

Many doubts—to some of which we gave expression yesterday—must have been resolved by the speech of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at a mass meeting in New Delhi connected with the Liberty Week celebrations. During the developments of the past few months Sardar Patel has been notable for the clarity of his utterances no less than for their statesmanlike content. A man of few words, he always means what he says. Deeply engrossed in the many-sided task of partition, he has had little time for speech-making, but whenever he has spoken he has cleared an atmosphere sometimes vitiated by people of his own party. The last time he made a public statement it was a balanced, friendly and realistic appeal to the Rulers of the Indian States, which yielded results in the large number of accessions to the Indian Union. Now he has made a dignified appeal to the people of India on the subject of Pakistan. In response to Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan's statement complaining about the Congress President's recent advice to his followers, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel welcomed the Pakistan Premier's assurance to the minorities in Pakistan, and declared that such a generous move by the Muslim League "could not but evoke "reciprocity in India."

Sardar Patel had also some very sensible things to say about partition. It is common knowledge that nobody is happy over the division of the country; the Hindus object to the splitting up of the sub-continent into two separate States, while the Muslims regret the cutting in two of the Punjab and Bengal. If the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan are unhappy about their future, so are the Muslims in India. Declining to explain away the Congress responsibility for partition, Sardar Patel said he agreed to it because he was convinced that "in order to keep India united it must be "divided now." Whether or not one agrees with him that partition is "the best thing possible," one must realise that today it is a fact. There is little to be gained by brooding over what might have been or what should have been. Instead, the advocates of a united India should wholeheartedly follow the Sardar's lead in wishing

Pakistan success and prosperity. That is realism, good neighbourliness, and, to put it on the lowest plane, the surest means of paving the way for the return of the seceding areas.

The Home Minister made a stirring call to action to "stabilise, consolidate and "strengthen" India. He has rightly given this task first priority. He called on the people to forget the past, to regard the events of the past two years as no more than a terrible nightmare, and by "hard toil" and bend their energies "with single-minded "purpose to make India strong, "prosperous and happy." He made an appeal to Socialists and labour leaders to follow the example of Britain's Socialist Government and not to persist in a policy of strikes and wage-raising which could only be met by "printing more "notes at Nasik." India's economy is in a parlous state. Primary commodities are in short supply. An increase in the production of basic requirements is the supreme need of the hour. The new State starts with heavy handicaps in all directions. Seriousness and a sense of responsibility must inspire the approach of all—labour leaders as well as politicians—if the economy of the country is not to collapse. Will these concerned heed this timely warning?

The Times of India

Wednesday, August 13, 1947

INDIAN POLITICAL NOTES

The Dawn Of Freedom

By "CANDIDUS"

WITHIN twenty-four hours the sun of freedom will have risen on the Indian horizon—the fulfilment of a nation's dream, the consummation of decades of yearning and struggle by its leaders. In the case of India, unlike many another country in the world, history has played havoc with geography. The peninsula ringed on the north by impenetrable mountains except for a couple of gaps and surrounded on other sides by the sea, should normally have been a homogeneous unit, politically, economically and otherwise. During the past thousand years, however, successive invasions continually interrupted the even tenor of life. This did not affect the racial, social and cultural aspects where the intruder mingled with the existing to form a new synthesis. The long-lost political unity was restored about 150 years ago thanks to the policies and measures adopted by the British trader turned ruler. Political subjection to this foreigner (who, unlike his predecessors, kept aloof from the main currents of Indian life) was a serious detraction from the advantages of political unity. Now, the subjection has gone, but with it has gone the unity of the country as a whole. However, apart from the fact that India stands divided into two, there is a great deal to be thankful for, much to rejoice over.

PARTITION

Regrettable, from at least the emotional standpoint, though it is, the partition of the country is not an unmixed tragedy. If a brother wishes, however unwisely it may seem, to live apart, he has a right to set up house separately. That is all that has happened. And it has happened. It avails little to blink this gaping fact or to beat one's breast and tear one's hair. Recent events have made it inevitable. Who can tell that the division will not pave the way for an abiding reunion?—surgeons tell us that two raw surfaces resulting from a cut unite better.

Yes, the administrative unity with which the British have made us familiar has disappeared; undeniably it is a loss. But look at the gain: India is ours. Not long ago an eminent Indian visitor, so the story goes, visited a school in Bengal and asked the boys to whom Calcutta belonged. Many answered: "The King Emperor"; some said, "The Governor"; others "The Mayor". Only one stout-hearted fellow rapped out: "It belongs to me". This one will hereafter be legion. The areas covered by the

two Dominions and all their resources, traditions and heritage are lying open to be handled, well or ill, by the people inhabiting them. No more need it be said in sourness, "Good government (assuming it has been good) is no substitute for self-government". Those who assumed that independence means "freedom to make mistakes" now have a full opportunity! One hopes they don't utilise it fully.

PEOPLE'S RULE

By now fairly well-trained in the arts of modern democracy, India and Pakistan are both free to fashion their States according to their genius, without let or hindrance, to bring about the rule of the people, for the people, by the people, on the basis of liberty, equality and fraternity—dogmas widely uttered during the past half a century. Will they do so? Can they?

There is little doubt that the present dominant leadership in both the Dominions will strive to live up to their oft-proclaimed professions of democracy. It must, however, be recognised in fairness that they are starting with numerous handicaps. Some of these are a legacy of the British regime, while others are an aftermath of recent or current history. For instance, the poverty and backwardness of the masses in many directions, due either to British self-interest or the reluctance of the rulers unduly to interfere in the basic life of the indigenous population, are a legacy of British rule.

