APPENDIX I

The following was the article written by Gandhiji in the 'Harijan' dated 10 February, 1946.

‘Rajaji is one of my oldest friends and was known to be the best exponent in word and deed of all I stand for. That in 1942 he differed from me I know. All honour for the boldness with which he publicly avowed the difference. He is a great social reformer, never afraid to act according to his belief. His political wisdom and integrity are beyond question. I was therefore pained to find a clique against him. It is a clique that evidently counts in the official Congress in Madras. But the masses are devoted to Rajaji. I am neither vain nor foolish enough to feel that I could have had the huge public demonstrations all along the route of the pilgrimage if he had no influence with the masses in Tamilnad. Congressmen in the South will act as they think best. But I would be less than loyal to the organisation if I did not warn them against losing the valuable services
which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment.

Kamaraj issued the following statement on 12 February 1946.

"Yesterday the Parliamentary Board met as already arranged. But in the meanwhile Gandhiji's article appeared. That needed serious attention. So I adjourned the Board meeting so that I may consider Gandhiji's statement.

Gandhiji's signed article in Harijan published in yesterday's papers regarding Rajaji and Tamilnad Congress came as a shock to me.

I am the official head of the Tamilnad Congress. According to the Constitution I nominated the working Committee. Therefore, Gandhiji's reference can only be applicable to me. I have paid my respects to Gandhiji in person and have been in his calling distances in Madras and during his Tamilnad tour. So have been many of the other members of our Working Committee. It pains me much that Gandhiji did not
talk to us anything about the Tamilnad Congress affairs while here. His use of the word "clique" affects me deeply.

Neither I nor my colleagues believe in the Parliamentary programme except as a means to further the country's struggle for freedom. I had made my position clear on dozens of platforms since my release. At any rate, I am no aspirer to any kind of office under the Parliamentary activities.

As for the public agitation against Rajaji, it is only the reaction among Congressmen and the public to Rajaji's actions and speeches since his Pakistan resolution and resignation from the Congress. But after Gandhiji's recent article, I feel that I can do nothing else than resign from the Parliamentary Board, because all this conflict has come about only on account of the Parliamentary Programme.

Four of my colleagues, Messrs. T.S. Avinashilingam, C.N. Kothuranga Mudaliar, J.P. Ramaswamy Reddyar and Mrs. Rukmini Lalshimpeth felt compelled to quit also. I have persuaded them to remain for the very simple reason that the short time available for the election
work ahead could not admit of such wholesale resignations. I thank them for the spirit in which they have agreed to continue on the Board. They would certainly have been within their rights if they had followed my example. But they and I do not want to disturb the election work.

For my part I cannot but quit. For twenty years Gandhiji has been the leader whom I have unswervingly followed and my faith in his continuance unabated. That I should occasion his pain, drives me to take the action I have decided to take. I assure everybody concerned that every decision taken by the Board here or at the centre, will command my wholehearted acceptance.
In Mudukulathur Taluk in the coastal area of Ramanathapuram district, the Karavar Community members owed their allegiance to Muthuvelkarangam Thayavar. Though he was in Congress for some time he left it in 1946 and founded Tamil Nadu Forward Block – taking the name of the Party of Subhash Chandra Bose. The general election of 1957 and the subsequent by-election in July 1957 left a trail of bitterness between the Karavar Community and the Harijans as many of the Harijans in that constituency voted the Congress. To Karavars, the Nadar Community to which Kanaraj the Chief Minister himself belonged had played a role in inducing the Harijans to vote for Congress; also the "excess" police bandobust and presence of armed police at the time of election was resented by them. With the result the post-election period saw mounting tension between the two communities; with a view to settling the difference, the Collector of Rameswaram convened a peace conference on 10 September, 1957. The next day Emmanuel, the leader of the Harijans, who participated
in the conference was murdered. (Vatheramalinga Thevar represented the Narsvamars). This resulted in a series of clashes between the two communities in several villages in the district as a result of which about 38 persons were killed - 25 in communal clashes and 13 in police firing, about 2,850 houses were burnt, damage to property was estimated at about Rs.37,500/-. The allegations against the Government were that there was Police excess (Particularly in Kayla Thooval). Again police raids and searches were predominantly in the houses inhabited by Thovams. The Government immediately ordered an enquiry. It was entrusted to S. Venkateswaran, I.C.S., member of the Board of Revenue; in his Report the opening of fire by police in Kayla Thooval was justified on account of self defence and the Government accepted this finding; when opposition demanded a judicial enquiry such a demand was not conceded by the Government on the ground that since communal feelings mounted high, such an enquiry at that stage would only aggravate the situation, when the disorder was being brought under control.