CHAPTER IV

BRITISH POLICY

As discussed earlier, on July 14, 1942 the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution popularly known as "Quit India" resolution at Wardha which demanded the immediate withdrawal of the British Government from India. Like earlier movements, this was also started on "non-violent lines on the widest possible scale". This historic resolution was ratified by All India Congress Committee at Bombay on August 8, 1942. The Quit India Movement was, by all accounts, the most powerful and widespread agitation against the foreign rule. It evoked massive popular support and enthusiasm. Nationalistic awakening and anti-British sentiment reached newer regions and people. It was the most serious challenge faced by the British to their rule ever since the mutiny of 1857. An attempt has been made in this chapter to study and analyse the attitude of the British Government towards this resolution and the policies adopted by it in regard to this movement.

The response of the Government towards this in one respect was clear and categorical. The British had decided that nothing would be done regarding the constitutional matters as long as the war lasted. The Government was quite firm not to allow any political movement which might distract its attention from the pursuit of the war. Therefore, it looked upon the Congress demands as ill-timed and tantamount to an invitation to the enemy to extend...
his operations towards India. The Government was confirmed in its resolve to take drastic action because it was alarmed by the writings of Gandhi, the resolutions of the All India Congress Committee (April-May, 1942) and the Congress Working Committee of July 14. A few days prior to the launching of the movement, the British Government had made all necessary arrangements for dealing with the expected challenge. The Government never wanted to let the grass grow under its feet nor would it allow any movement to appear which might gather momentum. The Government did not hesitate to make use of any strategy which could help it in crushing the movement and keeping the people away from participation in the agitation. The Government was of the view that if the existing laws were not adequate, new one could be put into force. To achieve this objective the Government adopted a multi-pronged policy.

In the first instance the Indian authorities deemed it prudent to mobilize public opinion and encourage those parties and prominent individuals who did not agree with Gandhi’s policy, programme and the Congress resolution. It was also suggested that public opinion in England and even more in America, should be prepared well in advance for any strong action that might eventually be necessary. The Government of India asked all the Provincial Governments to review their arrangements for dealing with a mass movement in order to promulgate the Emergency Power Ordinance which had been kept in readiness. At the same time the

importance of promptly remedying all genuine grievances about the requisition of property for military purposes and the "denial-policy" was stressed. It may be recalled here that there were certain Congress leaders and liberals who viewed Gandhi's programme with serious misgivings. Certain Indian leaders like Chiman Lal Setalvad and Sir Cowasji Jehangir came out after the Wardha meeting with statements expressing strong opposition to the Congress Resolution. Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Purshotamdas Thakurdas and others issued a statement drawing attention to President Roosevelt's message about the United Nations Flag Day on June 14th and appeal to all Indians to throw in their lot with the United Nations regardless of any differences they might have with the British. Immediately after Nehru's public endorsement of Gandhi's plans, Sir Chiman Lal issued another statement commenting that the first result of the British withdrawal would be complete internal anarchy and the easy conquest of India by Japan. Gandhi, he added, apparently had no objection to the Hindus and the Muslims fighting each other but did not like their fighting together against the Japanese. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

4. Setalvad, Sir Chiman Lal, the Vice-Chancellor,Bombay University, 1917-29, Vice-President, All India Liberal Federation.
5. Jehangir, Sir Cowasji, Bart, Member, National Defence Council, Member Indian Legislative Assembly for Bombay City, President All India Liberal Federation,1936.
declared that Civil Disobedience at such a time was 'treachery to India' and 'playing the enemy's game' and urged all Indians as a patriotic duty "to resist with all power and resources at their command" the idea of the Congress to launch Civil disobedience. Rajagopalacharia, who had left the Congress after the Cripps Mission, observed that the 'withdrawal of the Government, without simultaneous replacement by another, must involve the dissolution of the State and society itself'. He went on to say further that the two major political organisations, the Congress and the Muslim League, should agree on some plans for a provisional national Government that could take over power. But it was imminent that only chaos could follow abdication by the British.

The resolution was denounced in Britain as a 'scarcely veiled threat of a sell out to Japan'. The National Executive of the British Labour Party which had previously supported Congress declared that the proposal to launch a civil disobedience campaign was a 'proof of political irresponsibility, might imperil the fate of all freedom loving peoples and thereby destroy all hopes of Indian freedom'. According to Cripps, Congress wanted the British to 'walk out' of India, leaving the country 'without any constitution or any Government'. If the demands were conceded, he said, there

would be 'chaos and confusion'. He added that such a situation would offer an 'irresistable temptation to Japan'. On July 26 1942, he also delivered forceful broadcast to America in which he quoted some of Gandhi's statements that India had been offered (once victory was gained) complete freedom provided that victory must be won, and Britain could not be allowed to give in before the actions of a 'visionary'. Amery, the Secretary of State, answering a question in the House of Commons on July 30th said that regarding the Cripps draft His Majesty's Government stood firmly by the broad intention of their offer, and he warned the Congress that the Government of India would not flinch from their duty to take every possible step to meet the situation.

