CHAPTER FOUR
1. Formation of the Committee of Administration

Mohan Singh's order for the dissolution of the I.N.A. had an immediate unsettling effect on it (the I.N.A.). The troops were disarmed and all activities in I.N.A. ceased. (1) The officers who had resisted the formation of the I.N.A. in 1942 became active in carrying out propaganda against the continuation of the I.N.A. (2) A feeling of despair prevailed among the rank and file.

The President of the Council of Action did not accept the order issued by Mohan Singh to dissolve the I.N.A. as valid and he strove hard to bring the situation under his control. Within a few days of the arrest of Mohan Singh a Committee of Administration was appointed by him consisting of Lt. Col. J.K. Bhonsle as chairman, Lt. Col. M.Z. Kiani, Lt. Col. Loganadan and Major Prakash Chand as members. (3) The Committee was meant for the


(2) Major-General A.C. Chatterji, India's Struggle for Freedom (Calcutta, 1947) 53.

(3) This Committee functioned till April 1943. Evidence by the witness for the Prosecution, D.C. Nag, before the first I.N.A. court martial, see Motiram, ed., The Two Historic Trials at Red Fort (Delhi, 1946) 24.

K.R. Palta includes the name of Lt. Col. Eshan Qadir as the fourth member of the Committee of Administration. K.R. Palta, My Adventures with the I.N.A. (Lahore, 1946) 54.
administration of discipline among the ranks occupied by the I.N.A. personnel. (4) This committee also provided food and clothing of the Indian troops (5) since the Japanese had refused to take them back as prisoners. (6) It organized separate meetings for the N.C.O.s., the commissioned officers, and men and also joint gatherings. In separate meetings, officers and the N.C.O.s, and other ranks were given free latitude to ask any question. (7) These meetings had the salutary result of removing a good deal of suspicion against the President and they clarified to the rank and file of the army the reasons for the removal of the former G.O.C. (8)

From the beginning of February 1943, things had started changing for the better. Prime Minister Tojo, in a reply to an interpellation in the House of Representative of Japan on 4 February 1943, reiterated the statement that Japan had no territorial ambitions in India and on the contrary she (Japan) would give all-out assistance to see India free. (9) In the absence of

(4) Evidence by the witness for the Prosecution, D.C. Nag, before the first I.N.A. court martial, *ibid*.

(5) *Falta*, n. 3, 54.


(7) *Chatterji*, n. 2, 53. Chatterji himself took part in these lecture campaigns.

(8) *ibid*.

(9) Gen. Tojo's reply reemphasised Japan's promise to respect Thailand's sovereignty, her assurance of granting independence to Burma and the Philippines in near future, as a testimony of sincerity of Japan's pledge towards India. See *Our Freedom and Japan* (Bangkok, 1943) 19. Hereinafter referred to as *Our Freedom and Japan*.

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a full and formal declaration by the Government of Japan on India, the Indian Independence League and the Japanese controlled press made the fullest use of Gen. Tojo's comment to remove the prevailing suspicion among the Indians about Japan's intentions. (10) Similarly, the events in India were used to fan up the anti-British sentiments of the Indians in East Asia. This was expected to divert their attention from the recent troubles and forge a sense of unity among them. (11)

Gen. Tojo's statement on India was reproduced in this publication of Indian Independence League, Headquarters.

(10) The Indian Independence League published a statement on Gen. Tojo's comments about India and observed in it that, it (Tojo's reply) "has given the greatest inspiration to Indians who now realise all the more Japan's lofty spirit for the construction of Greater East Asia.... Fully comprehending General Tojo's statement the Indian people have come to trust Japan more than ever and their independence movement will make a rapid advance hereafter." Quoted in Our Freedom and Japan, Ibid., 20.

The Syonan Shim bun editorially wrote: "Indians throughout Greater East Asia must have read with the utmost satisfaction and gratitude the answer given in the House of Representatives on Thursday (4 February) by Premier Hideki Tojo in reply to an interpellation by Ryo Koyama about India. In unequivocal terms the Premier declared that Nippon had no territorial ambition in respect of India but rather on the contrary desired to see India regain its independence as soon as possible.... Premier Tojo's reiteration of Nippon's policy vis-a-vis India should spur Indian Nationalists on to further efforts...." The Syonan Shim bun (Singapore), 6 February 1943, 1.