WAR'S RESULTS

Scarcity of basic commodities, inflationary tendencies, class unrest, lack of peace and security, a loosening of the administrative machinery and the attendant evils of inefficiency and corruption are off-shoots of the World War, the internal disturbances of the past year and the processes of partition during the last two and a half months.

Whatever the cause, the leeway to be made up is considerable. In a troubled world, in a country torn by passions and prejudices, the leaders have a hard row to hoe. They deserve every sympathy and support. It is a solace that the erstwhile master will be there, now in the role of a friend, to help, guide but not dominate. Incidentally, the manner of his withdrawal, whatever the past may have been, is in accord with his democratic professions of trusteeship of, and friendship towards, India.

India of the immediate future will doubtless benefit from association, in some form, with the British; their international position, their knowledge and experience of true democratic public life and some at least of the standards set by them. In this country are worth taking advantage of.

INTERNAL POSITION

Reverting to the internal position that will emerge on August 15, one cannot help drawing attention to one grave peril. Without going into the causes and manner of the establishment of the two separate States, one is forced to the conclusion that there is danger ahead—danger to progress, peace and the very existence of the two new States—if the forces that led to the partition are allowed to take root in either territory. Communal fanaticism will most certainly undermine both. The minority problem, hardly solved by the partition, will remain a festering sore, preventing healthy life, blocking progress and threatening the structure of the State. Communalism, admittedly brought about the creation of two separate States. The course of wisdom is to cut the loss. Needless persistence in this poisonous tradition will only hasten disintegration and the ruin of all that is symbolised by Independence Day, of all the dreams and strivings that brought it about.

'The Times of India'

Thursday, August 14, 1947

FREEDOM

One Era Ends: A New Begins

Today the people of India achieve their freedom. That freedom is complete. By passing the Indian Independence Act, the British Parliament transferred to the two new Indian Dominions full powers to look after their own affairs, and as Dominions they have the right, if they so desire, to leave the British Commonwealth of Nations at any time in the future. Thus ends a long political struggle marked by many varying phases. On this day it behoves the people of the two new States to remember with gratitude those giants of the past who sowed what their descendants are reaping. No brief list of their names can pretend to be complete, but among them we would recall Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale, Tilak, Annie Besant, W. C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerji, C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and a host of others. Today we happily have with us many who see the fruition of their life's work, including Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, to mention only a few. Mr. Jinnah has got Pakistan. Nor must we forget the tremendous service rendered by Lord Mountbatten in the final stages. But it is Mr. Gandhi whom the vast majority of his fellow-countrymen will regard as the architect of their freedom and the object of their veneration. Before Mr. Gandhi became the dominant influence in the Indian National Congress, the men who advanced the country's political claims were a group of what might be termed intellectuals. To Mr. Gandhi must go the credit for making the movement for political freedom a mass agitation; it was he who took it out of the hands of the few and gave it to the many. From the day that Mr. Gandhi broad-based his appeal, its success—despite mistakes and reversals—was eventually certain.

PARTITION

The one disappointment to Mr. Gandhi—as to millions of his fellow-countrymen—is the fact that freedom comes to an India divided into two separate States. But the roots of that unhappy division lie deep in history. It was the chaos in this country following the break up of the Moghul Empire which enabled merchant adventurers from the West to gain a foothold in the country. India became the cockpit of vested foreign interests struggling for supremacy, and out of that welter—in which British, French, Dutch and Portuguese contended—the British finally emerged triumphant. The "Governor and Company of Mer-

"chants of London trading into 'the East Indies'—the East India Company—was formed in 1600, and by the middle of the 18th century it had established a firm hold over large areas of the country. Its administration continued until after the uprising of 1857, which sealed the fate of the Company after a life of more than two and half centuries. In 1858 India was taken over by the Crown, with the promise of good and impartial government to all castes and creeds contained in Queen Victoria's famous proclamation. So long as a foreign power ruled the country, members of all communities were united in the struggle for emancipation, but as soon as the prospect of freedom appeared on the horizon, the embers of a centuries-old rivalry were fanned into flame. There arose the question—to whom is political power to be bequeathed? Everybody now admits that in the handling of this problem all parties were to blame. Mistakes—the consequences of which could not be seen at the time—were made, and age-old passions were revived. The result we see today in the creation of Pakistan. But we firmly hold the view that time, forbearance and statesmanship will heal the breach. When fears and suspicions have died down, we believe that the forces making for the essential unity of the country will establish themselves, and that they will bring about an honourable partnership, thereby bestowing on this sub-continent its rightful and powerful place among the countries of the world.

PEACEFUL TRANSFER

Let us be thankful for one great blessing. It is one of the biggest triumphs of democracy that freedom has come to the people of this country without a violent and bloody upheaval. We do not forget the struggles of the past, nor the fact that they occasionally led to bloodshed; to Mr. Gandhi again must go the credit for the non-violent form which mass agitations generally took. Yet never before in history has so vast transfer of power been accomplished with so much speed and with so much goodwill on both sides. As a writer in one of the articles which we publish today puts it, nothing in all their long connection with this country has become the British people better than their method of leaving it. Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, described his Government's action as the fulfilment of a mission. For many years past successive British Governments have proclaimed their intention of leading India to self-government; the dispute was not so much over the goal as over the speed and method by which that goal could be achieved. The people of this sub-continent, freed from outside control, will develop in future according to their own genius and in their own best interest. Yet they inherit

from British rule three things which are worth adhering to in the interests of the common people—freedom from external aggression, a sound administrative system, and the rule of law.