Secondly, the Press was extensively used. Pro-Government newspapers, journals, magazines and periodicals were asked to take a strong line against the Congress. To certain papers such solicitations were not wholly unwelcome. They avidly took up the hints with a view to secure favours from the Government. Some of the vernacular newspapers and journals totally disapproved the programme of Congress at such a critical moment. The Times of India, New Statesman, the daily Herald took a strong line. It was significant that the Bombay Chronicle, generally a supporter of the

11. op. cit., August 6, 1942.
13. Ibid., MSS.EUR. F.No. 125/11, Linlithgow to Amery, 22 July, 1942.
Congress, was not happy about the resolution. It deprecated any kind of civil disobedience and particularly stressed the danger of launching such a movement without Hindu-Muslim agreement. The Standing Committee of the editors of all India Newspapers held a conference with the Home member, Government of India, at Delhi from May 6th to 8th, 1942. As a result a detailed course of action was framed whereby full use might be made of the Central Press Advisory Committee. It was also decided that harmful writings should be checked. Provincial Governments were asked to adopt a similar policy with their own Committees. The Standing Committee at the same time issued a circular to the Provincial Committees recommending that they would take "proper and adequate steps to discourage the spread of alarmist rumours and writings tending to undermine the public morale or to weaken the spirit of resistance to the enemy". Before the arrests of the Congress leaders, it was realised that some control of publicity would be required. After consultation with the Provinces, a general order was issued under Defence of India Rules 41(1)(b) prohibiting the printing or publishing of any factual news relating to the movement sanctioned by the A.I.C.C. or to the measures taken by the Government against that movement, except news derived from official sources, or from the three leading Press Agencies, or from a regular correspondent registered with his local

14. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR.F.No.125/6, Lumlaf to Linlithgow, July 17, 1942.

15. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR. F.No.125/144, May-July,1942, p. 34.
district magistrate. The order was designed to control the origin of news so as to secure what was published should be derived only from recognised and responsible sources. An explanatory press note was issued by the Government of India in which all Provincial Government were asked to hold Press Conferences to make the intentions of Government clear. The Director General of Information, Government of India, was the principal officer engaged in making anti-Congress propaganda and telling the masses: "Great Britain has promised India the choice between Dominion Status and Independence as soon as the Axis is beaten. Win the Victory and take your choice".

In order to win public support and to explain its own policy, the Government of India issued instructions to provincial governments and administrations to emphasize that the success of Congress movement would not only cripple "India's war efforts and gravely prejudice the cause of the United Nations" but also "handicap India's political advancement". It also declared that "actions taken by Government of India are not punitive but preventive", and blamed the Congress for adopting a non-negotiable course, declaring "no government could negotiate under pressure".

The Government was determined to prohibit the entrance of students and teachers in the movement because it feared that

17. Ibid., Linlithgow to Amery, July 19,1942, MSS.EUR.F.No.125/23.
their bulk participation might create problems for the authorities. In order to prevent the participation of students and teacher of Universities, "short term" and "long term" policies were evolved. As a "short term" measure, the Government stopped grants to such educational institutions whose members participated in movement and these grants were not paid till the proof of restoration of normal conditions was not provided. Innumerable teachers and taught were blacklisted; students were declared ineligible for examinations temporarily or permanently depending upon their offences, and those who abstained for long were struck off the rolls. 19

As a "long term" policy Proctorial system was introduced with a view to enforce and maintain discipline in the educational institutions; tutorial system was widely extended; individual institutions were reduced making it more easy to control them. Besides, rules for entry into Government service were revised so as to discourage "unsuitable" candidates. Above all, steps were taken to establish employment bureaus whose chief object was to advise parents and their sons about their careers. 20

The Indian element in these services was under great stress and pressure. Hence the various measures adopted by the British Government. To maintain morale of the services, the Government decided to give rewards for good services. Accordingly, the Railway and

20. Ibid.
Posts & Telegraphs Departments of Central Government not only gave cash awards but also accelerated promotions to personnel on duty in disturbed areas. It was also decided to increase the number of Indian Police Medals. On the other hand, no hesitation was shown in taking disciplinary action against those who failed in their duties.  

Provincial Governments were instructed to dispose off pension claims quickly and provide relief to widows and those government servants whose property was damaged. The Government of India ordered that its servants, who were continuously on duty during disturbances, were eligible for getting compensation when injury occurred while resisting the Congress workers. Special compensation officers were appointed for such purposes.  

Several measures were taken to secure general contentment of the employees. It was decided that Central Government should take steps to provide cheap food stores for them. These benefits were extended to the labourers in general and industrial labour in particular. At the same time, some additional steps were also taken to look after their welfare. For protection of labour and industry a better intelligence system in big factories was provided and arrangements were also made for early arrest of professional agitators or strike leaders.

21. *op. cit.*, F.No. 3/34/42.  
23. *Home Political (I)*, F.No. 3/34/42.
The Government also tightened up control over the manufacture, possession and sale of various explosive substances. An ordinance was issued imposing death-penalty for offences under the Explosive Substance, Act. It was decided to assist the Armed Forces of the Crown, including the Army and the Police, by developing a patrol system through village agencies on important lines of communications. A new scheme came into operation by which utmost use of the Armed Forces could be made wherever required.

The Government of India had, therefore, made elaborate preparations to nip the rebellion in the bud. A multi-pronged strategy was adopted to meet the most serious challenge to the British rule in India.