(11) Indian Independence Day was observed on 26 January 1943 with great enthusiasm in all countries of the Greater East Asia. The reports regarding the celebration of Independence Day were received from Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Java, Manila, Hanoi, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Borneo, Sumatra and Japan. From the Tokyo Broadcasting Station greetings were sent to the people of India. Our Freedom and Japan, n. 9, 21-4.

The occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's fast for three weeks in February 1943 was used to the fullest extent. Expressing their sympathy with Mahatma Gandhi in his protest against the British

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Along with these efforts, the President immediately engaged himself in the work of salvaging the I.N.A. On 6 February 1943, he put forward a scheme to the Iwakuro Kikan for "reforming" the Indian National Army. (12) The scheme reaffirmed that the I.N.A. would be under the direct control of the Indian Independence League. The army would be organized on a "voluntary basis", and governed by the Indian National Army Act to be framed by the Council of Action. The Army should consist of (a) Headquarters,

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Government's policy of oppression in India and praying for the Mahatma's survival of the 21 day fast, Indians in Greater East Asia, observed the Gandhi week. The Syonan Shimbun (Singapore), 19 February 1943, 2.

Rash Behari Bose stated that with the starting of Gandhi ji's three week fast, India's struggle for independence had "reached a critical stage" leaving no room for the Indians in East Asia to hesitate about their course of action. From Rash Behari Bose to the officers and men of the Indian National Army, 13 February 1943, Exhibit E E of the first I.N.A. court martial, see Mottram, ed., n. 3, 307-308.

Kiwao Okumura, Vice President of the Board of Information of Japan, in a press conference at Tokyo on 23 February 1943, said: "Mahatma Gandhi's fast and his physical conditions are no longer his personal problem. They are the problem of whole India, in fact, of the world and that is why both the Government and private circles in Nippon are greatly concerned about it...." The Syonan Shimbun (Singapore), 24 February 1943, 1.

Having received the news that Gandhi ji had survived his fast, the Domei News Agency quoted The Nippon Times (Tokyo) as having described it as a "miraculous feat" and a "spiritual victory of the greatest import in the fight of the Indian people for independence from the tyrannous British rule." The Syonan Shimbun (Singapore), 6 March 1943, 2.

(b) Field Force Group, (c) Guerilla Regiments, (d) Special Service Group, (e) Intelligence Group and (f) Reinforcement Group. Further expansion of the Army would be carried out to the maximum extent "as facilities are offered by the Japanese side."

There was another notable feature of the scheme. It took away the independence of the army command. It was decided that a military department would be established within the League. This department would deal with "matters concerning the military administration and operations." That these matters would be taken away from the Army Headquarters' control and given to the newly created Military Bureau under the League indicated that henceforth the commander of the army would be a much less powerful figure than its former C.O.C. The new commander would only execute the wishes of the new department of the League which will be guided by the President.

The status of the I.N.A. "shall be deemed to be the same as that of armies of allied nations of Japan." The army should be used for securing or safeguarding Indian independence and for that purpose it could be used against British or any other Powers in India, or for defending the place where it was stationed.

The liaison agency approved the scheme. This scheme got the approval of the Iwakuro Kikan on the same day. (13) The next day, 7 February, the Iwakuro Kikan issued a statement in which it clarified its attitude towards I.N.A. and the Indian independence

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movement in general. Although the statement confirmed the points raised by the letter of the President dated 6 February and the comments of Gen. Tojo on 4 February 1943, it also clarified its attitude on other points. It was made clear that the liaison agency "cannot agree to the proposal to put the Indian Prisoners under the supervision of G.O.C. of the I.N.A." It also pointed out that the Japanese army had never attempted the dissolution of the I.N.A. or its disarmament. Thereby it implied its unwillingness to recognize any attempt by the Indian soldiers to revert en bloc to the status of P.O.Ws. It also assured the League that the Government of Japan had implied their consent to the Bangkok resolutions but no declaration could be made as the League was not a State. (14)

The scheme of reorganization of the I.N.A.: a compromise.
The terms, on the basis of which the President went ahead to revive the I.N.A., represented a compromise. The Japanese army recognized the control of the League over the I.N.A. and the latter would be given the status of a separate army. On the

(14) In his statement Col. Iwakuro wrote: "Although I consider that your request for an itemized reply is reasonable, I regret to say that the Japanese Constitution does not permit the Government to issue a written reply in such a form as desired by the Indian Independence League for the reason that the same is a mere political organization and cannot be regarded as a state. The Japanese Government, however, fully recognizing the existence of the League and its Movement have issued a written reply promising general support and instructed the Iwakuro Kikan to meet with the wishes of the Indian Independence League to the greatest possible extent."