THE FUTURE

What of the future? On this great day, amid their rejoicings, the people must dedicate themselves to the solemn tasks which lie ahead. Problems connected with the welfare of the masses, with food and clothing, with black-marketing and corruption, with social injustice, crowd heavily upon our future rulers. It must be their task to see that these grievances are remedied as speedily and as completely as is humanly possible. On the other hand, the people themselves have a duty to perform; it is to ensure that progress is achieved in a peaceful and orderly atmosphere. Nothing could more quickly ruin the country than internal upheavals of a political or social nature. India and Pakistan are starting on their voyage of independence as democracies. The success of the democratic system depends on the willingness of the public to subscribe to democratic methods—the parliamentary form of government, toleration of each other's point of view, and the friendly co-operation of people of all classes and creeds. While pressing for the redress of grievances in a constitutional manner, the public must not be encouraged to any form of direct action, since direct action is the negation of democracy. In our present state it is definitely unpatriotic. If orderly progress is achieved, a great future lies ahead of this country. With its tremendous resources of men and material it can provide not only for the prosperity of its own people, but it can play a great part in the affairs of the nations towards the uplift of mankind and justice for all. To that noble end, amid their rejoicings, the people must dedicate themselves. One era has ended; another, full of hope and faith and pregnant with immense possibilities, opens before us.

The Times of India

Friday, August 15, 1947

Tasks Ahead Of The Cabinet

From A Correspondent.

THE orderly sequence of events in the last two and a half months and the sense of patriotism displayed all round by Congressmen, Princes and Muslim Leaguers, not to speak of the minority communities, are a good augury for the new India. To this happy denouement, Britain, through her last and—to India—greatest Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, has made an invaluable contribution.

HOPEFUL FEATURE

Every patriotic Indian will regret the partition of the country. But that this unprecedented political operation should have been accomplished comparatively bloodlessly and in a peaceful and orderly manner is a most heartening feature. However regrettable the partition may be, few will deny that thereby the greatest obstacle to the healthy growth of the body politic of the country has been removed.

The next hurdle was the Indian States problem. The high sense of patriotism displayed by the majority of the Princes in readily co-operating in the building up of a new India, as well as the realism and accommodation shown by the Congress to the Princes, have demolished this hurdle too. Before August 15 almost all of the five hundred and odd States will have acceded to the Indian Dominion.

The Congress High Command deserve to be congratulated on selecting for the first Dominion Cabinet of India a personnel representative of almost all sections of political opinion in the country. It was a stroke of statesmanship to have, at the moment of triumph, gone out of the party ranks to seek talent and ability wherever available, irrespective of party or community. By this grand gesture the Congress has proclaimed to the world that it is opening the chapter of India's independence with a clean slate, burying the past and inviting the co-operation of every element and party in the country in building up the new India.

NEW CABINET

In the new cabinet are included Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes leader, until recently a political opponent of the Congress; Dr. Syam Prasad Mukherji, the Hindu Mahasabha leader; Mr. Shammukham Chetty, one of the most talented men in India but who in other days would have been considered a renegade by the Congress and kept at a distance; and Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and women.

A cabinet so rich in talents and representative of all the major elements in the country's political life should prove well equipped for the herculean task that lies before free India. The grave and multifarious economic ills that India is called upon to tackle are perhaps common to many nations of the post-war world. What is unfortunate is that India should have to launch on her independent career with colossal economic problems weighing her down. Courage, bold imagination and energetic and sustained action alone can cure our deep-rooted economic maladies.

As soon as the first Dominion Cabinet takes over, it will be face to face with the food crisis at its climax. Many a province and State will be threatened with famine conditions. Inheriting a desperate situation fol-

lowing a tragic sequence of crop failures and inelastic and limited import resources, the cabinet will be called upon to perform miracles. Even a free Indian Government may not be able to perform miracles, but it can at least stop the leaks and build up a more efficient food procurement and distribution machinery. Procurement has deteriorated in most provinces; it has to be whipped up to the maximum. The "Grow More Food" campaign, which is calculated to make the country self-sufficient in food by 1952, at least with a 16 ounce ration, as yet seems to have made little headway. The plan has to be put through with greater earnestness and thoroughness. At the same time, long-term irrigation projects have to be pushed through with determination and the minimum waste of time. But to tackle the problem at its root, bold and unflinching measures of land reform are called for.

INDUSTRIAL FRONT

The picture on the industrial front is hardly less gloomy. At a time when there is a universal cloth shortage, production in the country's textile industry is falling instead of rising. In addition, the black-market flourishes unchecked. The prevalent labour discontent, which is being fanned by irresponsible agitators vying with each other for labour's allegiance, and the general state of unrest and disturbance in the last few years, have all contributed to this state of affairs. Every kind of labour, from dock and railway to textile and mining, threatens to go on strike at the slightest provocation. The recent threat of one million railwaymen to go on a general strike, if carried out, might well precipitate a major economic crisis in the country with far-reaching and disastrous consequences.

Yet another acute economic problem is our adverse trade balance. While our imports are soaring mainly in fuel, our exports are declining to worrying point with the separation of Pakistan. We shall have hardly any exportable surplus commodities with the possible exception of tea and oilseeds. We may have to make the most of these two commodities, even at the cost of restricting internal consumption. Otherwise we shall be hard put to it to find the much-needed foreign exchange on which largely depend our reconstruction and development programmes.

Above all, a most disconcerting and distressing feature of present-day India is a complete lack of respect for law and order and mass indiscipline, combined with a lowering of moral values—the hangover from the hectic war years—which are eating into the vitals of the country's public life and society as a whole.

URGENT TASKS

Exercising the canker of corruption and indiscipline from the body politic of the country and ensuring the minimum food and clothing and housing to its citizens are the immediate and urgent tasks to which the first Dominion cabinet of India will have to address itself. Everything else, including even public health, banishment of illiteracy, education, social reform and prohibition, can come afterwards, taking their due places in the queue of priorities before the Government.