For almost a year following the British declaration of the war and the Congress declaration of opposition, the Government plotted their strategy. By the summer of 1940, this had taken final shape in the form of Revolutionary Movement Ordinance and an accompanying manifesto. The manifesto was to be issued by the Viceroy alongwith the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance, laying down the Government's position and future intentions. The manifesto asserted that the intention of the Congress leaders was to overthrow the existing Government of India by deliberately defying its laws. The manifesto went on to say that the Government of India had never accepted the pretence of the Congress to speak for the

24. *op. cit.*, F.No. 35/1/43.
whole of India and deemed it to be their duty to respect the views and interests of the communities and parties which did not agree with the Congress. The manifesto claimed that the rightness of this attitude on the part of the Government was vindicated. There must be countless Indians who will condemn or disown the decision of the leaders of the Congress and who will feel that, whatever is held in store, India can now best fulfill her destiny and her due place among the nations of the world only after the total extinction of the political party which, at this vital juncture has been fit to betray them...." The supporters of the constituted authority had nothing to fear, the manifesto assured. To all law abiding citizens and men of true patriotism and goodwill, the Government of India guaranteed not only their protection so long as the moment lasted, but also, when it would be defeated due recognition of their loyal support. "It is for them now to demonstrate by work and deed, that they are at one with the Government in holding that the entire energies of the country in war time must be devoted wholeheartedly to the defeat of its enemies, whether outside or within the gates". 25

It would now be appropriate to show the attitude of Home-Government, India Government and Provincial Governments towards the Congress. The Viceroy wished the total extinction of Congress and called for its active denunciation by loyal Indians who would be...

rewarded for their services. The manifesto and the Ordinance were the result of a year's consultation and planning within the Government of India. The issues on which it attempted to pronounce so decisively had been troubling officials since the outbreak of the war and the break with the Congress in the autumn of 1939. There were series of letters exchanged between the Provincial Governments, and discussions with the Home Department. Sir Reginald Maxwell proposed "not merely to reduce the Congress to a condition in which they would be prepared to make terms but to crush the Congress finally as a political organisation". 26

The Government's hands were strengthened by the Defence of India Rules which permitted to take arbitrary action against any person or group in the name of the war effort. But as their thinking with reference to the Congress stretched beyond military considerations, it was decided that explicitly political Revolutionary Movement Ordinance was desirable. Such a measure had been first discussed in 1937 when it was thought that the Congress might refuse to co-operate with the reforms inaugurated under the

26. op. cit.
Government of India Act of 1935. The resignation of the Congress ministeries in 1939 quickly stimulated the round of consultations. An updated package plan was finalised in August, 1940. In personal letters to Governors, Linlithgow explained that despite the studied vagueness of the phrase 'Revolutionary Movement', the situation primarily envisaged was a clash with the Congress. He also drew their attention to the significance of the decision reflected in the wording of the Ordinance declaring the Congress as a whole an unlawful association. "More importantly", wrote the Viceroy, "I feel very strongly that the only possible answer to a declaration of war by any section of Congress in present circumstances must be declared determination to crush the organisation as a whole".

This plan envisaged the wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders, the dismissal of officials considered disloyal, the closing of educational institutions and the seizure of bank accounts and party premises. Collective fines were to be imposed on troublesome areas, and the wealthy supporters of the Congress were to be attacked by what the Government called 'Economic Welfare'. The


28. Linlithgow Collection, MSS. EUR. F.No.125/89, Linlithgow to Glancy, August 8, 1940, also see Home Department, F.No. 3/13/40 - Political(I) Linlithgow to Chief Secretaries of all Provincial Governments, August, 1940, also see Transfer of Power, Vol.II, p.367.
Government would have preferred to deny Government contracts to all Congress contributors but it was decided that this would be impractical in cases where Congress contributors were major suppliers of material necessary for the war effort. The important legal question as to what constituted a revolutionary movement was resolved simply by the statement that any movement declared to be a revolutionary movement by the Viceroy was to be legally considered such.29

The Government preferred a separate Revolutionary Movement Ordinance for two reasons: the possibility that the Congress might not be fully suppressed until sometime after the end of the war in which case the Defence of India Rules would have lapsed; secondly the desirability of making known the Government's long range intentions to those who might otherwise be inclined to sit on the fence and waver in anticipation of an eventual Congress return to power. A forthright statement of intention seemed the only way to reassure the waverers and the prospective supporters. It would also allay the fears of the Government officers that action taken in pursuance of British orders would not lead to future victimization. These assurances, evidently, had little effect. The prolonged agitation demoralised the officialdom.30

29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
Confident of getting Churchill's support, Linlithgow carefully finalised his plans of a pre-emptive attack upon the Congress without any reference to the India office. He had been under the impression that the India office would give him a blanket approval of his scheme. Linlithgow had not realised that Churchill’s opinion counted little on the Indian question and the approval of the entire War Cabinet would be required. The War Cabinet could not prevent Churchill from making speeches but felt that Indian policy was too important to be left to the Prime-Minister. His views were generally discounted by his colleagues. The War Cabinet viewing the Indian situation from a great distance and eye on the reaction in Britain and the U.S.A. could not openly decree the extinction of the Congress.

The first difficulty arose when Amery was suddenly presented with a request for a stand-by approval of the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance in a telegram explaining that 'you may not have received' the full text of the Government of India's plan, sent by airmail some days earlier.

31. *op. cit.*
32. *Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR.F. No. 125/11, Amery to Linlithgow, September, 1942.*
33. *Ibid., MSS.EUR. F. No. 125/19, Linlithgow to Amery, September 11, 1940.*
In a subsequent telegram the Viceroy said:

"I and my advisors are clear that we are rapidly moving towards the moment when we shall have to proclaim the declaration of an organisation as an unlawful association under the Criminal Amendment Act. Congress, arrest, Working Committee, including Gandhi and leaders of Congress in all Provinces. I trust that you and Cabinet will feel that we shall take no action stronger than the situation requires, and that we must be free to take decision here and to act from day to day without reference home."