For the text of the statement see Sopyan (pseud.) Mataji Subhas Chandra Bose: His Life and Work (Bombay, 1946) 240.
other hand, the League should not press for the control over the Indian P.O.Ws. which had already been taken over by the liaison agency. There was no chance of immediate expansion of the I.N.A. Moreover, there would be no declaration by the Government of Japan about their intentions regarding India. (15)

For Rash Behari Bose there were some reasons to reach a hurried settlement with the Jwakuro Kikan. As a veteran revolutionary, he was alert about the time factor. The achievements of one full year had been negligible and from the point of view of achieving the military end of the movement, they were behind the schedule. The tide of the Pacific War had indicated initial signs of reverses for Japan and, on the European front, Hitler's army had been beaten at Stalingrad. (16) In India, the American

(15) It must be mentioned here that the President of the Malaya Branch of the Indian Independence League broke away from the President of the Council of Action at this point of compromise. He had mobilized the support of the Presidents of the Malayan Territorial Committees for the President of the Council of Action in December 1942 in favour of carrying on the movement. He had patiently awaited a formal declaration which the President of the Council of Action had promised to secure and then submitted a memorandum on 21 February to the President of the Council of Action stipulating 13 conditions including the demand for a "formal or solemn declaration...clarifying in full the policy of Japan towards India." As it was not forthcoming, he resigned as President of the Indian Independence League. On 22 March 1943, The Swaran Shimbum reported that Mr. N. Raghavan had resigned "owing to ill health." He was succeeded by Dr. M.K. Luxumeyah as President of the Malayan branch of the League. The Swaran Shimbum (Singapore), 22 March 1943, 2. For the text of the Memorandum of the Malayan branch of Indian Independence League see S.A. Das and K.B. Subbaiah, Chalo Dalhi (Kuala Lumpur, 1946) 93-105.

(16) The American forces conquered Guadal Canal in August 1942. After engaging in six major sea battles near the Guadal Canal, the Japanese Navy lost control of the adjacent seas by the end of November 1942 and by February 1943, the Japanese garrison was withdrawn from the Guadal Canal. T. Kase, The Journey to Missouri (New Haven, 1950) 65-7.
soldiers and war materials had started pouring in. This was an
ominous sign for the army which would go into action in India to
drive away foreign Powers and it did not escape Rash Behari's
notice. (17)

The officers' demand for making Subhas
Chandra Bose's leadership available in
East Asia

As the propaganda meetings were being organized by the
Committee of Administration to popularise the cause of the army,

(17) From the beginning of 1942 the U.S. Government had
shown interest in India as a theatre of war which should be held
at all costs. The U.S. Economic Mission headed by Henry F.
Grady, sent to India in April 1942 to report on the requirements
for India's preparation for war against the Axis, stressed the
importance of India as a supply route to China and a base for
recapture of Burma. It said: "The Mission believes that India
is of great importance to the cause of the United Nations. In
its opinion this is because India can be utilized as a base for
an offensive against the Japanese in Burma, because India and
Burma are essential links in the efforts of the United Nations
to supply China with war materials, and finally, because India
possesses great natural resources which must not only be kept
from the enemy, but must also be fully developed for the benefit
of the United Nations. The production of military supplies
close to a military front is obviously vital."

Accordingly, over $60,000,000 worth of arms and ammunitions
were sent by America to India under Lend Lease Agreement in the
first half of 1942. In the later half of that year, shipments to
India more than doubled. In all, 500 million Dollars worth of
Lend Lease goods had poured into India by June 1943.