In the last two years, the public have been fed on ambitious paper plans. Till now a grave political preoccupation was a legitimate excuse for inaction. Now that that excuse has been removed, the public, whose patience has been sorely tried, will naturally insist on action. In their present mood, the most drastic remedies resorted to by the Government will be fully backed by the public. They want action—more action, and less talk.

Revenue Resources Of India & Pakistan

(By MR. C. N. VAKIL, University Professor of Economics).

The object of this article is to give estimates of the probable revenue resources of the two Dominions on the existing basis of taxation.

As Taxes on Income constitute the most important source of revenue in recent times and as these will have to be divided between the two units, we have taken the final accounts of the year 1944-45 as the basis, this being the latest year for which the necessary details for divided Provinces are available. In view of this, the figures for other sources of revenue also relate to 1944-45. It is true that, due to changes in circumstances, the figures for 1944-45 cannot be the same as those for 1947-48 or any future year. It is, however, submitted that the broad tendencies indicated by these figures will be correct.

Wherever possible, estimates are made on the basis of the yield of a source of revenue in each Province or a part of it.

We have divided the revenues for 1944-45 in the proportion in which those for 1938-39 stood so far as the divided areas are concerned. This does not affect Provinces where no division is involved.

We shall now refer to a few leading items to show the way in which the estimates are made for them.

Central Excise Duties: These are levied on more than 12 articles. In the case of several of these articles, viz. Sugar, Matches, Steel, Tobacco, Coffee, Tea, Coal, it is possible to divide the revenue according to the source of production. Wherever this is not possible, the revenue is divided according to population.

Population As Basis

Taxes on Income: We have tried to ascertain the yield of different items of revenue under this head from different Provinces or their divisions. The yield has been divided accordingly. We have omitted Excess Profits Tax and in its place taken the Business Profits Tax which is now levied. The estimated yield from BPT for 1947-48 has been divided in the proportion of their share in the total yield under Taxes on Income.

Salt: This item has been omitted as this tax has now been abolished.

Opium: This revenue will go to the Indian Union, as opium is produced in India and manufactured at the Gazipur factory in the U.P.

Customs and other sources: We have adopted the basis of population for the division of the revenue under these items with the following exception.

Jute Export Duty: So far as the export duty on Jute is concerned, we have ascertained the position as under:

Eighty per cent. of raw jute is produced in East Bengal. The export of jute is partly in the raw state and partly in the manufactured state. The manufacture is done in West

Bengal. The yield of jute export duty is as under:—

	1938-39	1944-45
	(In lakhs of rupees)	
Raw jute	164	44
Manufactured jute	233	190
Total:	397	234

The exports of jute are illustrated by the following figures:

	1938-39	1942-44
	(In thousands of tons)	
Raw Jute	690	170
Manufactured Jute	938	634

Considering all factors, including the fact that the exports of jute are of a fluctuating character and that the duty on manufactured jute is higher than on raw jute, it will be safe to assume that at least 60 per cent. of the share of jute export duty should go to West Bengal and 40 per cent. to East Bengal. We have divided the jute export duty for 1944-45 in this ratio and included the figures in the provincial revenues. We have omitted the central share of Jute Duty from the Central Revenues. The exact treatment of this revenue will depend on the action to be taken by the new Governments in future, and the yield will vary according to future developments in the production and manufacture of jute. But for the next five years at least, the above tendencies are likely to remain. Incidentally, the current opinion that Pakistan is more favourably situated for earning foreign exchange by jute exports is proved incorrect even by this cautious estimate.

Subventions to Provinces: We have excluded the existing subventions given by the Centre to the Provinces. It will be for the new Dominions to decide as to how much help should be given to their constituent units.

With the help of the above observations, it will be easy to follow the estimates given below:

I. CENTRAL REVENUE: INDIA & PAKISTAN

(in lakhs of Rs.)

Major Heads of revenue	Share of the Indian Union	Share of Pakistan	Total
1. Customs	28.80	8.62	3,742
2. Central Excise Duties	32.87	6.27	3,814
3. Corporation tax and taxes on income other than corporation tax			
(A) Ordinary collections	62.65	4.43	5,725
(B) Surcharge	32.73	2.84	35,57
4. Business Profits Tax	11.00	1.60	12,00
5. Civil Administration	1.91	51	2,43
6. Currency and Mint	9.60	2.88	12,48
7. Civil Works	50	18	77
8. Interest	1.37	41	1,78
9. Opium	1.04	nil	1,04
10. Receipts from States	44	14	60
11. Receipts in connection with war	4.32	4.28	18,90
12. Net receipts from Posts and Telegraphs	7.80	2.36	10,25
13. Net receipts from Railways	24.64	7.34	32,00
14. Deduct share of Income-tax distributed to Provinces	-3.31	-21.25	-28,56
Total:	129.92	34.94	234,86

II. PROVINCIAL REVENUES

(In lakhs of rupees)

PAKISTAN

Province:	
W. Punjab	.. 14.85
Sind	.. 8.80
N.-W.F.P.	.. 1.84
E. Bengal	.. 19.19
Sylhet	.. 1.00
Br. Baluchistan	.. 20
Total Pakistan:	.. 45.98

INDIA

E. Punjab	.. 6.66
U. P.	.. 27.47
Bihar	.. 12.75
Orissa	.. 3.18
Assam (Sylhet)	.. 4.92
C. P. & Berar	.. 9.62
Bombay	.. 33.67
Madras	.. 41.24
W. Bengal	.. 15.30
Total India:	.. 156.21

III. TOTAL CENTRAL & PROVINCIAL REVENUES OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN

(In lakhs of rupees)

Dominion.	Share in Prov. Revenues	Share in Central Revenues	Total	Total population (in thousands)	Revenue per head. Rs. a. p.
India	156.15	199.92	356.07	227,185	15 12 2
Pakistan	45.94	34.94	80.92	68,790	11 12 3

The above figures show that the revenue resources of India are greater than that of Pakistan. This disparity is more striking in the case of Central Revenues than in the case of Provincial Revenues. The Provincial Revenues of the two Dominions are roughly in proportion to their population. It may be noted that Provincial sources of revenue are comparatively static; Central sources such as Taxes on Income and Customs are expanding sources of revenue.