The Viceroy and his Government were convinced that time for temporizing had passed. A firm and clear action was the need of the hour.

Amery, however, refused to be panicked into action. He found it difficult to understand how the situation could have suddenly deteriorated. The Viceroy's request came as a surprise to him. There was nothing in the recent telegrams received from India which gave the impression of an impending crisis there. Telegram had only shown that Gandhi was gradually developing his policy of discouraging Indians from participation in war efforts. The conviction of Nehru for a "seditious" speech had been quietly received. After much deliberation the Cabinet decided to send the following reply:

34. Ibid., I.A.S. EUR. F.No. 125/19/558, telegram from Linlithgow to Amery, November 21, 1940.
'We should make it clear that we were prepared to support him (Viceroy) in whatever steps were necessary to maintain peace in India and India's effective part in the war. Before, however, we could agree to Congress being proclaimed, we must know exactly what his (Gandhi) programme involved. Prime facie, we thought it would give rise to an infinity of trouble if it was intended to make membership of the Congress Party, a criminal offence, and we found it difficult to see why it should be necessary to go further than proclaim the Working Committee. The War Cabinet would be glad to receive any new facts explaining now the situation was developing and which had bearing on the need for taking immediate action.\textsuperscript{35}

Amery now began a protracted correspondence with the Viceroy over the implications of his policy. The point at issue was whether, if a situation arose in which action had to be taken against the Congress, the Congress party as a whole should be declared an unlawful association, or whether it would suffice to proclaim as illegal the A.I.C.C., the Working Committee and the Provincial Congress Committees where necessary.\textsuperscript{36} In the discussions, it was expressed that to make membership of the Congress party a criminal offence would lead to grave embarrassment and provoke serious reactions.

\textsuperscript{35} Linlithgow Collection, MSS. EUR. F.No, 125/19/558, Amery to Linlithgow, November 21, 1940.

\textsuperscript{36} Linlithgow Collection, MSS. EUR. F.No, 125/19/495, Telegram from Amery to Linlithgow, September 16, 1940.
While it might be less convenient administratively to proceed by way of 'proclaiming' particular committees and bodies which formed part of the Congress organisation, the object in view could be achieved by these means. The attention of the Cabinet was also drawn to the views expressed by the ministers of three ministerial provinces, in August 1940, urging that a party which was responsible for revolutionary movement should not be later allowed to return to power. The ministries in those three provinces represented in general the Muslim point of view. The War Cabinet was, therefore, opposed to the proposal that the Congress as such should be declared an illegal organisation.  

In the course of correspondence, the Viceroy's proposal was considerably watered down. The Viceroy to begin with was refused the approval he had requested for. He was told that he must seek cabinet approval before issuing the Ordinance, and he must allow twenty-four hours for a decision to be taken. Amery further pressed that if action against Congress should become inevitable it would be desirable 'for public confidence both here and abroad to represent reason for our action against Congress Movement as their programme of obstruction of War effort and their political aspirations'. He further elaborated, "I am only

37. Linlithgow Collection, MSS. EUR. F.No. 125/19/558, Amery to Linlithgow, December 10, 1940.
concerned that you should take into consideration at all stages my preference from publicity point of view and that if conflict with Congress should arise, it should appear as an outcome of war necessity rather than a political quarrel unrelated to the War".

It was obvious that the War Cabinet would support firm action being taken against Congress leaders the moment it was established that Congress was determined to embark on a campaign of deliberate interference with conduct of the War.

Amery carefully revised the Viceroy's Manifesto so as to remove references to the 'total extinction' of the Congress, and rewards for loyal service. The Revolutionary Movement Ordinance was altered in order to eliminate the declaration of the Congress 'as a whole' illegal; this was replaced with wordings declaring only specified governing bodies of the Congress illegal. Amery emphasised that 'the question of actual machinery to be used is largely a matter of convenience'. He agreed that Ordinance would be most suitable instrument for dealing with a sustained emergency as soon as initial excitement had subsided and could appropriately be promulgated at that stage. He, however, strongly felt that 'our initial action' should be justified in terms of war requirements, keeping public opinion in mind.38

38. Home Department, F.No. 3/13/40, Political (I), also see Transfer of Power, Vol.II, pp.365-68.
Amery's reply came as a great surprise to Linlithgow who, in the past, and always managed to get his views accepted. His own personality and the force of his arguments had usually carried the day. Moreover, in the Prime Minister, Linlithgow had a strong supporter. The Viceroy was thus not prepared to be brushed aside so easily by the Secretary of State, who, though technically his superior, all along toed the Viceroy's line. Linlithgow protested against Amery's views and justified his proposal on defence requirements:

"We see no advantage and many disadvantages in starting action on limited front by means of an adhoc amendment of Defence of India Rules and then switching on to ordinance powers for use on the whole front... To select a particular passage in resolutions in order to justify use of Defence of India Rules in first instance would imply that order passages calling for general non-co-operation in order to enforce political demands of Congress were not regarded as definite challenge to the authority of Government or that Government were unwilling to take up such a challenge and this would be taken as an indication that we still looked forward to making terms with Congress in the political field. Moreover, in adopting such tactics we should be electing to fight on ground chosen by Gandhi for propaganda purposes and losing advantage of proclaiming at once the real character of the movement... To initiate action on an entirely new basis would dislocate all our plans and lead to great deal of delay... and the
Linlithgow considered that it was necessary for the maintenance of public order and the safeguarding of the war effort that his proposals be accepted. He ultimately respected Home-Government's wishes but without changing his views or abandoning his determination to carry on his attack on the Congress within the bounds prescribed by the War Cabinet.