Edward R. Stettinius, JR., Lend Lease: A Weapon for Victory
(London, 1944) 169-63. Stettinius was the Lend Lease Adminis-
trator during 1941-4.

Rash Behari Bose made a radio broadcast in which he attacked
the American military assistance which was pouring into India.
He said, "a new and formidable menace for humanity has arisen in
the shape of the American plot to dominate the world. The sinis-
ter shadow of this scheme of America's world hegemony is already
lengthening across India." The Singapore Shinbun (Singapore), n. 10,
13 March 1943, 2.
the President put to the officers a questionnaire on 10 February (1943) to ascertain their opinion as regards their continuing in the I.N.A. In a statement issued by the President on 13 February (1943) it was stated that "practically all the officers are prepared to fight and sacrifice for freedom of our motherland" but "not all of them are willing to remain in the I.N.A." (18)

In February, Col. Iwakuro called a meeting of about 300 officers of the I.N.A. at Bidadari Camp in Singapore and spoke to them about the advisability of joining the Army, but with no effect. (19) Later on, in a "heart to heart talk" with some officers it emerged that "a large number of officers and men would be willing to continue in the I.N.A. on the express condition that Netaji would be coming to Singapore and until the time of his arrival no troops should be moved out of the island." (20)
It was also made a condition that the army should be strictly a voluntary one. (21) Col. Iwakuro acceded to these conditions and

(18) The President of the Council of Action in his state-
ment divided the unwilling officers into four categories, namely
(1) "those afraid of taking action against the British, (2) those
who do not seem to have full faith in the Indian National Congress,
(3) those who believe in Dominion Status for India, which assumes
a British victory, and (4) those who do not wish to remain in the
I.N.A. under the present circumstances." From the President of
the Council of Action to the Officers and Men of the Indian
National Army, 13 February 1943, n. 11.

(19) Shah Nawaz Khan, My Memories of I.N.A. and its
Netaji (Delhi, 1946) 72-3.
(20) Ibid., 74.
(21) Ibid.
he assured the officers that he would make the best efforts to make Subhas Chandra Bose's leadership available in East Asia.

Although the name of Subhas Chandra Bose and the promise of his coming had been with the Indians in East Asia from the initial period of the movement, (22) the necessity of his presence in East Asia was felt early in 1943 more keenly than ever. Rash Behari Bose might have understood that he had failed to secure a declaration about India from the Government of Japan. Subhas Chandra Bose might succeed where he had failed. He, therefore, readily welcomed Col. Iwakuro's suggestion of inviting Subhas Chandra Bose to lead the movement in East Asia. (23) He himself impressed upon Lt. Gen. Arisue, the new chief of the Military Bureau of the Imperial General Headquarters who was visiting Singapore in February 1943, the necessity of making speedy

(22) Mohan Singh, as it has been pointed out, had mentioned his name to Major Fujiwara in 1941. In Singapore Conference and Tokyo Conference (1942) the need of his guidance had been emphasised by the delegates. The Bangkok Conference had invited him to East Asia and had heard his stirring message.

(23) About his consultation with Rash Behari Bose in early 1943, Iwakuro later wrote: "At that time there gradually arose an atmosphere to invite Netaji Bose to the Far East and appoint him as the leader of the Indian Independence League. In the meantime Netaji was desirous to accept the above invitation.

Under such circumstances, I had consulted...Mr. Bose (Rash Behari Bose) regarding the above matter and whether to appoint Netaji Bose as new Chairman of the Executive Committee to which Rash Behari Bose agreed at once...I can hardly believe that there is a man like Mr. Rash Behari Bose who built up a great work despite many difficulties, and transferred unconditionally his work and position to another person." H. Iwakuro, "In Memory of the late Rash Behari Bose," in Radhanath Rath, ed., Rash Behari Bose and His Struggle for India's Independence (Calcutta, 1963) 57-8.
arrangements to bring Subhas Chandra Bose from Germany to East Asia. The Second Bureau of the General Headquarters was somewhat afraid that the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia might lead to a conflict for leadership between Rash Behari Bose who was senior in age and had built up the movement on the one hand, and Subhas Chandra Bose, the ex-President of the Indian National Congress, on the other. (24) When Rash Behari Bose assured Arisue that there was no possibility of any such conflict for leadership, the Imperial General Headquarters immediately started negotiation with the German Government on this point. (25)