Pakistan is more agricultural and rural; India has more industries and greater urban population. Expanding sources of revenue such as those

referred to above are, therefore, to be found more in India than in Pakistan.

It may be pointed out that the revenue resources must be studied in relation to requirements for expenditure. It is not possible to go into this problem in this short article; besides, the expenditure of each Dominion will take shape gradually. The more important requirements will be the expenditure on defence and liabilities for public debt, which will have to be met first, before beneficial expenditure on economic improvement can be undertaken, for which there will be unlimited demand in both the Dominions.

MR. K. P. S. MENON, India's Ambassador in China: We (India and China) are old comrades in civilisation; and we are determined to stand by each other in weal and woe.

MR. J. D. KEARNEY, High Commissioner for Canada: Every Canadian today wishes joy to re-created India. May she prosper and flourish.

The Times of India

Friday, August 15, 1947

Happy Augury For The Future

The country may well congratulate itself on the manner in which the transfer of power was accomplished during the week-end. It is no small feat for a sub-continent of some four hundred million people to effect peacefully overnight so tremendous a change in its constitution. It is even more remarkable for this to happen in a land long rent by communal dissension, where two separate Dominions took the place of the former unified India under British administration. That the double change-over occurred amid widespread rejoicings and peaceful demonstrations happily confounds those Jeremiahs who foresaw trouble. Only in the Punjab, and particularly in Lahore and Amritsar, does there appear to have been a continuation of the disorders which have marred the advent of freedom in that part of the country. Another cause for gratification is that the transfer was accompanied by cordial wishes and manifestations of the utmost goodwill between the two new Dominions and Great Britain. His Majesty the King's message to India and Pakistan, assuring them of his sympathy and support, faithfully reflects the feeling throughout not only Great Britain but the British Commonwealth. It is a striking tribute to Lord Mountbatten—who richly deserves the earldom conferred upon him—and the British Government that a parting which a few months ago seemed fraught with menace was instead the occasion for friendly speeches and demonstrations. The Delhi crowds who shouted "Mountbatten zindabad" echoed the sentiment of the vast majority of their fellow-countrymen. In the ceremonies, the illuminations, the processions and the holiday spirit abroad among all classes of the people there was the true note of genuine joy, coupled with a complete absence of rancour. In Bombay, for example, all creeds and communities, including the Muslims, joined in the celebrations with unaffected enthusiasm. Long may that state of affairs continue, since it is a happy augury for the future. No country can expect to deal successfully with the manifold problems which face it in the period of stress through which the world is passing if its outlook is jaundiced and its feelings soured by a sense of

grievance and bitterness. What the two new States must do is to keep the spark of joy undimmed as they press forward to the tasks which urgently await them. That must be their watchword and their guide.

GOODWILL

Both Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah—now to be officially known as Qaid-e-Azam—stressed the need for goodwill in their messages to their respective countries. "Our first and immediate object," said Pandit Nehru in a broadcast, "must be to put an end to all internal strife and violence which disfigure and degrade us and injure the cause of freedom. They come in the way of consideration of the great economic problems of the masses of the people which so urgently demand our attention.... All this requires peaceful conditions and the co-operation of all concerned, and hard continuous work." Much the same thing was said by Mr. Jinnah in a message to the citizens of Pakistan. "Our object," he declared, "shall be peace within and peace without. We want to live peacefully and maintain cordial and friendly relations with our immediate neighbour and with the world at large." Never was there greater need not only for advice of this type but for its strict observance. The joy and happiness, the friendliness and co-operation, evident during the week-end cannot conceal the fact that dangers lie immediately ahead. There has been, for example, an unexpected delay in issuing the reports of the Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions. This delay may be due to the intricate nature of the awards—to the average man it seemed almost impossible that so tricky a problem could be solved in so short a time as the official programme contemplated—but it may also have its origin in the continued disturbances in the Punjab and, to a lesser extent, in Bengal. There is nobody who does not sincerely appreciate the difficulties and anxieties of the people affected by the boundary decisions. There are certain to be heartburnings and disappointments. All the more, therefore, is it the duty of those who profess to lead the people to honour the spirit of the great day which has just been celebrated. However much we may deplore partition, it is today an accomplished fact. It has been accepted by the leaders of our main political parties and by all responsible citizens. No good purpose can be served by kicking against the pricks; the true way to serve both India and Pakistan is to accept the awards and work in a spirit of

compromise, co-operation and democratic tolerance for the reunion of what is now sundered. So with the problem of the few Indian States with which agreements have yet to be negotiated. With the *status quo* to continue in Berar pending a final settlement, the people of India can await the outcome of final adjustments with calm.

DUTIES

With the end of the celebrations comes the need to tackle in sober and realistic fashion the many economic problems which press heavily upon the public. Freedom brings its responsibilities as well as its privileges. That our rulers are aware of their duty is clear from Pandit Nehru's broadcast address. "Today," he said, "our people lack food and clothing and other necessaries and we are caught in a spiral of inflation and rising prices." These problems cannot, as Pandit Nehru reminds us, be solved suddenly, neither can their solution be delayed. They are bound up together; we would lay special emphasis on the India Prime Minister's reference to rising prices and inflation. To tackle our troubles successfully the first essential is production; the second better distribution. "Every attempt to hamper or lessen production is injuring the nation, and more especially harmful to our labouring masses." We trust that these wise words will be noted by the working people and their leaders all over the country. The men now at the helm of the state are the trusted leaders of the people; they must be given every chance to put our national affairs to rights by public co-operation. Only if they fail does there arise the question of looking to others to take their place. The old adage about the folly of changing horses while crossing a stream is as true today as ever it was.