The Indian Government proceeded with their plans for the eradication of the Congress on the assumption that the attitude of the War Cabinet reflected only caution, nor disapproval. The official History of Civil Disobedience Movement, 1940-41 noted: "It was, indeed, a complicating factor that the Government of India had to bear constantly in mind that H.M.G. were naturally anxious to avoid 'serious trouble in India' or a complete break with its important political party". The Indian Government were sufficiently intent on their course to consider the wishes of Whitehall only a 'complicating factor', not a reason for a basic redirection of policy. In response to Amery's wishes the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance was altered to eliminate the declaration of the Congress "as a whole illegal"; this was replaced
The Government's strategy for cracking down on the Congress had one disadvantage; it depended upon the Congress striking the first blow, by doing something 'revolutionary' to which the Government would react by calling into play its planned offensive. The Government had concluded that the moment had finally arrived in September 1940 when the Congress authorised Gandhiji to start the campaign against the Government. Gandhiji then launched the Satyagraha campaign in which select individuals were asked to deliver anti-war speeches. The Government, unable to label this as a revolution, could not clamp down. It was not until two years later with the launching of the 'Quit India' movement that the Government was able to implement its planned programme of pre-emptive attack.

In July 1942 when the Congress Working Committee adopted the resolution asking the British to leave India, the Government moved swiftly. Amery recommended to the War Cabinet that the Viceroy should be authorised to arrest Gandhi and the member of the Congress Working Committee. The War Cabinet authorised the Viceroy to take strong action if it should be necessary.

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Linlithgow was advised to move cautiously. He pointed out that apart from the violent language in the resolution, there was no indication that it was intended to be followed by action of any sort. The War Cabinet asserted that it would be a great mistake to strike immediately; it preferred to wait till the ratification of the resolution without any substantial modification by the A.I.C.C.  

In the period intervening between the meeting of the Congress Working Committee in July and the Assembly of the A.I.C.C. in August, the Government of India concentrated on a propaganda campaign in order to mobilize public opinion in favour of strong action against the Congress. Sir Frederic Puckle, Secretary of Information, sent a circular letter to the Chief Secretaries of the Provincial Governments outlining the Government's policy. In a strikingly forthright manner, the circular stated that in the period intervening between the Wardha session and the Bombay session of the A.I.C.C., the primary task of the official propaganda was to 'mobilise opinion against the concrete proposals' contained in the Congress resolution. The main 'lines of publicity'

42. Linlithgow Collection, MS.EUK. F.No. 125/23, Linlithgow to Amery, July 14, 1942.
suggested by Puckle included the argument that "a campaign of Civil Disobedience involves recklessly putting the cause of the United Nations in jeopardy and one encouraging the Axis... For the moment the object is to mobilize public opinion against the Congress policy as detrimental to the successful conduct of the War. Speeches, letters to the local press, leaflets, cartoons, posters, whispering campaigns are possible media for local publicity. Instructions to All Radio Stations will given by the centre".  

Two weeks before the A.I.C.C. met at Bombay, Linlithgow sent telegrams to the Governors outlining the action to be taken in the event of the A.I.C.C. ratifying the 'Quit India' resolution. The plan consisted of three stages. (i) To avert, (ii) to abort (iii) to suppress. In the first stage, the Government would avoid taking action till the Bombay meeting (7th August, 1942). The second stage would commence immediately after the ratification of "Quit India" resolution by All India Congress Committee.

43. Cited in K.A. Abbas and N.G. Jog, A Report to Gandhiji (Bombay, 1944) p. 17 Also see Harijan, August 23, 1942.
44. Linlithgow Collection, MSS. EUR. F. No. 125/110, Linlithgow to secretaries of the Governors, July 24, 1942.
this stage Bombay Government was asked to inform Government of India, all provincial Governments, Chief Commissioners and Political Residents, by telegrams containing a pre-arranged code word. No action would, however, be taken until the Government of India sent to all those mentioned above a further telegram containing pre-arranged code word which would be the signal for action. On receipt of the telegram from Government of India:

(a) Bombay Government would arrest Gandhiji, and all members of Working Committee under the Defence of India Rules; 46 (b) Each Provincial Government would proclaim under Criminal Law Amendment Act 47 Congress Working Committee, All India Congress Committee and each Provincial Congress Committees within its jurisdiction, but not Indian National Congress as a whole. Provincial Governments were also given discretion to proclaim other Congress Committees or Committees affiliated to Congress including those of Socialist Party against which they considered it essential to take action by way of seizing offices and funds; (c) Each Provincial Government could seize relevant offices and funds and also arrest under

46. The Defence of India Rules, section 26, conferred powers on the Central or Provincial Governments to restrict the movements or activities of, or to detain, any particular person if it was necessary so to do 'with a view to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the defence of British India, the public safety, the maintenance of public order', relations with foreign or Indian States, 'or the efficient prosecution of the war'. Mansergh Nicholas op. cit., Vol.II, p.449.

47. Criminal Law Amendment Act gave wide power of search and seizure of the property.
Defence of India Rule 26, all individuals whom the Government considered necessary and likely to attempt to organise and launch mass movement. No individual was to be arrested for merely being a member of unlawful association. The general object was not to fill the jails but to limit the number of arrests to those regarded as essential for dislocation of the Congress organisation.