The scheme of the 'reformation' of the I.N.A. implemented

Having assured of the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose in

(24) Later, Lt. Gen. Arisue wrote: "In February 1943 I was promoted as the chief of the Second Department of the Imperial Headquarters and then visited Singapore where I met Mr. Bose for the first time.... He was, however, much worried seeing the internal discords amongst the Indian Independence Volunteer Corps. Such being the case, there arose a proposal to invite late Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a refugee at that time in Germany to come to the Far East.... Regarding this matter, Mr. Rash Behari Bose called me to a special room and while partaking Indian rice-curry, requested me to make a speedy arrangement to bring Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Myself and my colleagues had no objection to comply with it, but we were much worried as to the seniority positions between the two Bosses after the arrival of Mr. Chandra Bose. So, I asked his frank opinion on this matter. In reply, he assured me that we should have no worry on this point, and that he would subordinate himself completely to Mr. Chandra Bose...." Seizo Arisue, "My Memories of late Rash Behari Bose," in Radhanath Rath, ed., Ibid., 60-1.

(25) Immediately on his return to Tokyo from Singapore, Lt. Gen. Arisue hurriedly negotiated with the German authorities to bring Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose to East Asia and to receive him in Japan. Ibid.
East Asia, measures were taken to put the army in order according to the scheme, discussed above. On 21 February, the new Military Department was set up with Lt. Col. Bhonsale, as Director and seven other officers. (26) A skeleton Army Headquarters, with Lt. Col. M.Z. Kiani as Army Commander was set up. (27) Following the President's move to take the opinion of the officers on 10 February 1943 and their subsequent interview with him, those officers, unwilling to join the I.N.A., were separated from the volunteers. In the second half of March, it had become clear that the soldiers had made their choice regarding their keeping in or away from the I.N.A. The directive issued by the Military Bureau on 22 March 1943, embodying the "Policy regarding the Reorganization of the I.N.A." mentioned that the army commander should go ahead with the

(26) Official Organization of the Military Bureau of the Indian Independence League, I.I.L. Papers. At first, five sections were established and these were: (a) Military Secretariat, (b) Section of Military Administration, (c) Section of Military Operation, (d) Gendarmerie, and (e) Law Bureau.

The Military Bureau was later enlarged. A new department, the Department of Enlightenment and Culture, was set-up. This department did the useful job of organizing platoon lectures in Simplified Hindustani and English. The object of the lectures was to broaden the outlook of the soldiers and make them familiar with the problems of India. These lectures were published by the Military Bureau in the form of booklets. Among the available booklets the following may be mentioned: Unity of India: Past and Present (Singapore, 1943); Religion, Castes and War (Singapore, 1943); Our Sufferings and Remedy (Singapore, 1943); Indian Independence Movement in India (Singapore, 1943); Indian Independence Movement in East Asia (Singapore, 1943); Do's and Don'ts for the Officers and Men of the Indian National Army (Singapore, no date mentioned).

(27) For the structure of the Department of the Military Bureau, I.N.A. Headquarters, the three Guerilla Regiments, the Intelligence Group, the Bahadur Group and the Number one Field Force Group see Exhibit F F of the first I.N.A. court martial, Motiram, ed., n. 3, 309-12.
measures of reorganization of the army without any delay, "as no more volunteers are expected to rejoin their units from separation camps." (28) Reliable sources agree that about four thousand men and officers of the first I.N.A. Division kept out of the I.N.A. in 1943 (29) and no pressure was used to enlist them in the army. (30)

Some motives of the volunteer and the non-volunteer officers.

It has been pointed out that the majority of the Indian officers


(29) Shah Nawaz Khan mentioned in his account of I.N.A. that three thousand officers and men did not join I.N.A. in 1943. Khan, n. 20, 76. But the number of non-volunteers, according to other reliable sources, is more.


This figure is confirmed by another reliable source. It mentioned: "All except about 4 thousand officers and men volunteered to remain" in I.N.A. in 1943. Indian Independence Movement and I.N.A. in East Asia, n. 1.