The Times of India

Monday, August 18, 1947

NEW BOUNDARIES

The long-awaited awards of the Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions, advisedly delayed till the morrow of August 15 lest they should mar the celebration of Independence Day, are clearly a compromise between warring claims and conflicting considerations. In the nature of things the findings cannot be expected to please everyone. There could be no better illustration of the irreconcilability of the contending claims, nor any better proof of the impartiality of the Chairman's verdict, than the failure of the members of the two Commissions to come to agreement. In both cases the Members were High Court judges trained in the art of making a strictly judicial and impartial approach. In both cases and also in respect of Sylhet and surrounding districts the members were equally divided, and, not being able to see eye to eye with one another even on the principles that should govern the demarcation of the boundaries, they invited Sir Cyril Radcliffe to give his award. Thus the British Chairman's award becomes the ruling of the two Boundary Commissions.

Yet there is no reason to regard his findings as arbitrary since he has kept himself in close touch with the proceedings of the two Commissions and has had long discussions with the members. The preamble to the boundary demarcation in either case affords proof of Sir Cyr's deep study and thorough understanding of the various implications and details of the complex issue. Although it was easy to allocate distant districts to either of the two Dominions, the central area through which the boundary lines should eventually run provided a difficult problem, since the bulk of this area has a mixed population. Moreover, it is hard to determine the content of the term "other factors" and the weight to be attached to this consideration vis-a-vis the basic principle of the population percentage of contiguous areas. Add to these the need to avoid disruption of the irrigation and communications system, conceived and developed on the basis of a united administrative unit, and the result is a Chinese puzzle. Small wonder, therefore, that the Chairman is conscious that his award is open to legitimate criticisms; but in fairness to him it must be admitted by all reasonable men that the issues themselves and the rival contentions make it inevitable that any other finding would be equally exposed to criticism.

Broadly, Sir Cyril Radcliffe's award follows the "notional" division announced in the plan of June 3. He could not, however, as already noted, avoid cutting up certain central districts which were necessitated by the operation of "other factors," such as the canal systems, hydro-electric projects and railway and road links. These affect, such a wide area and are so vital to the life of the people of the Punjab that he has been compelled to recommend joint control of these unitary services. It is to be hoped that, when emotion and prejudice wane, the two States will accept this advice and set up a common

authority so that the peoples inhabiting the separated areas may equally benefit from schemes that were originally undertaken for the good of both. The problem in Bengal is nearly the same with this added difficulty, namely, that it has few satisfactory natural boundaries between the western and eastern areas.

If the districts of Lahore and Gurdaspur have been partitioned in the Punjab much to the annoyance of Muslims, quite a few districts in Bengal have suffered mutilation which obviously cannot please Hindus. For instance, Khulna district, which was part of India under the June 3 plan, now goes to Pakistan; Chittagong hill tracts, where the Muslims are in a minority of three per cent., are attached to the Pakistan district of Chittagong. Again in Assam, in order to avoid "an awkward severance of the rail-way line" Sir Cyril Radcliffe has suggested "an exchange of territories" whereby some non-Muslim areas of Assam go to East Bengal while certain Muslim areas adjoining Sylhet are retained by Assam. While these may not be fully justified by an assessment of the merits of the case, they are all part of a whole pattern. The choice of one Chairman for both the Boundary Commissions, to which the leaders of both the Congress and the League agreed, is presumably designed to bring about an over-all adjustment equitable to all parties. In popular parlance, what one side loses in the swings it makes up in the roundabouts. Apart from the fairness of the award of Sir Cyril Radcliffe, whose disinterested impartiality must be accepted by all, it is well to remember that the arbitrator's findings are final. In any case, the accredited leaders of both sections, speaking on behalf of the Governments of the two Dominions, and the spokesman of the Sikh community have pledged them-

selves to accept the findings "whatever these may be" and to give effect to them speedily and effectively. In face of this it is surprising to find members of the Government of Pakistan using harsh language to describe the award.

The Times of India

Tuesday, August 19, 1947

INDIAN POLITICAL NOTES

Independence Week-end

By "CANDIDUS"

IMPERCEPTIBLY, as the bud blossoms into flower, India has attained her full bloom of independent nation-hood. Literally overnight the vast mass of people emerged free. Like one awake from sleep, the nation suddenly became aware of a new consciousness. The change was writ large on the faces of millions, men, women and children. For a whole long week-end they sang and danced with joy. The cynic was belied, the sceptic confounded. If ever there was doubt about the mass yearning for freedom, as distinct from the so-called clamour of the politically-minded few, that was dispelled by the spontaneous outburst of emotion witnessed during the celebrations of August 15 and the succeeding days. If the scenes enacted in Delhi and Bombay, to mention only two places, are any indication of the people's feeling, then the future is assured. Such awakening, such patriotism, such spirit of dedication to the motherland and such unity and discipline have never been seen in the country—perhaps never will be. Moments such as these occur once in centuries. It is a unique privilege to watch the nation stand erect, head aloft. Many of us justifiably felt that we have lived our full life. But, no—pause a while. There is a lot more to live or work for. Freedom is just born. It has to be nursed, tended carefully, saved from danger. The responsibilities, no less than the privileges, of freedom are many; indeed, the duties are harder to fulfil.