In the third stage, the whole Congress organization was to be declared unlawful, and Emergency Powers' Ordinance, 1940 promulgated if these measures failed to stultify Civil Disobedience. The main object of this action was to render the movement abortive by removing and detaining its leaders. All possible precautionary measures were to be taken in consultation with the military authorities to deal with the danger of widespread demonstrations and disorders. The authorities hoped that the adoption of these measures would result in the collapse of the movement.

A big question before the British Government was as to how to deal with Gan hihi and other Congress leaders. Whether they should be arrested or not was a perplexing problem. The British War Cabinet was in doldrums as to what to do with the

49. Ibid., pp. 534-35.
50. Ibid., p. 536.
51. op. cit., p. 609.
Indian leaders. It was divided over this issue. Eventually the
War Cabinet decided on August 6, 1942 that Gandhiji should be
removed from India and kept at Aden. The question then arose
whether other leaders should also be taken out of India or not.
On this, it was decided that half a dozen or a dozen of the other
important leaders should also be deported to East Africa. Like
the British War Cabinet, the Indian bureaucracy was also divided
over this issue. But the Viceroy with the majority of legislators
and his council was strongly opposed to this course. As anticipated
that Gandhiji intended to fast, the Viceroy and his Council thought
that it would be easier to deal with him if he were detained in
India than abroad or on the high seas. Lord Linlithgow's
advisors and all Provincial Governors except two (Sir A. Hope,
Madras and Sir H. Twynam, Central Provinces and Berar), also
disagreed with the War Cabinet's decision. Ultimately the
British War Cabinet had to agree with the decision of the Govern-
ment of India that Gandhiji and other leaders should be confined
in India.

The question arose that if Gandhiji after arrest conducted
fast, what measures should be taken. The Government of India

52. Ibid., p. 587.
53. Ibid., p. 605.
54. Ibid., p. 587.
55. Ibid., p. 617.
decided that "cat and mouse" policy would be followed as on previous occasions. He would be given every facility to take food and receive constant medical attention, but he might be released as soon as his life went into danger so that the possibility of his death could be avoided. But the War Cabinet was strongly opposed to the idea of 'cat and mouse' policy. It was in favour of keeping him in detention even if he went on hunger-strike. Ultimately, it was decided with the approval of War Cabinet the Gandhiji must continue in detention whatever the consequences might be.

Having finalised their plans, the Government of India marked time and waited for the Congress to put itself in the wrong. The wisdom of the Government to allow the Congress leaders to go on preaching rebellion and making plans was questionable. There were some discussion in the Viceroy's Executive Council in which it was suggested that a general warning should be issued to caution the Congress but the suggestion was dropped in the hope that when the Wardha resolution came up for confirmation at Bombay on August 7, the ultimatum contained in it might be withdrawn in view of its widespread condemnation not only in Britain and the U.S.A., but also in India itself. When the day of decision drew nearer, Amery speaking in the House of Commons warned the Congress leaders that there would be no compromise with the rebellion.

56. Ibid., pp.586 & 588.
57. Ibid., p.606.
The A.I.C.C. met on August 7 and after prolonged discussion for two days it confirmed the Wardha resolution. The resolution provided the pretext for which the Government had been waiting. The moment the resolution was passed the opportunity was seized by the Government to claim that it stood for the defence of India against the threatened invasion by Japan in contrast to Congress attempts at disrupting that defence, to describe the Congress as pro-Fascist, pro-Japanese and to make this a political basis for keeping the Indian leaders in prison for the duration of the war and to refuse political advance. The Government issued an 'Extraordinary Gazette Notice' on the very morning of August 8, 1942 in order to justify its planned and pre-determined action against the Congress. The notification described the Congress as "a totalitarian organisation" and blamed its leaders for consistently impeding the growth of Indian nationhood. It was apparent that the Government was about to follow a policy of repression and terror to liquidate the whole Congress organisation.

The first blow on the Congress fell on the very morning of August 9 when the Commissioner of Police and Rao Bahadur Desai reached Birla House where Gandhiji with his personal staff and close companions, such as his wife, private secretary, Sarojini-

Naidu, Meera Sen, Sushila Nayar etc. were staying. The Police Commissioner presented the warrant of his arrest and gave him half an hour to prepare for his departure. With all his companions he was confined in Aga Khan Palace at Poona. Simultaneously all the members of the Working Committee in Bombay were lodged in the Ahmednagar Fort. Then arrests took place all over India and a large number of Congressmen were thrown into prison. The Government did not disclose the whereabouts of the Congress leaders. They were not permitted to communicate even with their close relatives because "the preventive character of the Government action would be entirely defeated if such contacts were allowed". The Government also declared All India Congress Committee, Congress Working Committee, and the Provincial Congress Committees as unlawful associations by exercising power under the Indian Criminal Amendment Act.