Since the strength of the First Division of the I.N.A. was about sixteen thousand in 1942, it can be assumed from the above information that by the end of May 1943, the I.N.A. consisted of twelve thousand Indian soldiers and about two thousand civilian recruits.

(30) Some of the Prosecution witnesses in the first I.N.A. court martial pointed out that in early 1943, when propaganda campaign was carried out among the Indian soldiers for recruiting them in the I.N.A., no pressure was brought to bear on them to (Contd. on next page)
who joined the I.N.A. in 1942, did so to safeguard the life and property of the Indians in East Asia as well as in India. (31) It can be assumed that the same motive influenced the decision of the majority of those who joined the I.N.A. in 1943. (32) Moreover, there were some among the volunteers who could not fully endorse Mohan Singh's act of dissolving the I.N.A. (33) Many of those officers who were influenced by the patriotic motive in joining the I.N.A. in 1942, might have agreed to rejoin the I.N.A. in 1943 in the hope that everything would be set right with the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia. On the other hand, among the officers who kept out of the I.N.A. in 1943, some were from the group which had joined the I.N.A. in 1942 with no other purpose than escaping hardships as the P.O.Ws. under the Japanese. The news of the Axis setbacks might have led them to think that further association with the Axis would expose them to greater risks. (34)

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Influence their decision. Evidence by the witnesses for the Prosecution, Jemadar Iltaf Razak and Naik Santosh Singh before the first I.N.A. court martial, see Motiram, ed., n. 3, 55, 56.

(31) See Chapter Three.

(32) The statement by Shah Nawaz Khan before the first I.N.A. court martial, see Motiram, ed., n. 3, 105.

(33) Capt. S.M. Hussain in his statement to the I.N.A. Defence Counsel said that in early 1943 "...a lot of officers were questioning about Mohan Singh's conduct and about his authority to break the I.N.A." The statement of Capt. S.M. Hussain to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. court martial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, All-India I.N.A. Relief and Enquiry Committee, New Delhi.

Having set the army in order, the President tightened his control over the League. The heads of the various departments of the League headquarters prepared a draft constitution of the League which was to be submitted to the joint conference of the representatives of the Indian communities in East Asia and those of the army, called by the President at Singapore between 27-30 April 1943. (35) The minutes of the meeting of the heads of the League departments on 20 April (1943) recorded:

The...Resolutions passed at the Bangkok Conference were discussed and it was decided to delete almost all the resolutions with certain exceptions. (36)

At the conference of the Indian Representatives of East Asia, the Subjects Committee, nominated by the President, agreed on a constitution of the Indian Independence League which made the President the all-powerful leader having complete control over the League and the army. (37) The Chairman of the Reception Committee aptly


(37) According to this Constitution, the Council of Action (with only three members) would be an advisory body. They might nominate a Council of War. The President was empowered (i) to nominate his successor, (ii) to nominate the Chairman of the Territorial Committees, (iii) to suspend or postpone the election of office bearers of the League, (iv) to make any laws which he considered necessary for the benefit of the movement.

The Resolutions passed by the conference of the Indian Representatives in East Asia in April 1943, I.I.L. Papers.
pointed it out. He said:

Now the Constitution has been changed.... Mr. Bose is the Constitution. He has a War Council consisting of the Director of the Military Bureau of the Indian Independence League, the Army Commander and one or more members nominated by the President. He has a Council of Action which will consist of two or more members who will advise him. All the local branch Presidents have been transformed into Chairmen and they will act only as Chairmen and will take instructions from the President direct, if he so chooses to do. (38)

During the conference it became fairly certain that Subhas Chandra Bose would soon be in East Asia. Col. Yamamoto, who was the Japanese Military Attache in Berlin and a close friend of S.C. Bose had participated in the final session of the conference as the new chief of the Japanese liaison agency. (39) Before the close of the session the President announced that "Subhas Chandra Bose who is expected shortly to this part of the world, will be his next successor." (40) Ground was thus prepared by the revised constitution to give Subhas Chandra Bose greater authority to act more effectively.

(38) Speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. Yellappa, on 30 April 1943, at the open session of the Conference of the Indian Representatives of East Asia at Singapore, I.I.L. Papers.

(39) Minutes of the open session of the Indian Representatives in the East Asia on 30 April 1943.

(40) Ibid.