RICH TRIBUTE

There is another aspect of the week-end demonstrations which deserves to be underlined. Side by side with patriotic fervour was unmistakable evidence of friendship and goodwill towards Britain. Throughout the long history of Britain's association with India, no representative of the British race has ever got the reception that was showered on Lord Mountbatten in Delhi and in Bombay when he appeared in public as the first Governor-General virtually chosen by the people. If it was a richly deserved personal tribute for the manifest sincerity, consummate skill and powerful drive with which Lord Mountbatten effected the transfer of power, it was no less an appreciation of Great Britain's honesty of purpose, sagacity and courage in withdrawing from India. True, the common man did not realise the full implications of the new status which this action of the British Royal Family has cheerfully accepted; but he recognised "My Governor-General". This is history, good and true, and we who watch are indeed fortunate to see history in the making.

NO HATRED

Few have bothered about the fact that in form it is only Dominion Status that India has entered upon, though in substance it is unqualified independence. Maybe it is due to the realisation that the constitution that is now on the anvil is being hammered out to the pattern of a sovereign independent republic as outlined in the resolution on objectives. That apart, the demonstrations bear ample testimony to India's readiness to work with the Briton on terms of equality and friendship to the advantage of both. "Quit India" had no connotation of personal hatred.

Independence Day witnessed something more than an emotional upsurge, something more than a demonstration of Indo-British amity:

Barring the tragic exception of the Punjab, it marked the end of one full year of communal animosity, nay, the beginning of an era of Hindu-Muslim concord. It was on the black day of August 16 last year that communal rioting broke out in Calcutta on the occasion of Direct Action Day. In self-same Calcutta, exactly twelve months later, on August 15 this year, Hindus and Muslims embraced each other, exchanged felicitations, sprayed rose-water and distributed sweets. Clearly a triumph for Gandhism.

GANDHI'S LEAD

The Mahatma's leadership was many-sided, but the politician seized only the fight against the foreigner, more or less ignoring its many inseparable adjuncts such as Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, rural uplift. The fatal nature of this relative neglect was unfolded in all its horror through the past year. The poison threatened to persist: but once again the Mahatma has done the trick.

As in Bengal, so in every other province except the Punjab, the new era has been accepted by Muslim as well as Hindu, not in a sullen mood but fairly enthusiastically. But the Punjab has passed through hell. The thanks of geographical India are therefore due to the Governments of both India and Pakistan and to the leaders of all communities alike for the steps they are taking to stop this carnage and bestiality and to inaugurate an era of peace. They could ill-afford to be indifferent or inactive. We ourselves are masters of our respective countries and custodians of the safety of our peoples. Britain is no more blameworthy. The world will rate us very poorly indeed if even after securing complete mastery over our affairs we fail to put our house in order.

EQUAL RIGHTS

Apart from the persistence of old animosities, which are best forgotten, and the morbid craving for revenge between the rival communities, much of what has been going on in Lahore and Amritsar is due to a sense of fear about the future. Pandit Nehru has therefore done well in giving the broadcast assurance that "our State is not a communal State, but a democratic State in which every citizen has equal rights, and the Government are determined to protect these rights". It is heartening to be assured by Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan that "this is also the policy of the Pakistan Government". With these pledges, with the additional warning that neither of the two Governments will any longer tolerate communal troubles and with the elaborate measures initiated to stop this madness, one is encouraged to hope that the Punjab will soon return to sanity.

There is enough work ahead for either State without allowing its energies to be exhausted in a task which is best looked after by the citizen. The spectre of starvation has to be tackled; the people will have to be clothed; the badly shaken administrative machinery has to be tightened up; corruption and inefficiency have to be uprooted; industrial and agricultural economy and the price structure await scientific adjustment; education, health and social justice demand attention. There are a thousand and one jobs to be done. Let the State be freed from keeping a vigil on its citizens and preventing them from killing one another. Indians in both India and Pakistan are on their trial.

'The Times of India'
Thursday, Aug. 21, 1947

The Two Dominions Cooperate

The newly constituted Dominions last week passed through a very critical period in their history. While, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru put it, nearly the whole country rejoiced over the coming of independence, not so the unhappy Land of the Five Rivers. "Both in the east and the west," said India's Premier, "there was disaster and sorrow. There was murder and arson and looting in many places, and streams of refugees poured out from one place into another." The situation was bad enough in all conscience in view of partition, but it became fraught with grave menace owing to the expected awards of the Boundary Commissions. These were deliberately postponed because of the difficulties facing the Chairman, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, who had to make an award by himself, and also because of the need to await a more settled state of affairs in the Punjab. In Bengal, happily, what has been described as a miracle occurred. There was widespread Hindu-Muslim fraternisation during the Independence Day celebrations in Calcutta and, thanks to the activities of Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Suhrawardy, everyone hopes that the foundations of enduring peace are being laid. But in the Punjab there was no break in the dismal tale of communal disorders which had persisted for months.

AMBALA MEETING

In view of these circumstances the Governments of India and Pakistan took an important step. On August 17—a week ago last Sunday—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Sardar Baldev Singh and several other Ministers hurried to Ambala, one of the most disturbed centres, where they held a conference with the Governors, Ministers and senior officers of East and West Punjab. The fact that Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan flew from Karachi to the Punjab is a welcome sign of the co-operation between the two Governments. On the following day the two Premiers issued a joint statement at Amritsar announcing that the Governments of both India and Pakistan—Central and provincial—were determined to bring peace and order and security to the Punjab. For this purpose it was unanimously decided to take every possible

step immediately to put an end to the orgy of violence—these steps to include administrative and military arrangements as well as appeals to the leaders of the people. Plans were also made to transport refugees and to provide them with food and accommodation. These prompt measures were undoubtedly responsible for the improvement in the Punjab situation towards the end of last week, and that too despite the provocation offered by intemperate statements on the Boundary Commissions' awards. The Ambala conference, held as it was in a critical place at a critical time, may well rank as a landmark in the history of the two States. It was the first joint action on a large scale between the two Dominions after the new Governments had taken over full control of their own affairs. Both in its scope and its effects it was a heartening portent for the future. We are not yet out of the wood, but it can, we think, be said with confidence that the worst is over.