The Government showed no hesitation in using full powers provided by the Defence of India Rules. In addition, the Penalties (Enhancement) Ordinance and Special Criminal Courts Ordinance, which were intended for situations arising directly from enemy attack were also applied. An effective use of "Collective Fine Ordinance", laying joint responsibility on inhabitants of any area concerned

60. Home Political, F.No. 3/21/42, also see, Linlithgow-Collection, MSS.EUR.F.No.125/56.
in the commission of certain classes of offences, was made by Provincial Government. 61

In face of such serious challenge, the authorities exercised strict vigilance on mass media. A strict restriction on the publication of news was imposed as the news of what had occurred in one place could lead to its repetition at other places. Full executive powers were given to the police throughout the "disturbed" area. "They on many occasions opened fire on riotous mobs and gangs of saboteurs in defence of property, or not infrequently, of their lives". 62

The Revolutionary Movement Ordinance was signed by the Viceroy and set up in type to be issued in the Gazette of India, but it was withheld pending the receipt of request for it from the Provinces. Such request did come from the Central Provinces but other provinces reported that they would use the powers available to them under the Defence of India Rules. The dubious legality of using Defence Legislation against a domestic uprising, which had seemed so inhibiting during the preparatory discussions, seemed inconsequential to Governors faced with the practical problems of suppressing the revolt. So long as they had the substantive powers contained in the Ordinance, they could do without its

62. Home Political (I), F.No. 24/11/42-POLL-(I)
preamble. Without a clear cut mandate from the provinces, and bearing in mind the opposition of Amery, Linlithgow decided that the Ordinance should not be issued. Sections of the Ordinance were issued as amendments to existing laws and a memorandum was sent out stating the policies which were now to be followed independently of the Ordinance. All plans evolved over the past three years were brought into operation, but without the straightforward declaration of principle which had been intended to tie everything together and make the Government's long range intention, the Congress was dealt with as a 'defence' menace after all.

Now it would be appropriate here to make a comparative study of Punjab with other Provinces of India.

The special measures taken at Bombay to deal with the movement consisted of the arrest and detention of leaders, banning processions and meetings without prior permission of District Magistrate. Railways and other public concerned departments asked for the requisitioning of military assistance, issue of curfew orders, use of Defence of India Rule 81-D, the imposition Collective Fines and use of section 5 of the Penalties(Enhancement) Ordinance 1942 and section 7 of Criminal Law Amendment Act 1932. Hence the Provincial Committees were declared unlawful and imposed the Whipping Act to Bombay City.

63. Home Political(I), F.No. 3/34/42.
In Bihar repression resorted to by the British Government for suppressing the people of Bihar was of the most ferocious and savage description. The army was let loose on the people in every district. The authorities tried to nip the movement in the bud by resorting to mass arrests of the leaders, active workers and the people without any discrimination. Both Military and Civil authorities gave the fullest publicity to the Collective Fines Ordinance. Fines were imposed in 23 cases involving 170 villages in 8 districts. The total amount of fines came up to Rs. 5,78,200. Curfew was imposed in Monghyr, in two sub-divisions in Patna district and in many towns of Southern and Northern Bihar. Traffic between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m. was prohibited on 16 important roads in Patna, Gaya and Shahbad. Sections 3 to 7 of the Enhancement of Penalties Ordinance were brought into force throughout the Province. Special Magistrates and Judges were appointed under the Special Criminal Courts Ordinance. All railway premises were declared to be protected places. Access to railway stations and ferries etc. was controlled by a system of permits.

In Central Provinces, the extensive powers of the Defence of India Rules were delegated to District Magistrates, who used

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64. op. cit.
65. Ibid.
powers of arrest under Defence of Rules 129. Collective fines were frequently imposed and promptly collected.

In United Provinces, the Penalties (Enhancement) Ordinance was applied first to Kanpur, then to Allahabad, Banaras, Agra and Meerut and finally to the whole Province. The Special Criminal Courts Ordinance and Rule 81-D of the Defence of India Rules were also put into operation in the entire province. The chief weapon was the arrest of leaders who were found inciting people.

As a part of the repressive measures, the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee was declared illegal. Records of Bengal Civil Protection Committee were seized and the building and furniture of the office of Congress Civil Defence Board was badly damaged. In Bengal, the provincial government took special measures to rally public opinion against the movement. The public was asked to refrain from violence otherwise use of force would be taken. The basic contention of the provincial government behind this warning was to eliminate bitterness and criticism. Besides, the efforts made by the authorities proved unsuccessful and resulted only in "ham-stringing". It provided an opportunity to the nationalists to ignore local authorities' warnings and to carry on their work. In such situation, the officers decided to deal firmly but no "special measures" were in general applied.

66. op. cit.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
In Delhi, the measures consisted, in brief, of the cordoning of the city and suburbs from European residential areas of New Delhi and the Civil Lines by Police and troops coupled with strong offensive measures against the city mob wherever it could be brought to action.⁶⁹

In Orissa, the imposition of collective fines on areas where "mob-violence and hooliganism" took place was resorted to. Leflets were circulated giving warning to the people.⁷⁰ In Koraput, a small paid and specially appointed staff working under the District Magistrate "did their well".⁷¹

In Ajmer-Marwar censorship was imposed. Though there were serious disturbances in surrounding cities like Delhi, Agra, Mathura, Jodhpur and Ahmedabad, yet this region remained peaceful. As a result of the closure of schools and colleges, people were unable to derive 'mob-courage' and it prevented them from staging demonstration.

In Madras no special measures were taken except prohibition of meetings and picketing.⁷² In Assam, Collective Fines Ordinance was introduced.⁷³

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⁶⁹. *op. cit.*
⁷¹. *Ibid., F.No. 3/44/42.*
⁷². *Ibid., F.No. 3/34/42.*
As the nationalist struggle gathered momentum, the Government was very anxious about the Punjab as this province was crucial as a frontier region and a base for the recruitment of the Indian army. The basic objective of the British Government was to preserve Punjab as the base for army recruitment. The British Government tried to fight the nationalists with the help of loyalists. The bureaucracy cultivated loyalists and feudalists. This bore fruit in the form of the Unionist party which dominated the Punjab politics till 1945.