Sir Cyril Radcliffe's awards might have been expected to cause fresh trouble, an almost miraculous transformation occurred. Calcutta's long and dismal record of communal warfare, gangsterism and outrage disappeared overnight in the glow of Independence Day. The Bengali is a highly emotional individual, and it seems as if the achievement of freedom completely changed his communal outlook. Fraternisation on a large scale took place from August 15 onwards. Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Suhrawardy are assisting the good work by living together and addressing meetings in company in various parts of the city. Their task, and that of all men of goodwill, is to consolidate the friendly relations which have been established so that Bengal, instead of being a blot on the country's reputation, will become a harbinger of peace. It is devoutly to be hoped that the good feeling generated in Calcutta will spread to the rest of the country in ever increasing measure.

FRONTIER MINISTRY

The dismissal of Dr. Khan Sahib's Ministry by the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province will be regretted throughout India owing to the Ministry's Congress affiliations. Nevertheless it must be recognised that the affair is an internal concern of Pakistan, and it is difficult to see how the Ministry could have continued in the circumstances. The recent referendum showed that a small but absolute majority of the Frontier people favoured the union of the province with Pakistan—a policy to which Dr. Khan Sahib's Government is

resolutely opposed. While, as a result of the 1946 elections the Ministry had the support of the provincial Legislative Assembly, it was obviously out of tune with the feeling of the people on the main political issue as expressed a year later. Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, leader of the Muslim League Opposition, has been asked to form a ministry, and the intention apparently is that he should carry on the administration until the budget session of the Assembly early next year. If his Ministry is then defeated, the only course left would be to dissolve the legislature and order fresh elections. It may well be asked why the new Ministry should not face the legislature now and accept its verdict. The Pakistan authorities presumably argue that an election at the present moment might lead to serious disorders. That there is some reason for this fear is evident from last week's ugly outburst in Quetta, where a fight between Muslim Leaguers and "Pathanistan" Pathans resulted in considerable bloodshed and eventually—as is almost inevitable—took a communal turn. According to reports from Karachi, most of the minority communities have been evacuated from the Quetta area. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the Pakistan Premier, has announced his Government's intention to restore peace and order at all costs; it is sincerely to be hoped that this will be done. But the tragedy shows all too clearly the explosive potentialities of the Frontier regions.

The Times of India

Monday, August 25, 1947

Wednesday, February 26, 1947

MUSLIMS AND THE R.I.N.

STATISTICS relating to the communal composition of officers and ratings in the Royal Indian Navy which the Defence Secretary, Mr. Bhalja, disclosed in the Central Assembly on Monday in reply to a question by Mr. Ahmed Jaffer, proved the charge which Muslims have repeatedly made that the Defence Department has pursued a policy of discrimination against them. The Indian Ratings number 10,412, of whom 4,349 or 41.7 per cent are Muslims. The Indian Officers number 874, of whom only 179 or 20 per cent are Muslims. The ratio of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and other officers to their respective strengths in the ratings category reveals a similar discrimination against Muslims and undue pampering of other communities. For 3,823 Hindu ratings there are 298 Hindu officers, i.e., 7.7 per cent. For the infinitesimal number of 173 Sikh ratings there are 39 Sikh officers, i.e., 22 per cent. For 2,055 "other" ratings there are 360 "other" officers, i.e., 17 per cent. As against these, for 4,349 Muslim ratings there are only 179 Muslim officers, i.e., a mere 4 per cent. These figures do not include British officers and ratings.

This glaringly disproportionate distribution of the officers' strength, particularly the special weightage given to the Sikhs requires immediate explanation. We are constrained to observe that Mr. Bhalja's statement on the floor of the Assembly asserting "that recruitment to the R.I.N. was on an all-India and not communal basis and, therefore, no special steps were taken to encourage any particular community to come forward to join the R.I.N. in large numbers" must be regarded as utter nonsense. The figures which he himself gave indicate special

encouragement to non-Muslims and deliberate discrimination against Muslims. Surely, neither Mr. Bhalja nor his superiors in the Defence Department can seriously contend that Muslims who have been able to provide the largest number of ratings could not also produce a proportionate number of officers?

Figures showing the communal breakdown of officers posted at Naval Headquarters were not asked for nor given during Monday's interpellation, but we have these figures in our possession. These show that at the N.H.Q. there are at present: one Hindu Commander and no Muslim; 5 Hindu Lt.-Commanders, 2 Muslims and 2 Sikhs; 13 Hindu Lieutenants and 6 Muslims; 14 Hindu Civilian Officers of gazetted ranks, 1 Sikh and 2 Muslims; the total community-wise percentage of the N.H.Q. personnel being 71 per cent Hindus, 22 per cent Muslims, and 7 per cent Sikhs. Statistics of communal representation in the ranks of Lt.-Commander and above, given by Mr. Bhalja, also show that out of a total of 73 such officers only 10 are Muslims.

According to our information even this unsatisfactory state of affairs is now in the process of being made still more unsatisfactory from the Muslim point of view through measures which are now in the process of implementation by the Defence Department. We suggest that Muslim members of the Central Legislature should not consider their duty done by merely having put certain questions and elicited certain replies. They must study these defence problems more seriously and resist the Department's anti-Muslim policy more determinedly.