The Government of India directed the Punjab Government to overhaul plans for dealing with mass civil disobedience movement on the lines discussed above. The Government of India felt it essential to crush it at the outset and prevent it from obtaining any momentum. 74

The Viceroy's council met on 15th July in which no European was present except Benthall. It was decided that it would be wise to wait and see whether the All India Congress Committee ratified the Working Committee's resolution when they met on August 7, 1942. But the government must be prepared to take immediate action thereafter in the event of ratification. The Viceroy, Linlithgow, apprised 3. Glancy, the Governor of Punjab, that his colleagues were very emphatic as to the importance of

propaganda here at home, in the United States and in China. A suggestion was also made that it was of real importance that they should mobilize so far as possible those individuals and parties throughout the country which did not agree with the Congress's Quit India resolution or with Gandhi's policy, and endeavour to persuade them to come out in open condemnation of it. The Viceroy suggested to Glancy that he should contact Jogendra Singh, the Sikh leader, and see what could be done to try to get the Sikhs to come out in reasoned criticism in opposition.

This was of course a delicate business and the Viceroy suggested to Glancy that they must walk very circumspectly. But he was certain that Glancy would agree with him on the importance of preparing the ground in every possible way by propaganda, refutation, and analysis of the weaknesses of the Congress resolution, contrast between the terms and demands in that resolution and the proposals projected at the time of Cripps negotiations and the fact that acceptance of their view would mean a move from unreality to reality.

The Viceroy also informed Glancy that he believed that Gandhi's followers were not too nappy about all this business, and it was quite obvious that he was trying to force the pace. But

75. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR. F.No.125/91 Linlithgow to Glancy, July 16, 1942.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
the Viceroy was confident that they would be able to deal with him (Gandhi), if they could get over the propaganda properly and a sufficient stream of adverse comment from the United States in particular. 78

B. Glancy, the Governor of Punjab, entirely agreed with the Viceroy's views about the value of counter propaganda. He assured the Viceroy that there would not be any lack of articles in various sections of the Indian Press strongly condemning the attitude which the Congress had adopted. Jinnah had already spoken very harshly in the Dawn and elsewhere conveying his warning to the British Government of the consequences which they were to expect if they yielded to Congress demands. It was not likely that the Muslim Press in general would adopt a different line. Eastern Times of Lahore, which was the "Premier Indian Muslim journal and leading English organ in northern India", contained quite a helpful article about "Wardha's Ultimatum". It ended up with the remark that Gandhi's recent performance was "undoubtedly the greatest and most unashamed attempt at black-mailing in history". Some of the Sikh newspapers were expected to express similar feelings. The Governor of Punjab assured the Viceroy that they would collect extracts from various newspapers and send to Delhi anything that was likely to be of assistance by way of

78. Ibid.
propaganda. He assured that he was trying to get into contact with Jogendra Singh, but, as he (Viceroy) was so well aware, he would have to be tackled with considerable caution. Master Tara Singh and his Akalis he added, were "notorious" for their habit of "sailing in two boats" and inspite of the Sikhander-Baldev Singh Pact they had by no means severed their connection with the Congress. Glancy was doubtful whether either prominent Akalis or Jogendra Singh who took his cue from them would be as out-spoken as he would like him to be. However, he assured the Viceroy that he would see what could be done.

B. Glancy assured the Viceroy that the Congress Working Committee's demands would not meet with any general support outside Congress circles in the province. Punjab Muslims of almost all shades of opinion subscribed to the criticisms voiced by Jinnah, Firoz Khan Noon, Sikander Hyat Khan and others. The Ludiania paper Sunrise also opposed the movement. Sikander said in a meeting at Lyallpur: "If the British quit India, chaos will follow and no ordered Government will be possible". The Punjab Governor also claimed that the Punjab Congress party was at a low ebb and its leaders were at loggerheads with each other. The

79. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR, F.No.125/91, Glancy to Linlithgow, July 18, 1942.
80. Ibid.
81. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR, F.No.125/110, Linlithgow to B. Glancy (Punjab), A. Hope (Madras), Sirimulley (Bombay), and J. Herbert (Bengal), 26 July, 1942.
two main groups led by Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargav and Dr. Satyapal would both be inclined to follow Gandhi's lead, but the Satyapal group would hesitate to do anything that might increase the prestige of Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargav. The Congress Communists could not support a movement of the kind contemplated and might be forced out of their alignment with the Congress. The Congress Akalis would be in an awkward position in view of the Akali-Unionist rapprochement. 83

The Governor further added that it was significant that the Lahore Hindu Press, which ordinarily supported the Congress, had shown no great enthusiasm for the resolution. The Tribune on the whole had refused to advocate a mass movement. 84

The Sikhs were generally better disposed towards Government than for some time past as a result of Sikander-Baldev pact and the appointment of Sir Jogendra Singh to the expanded executive council. Sir Jogendra Singh and Sardar Baldev Singh spoke distinctly at a tea party on 22nd July 1942 which Glancy also attended. Baldev Singh's remarks included the following: "Let me again make it clear that while I stand steadfastly to safeguard the interests of my community, I will be failing in my duty if I do it at the expense of any other community or to do

83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
something which will embitter the communal solution... our country is threatened with evil forces of aggression and it should be the duty of every true Punjabi to get ready to make any sacrifice to meet internal disorder, and to defeat the forces of external aggression. My community has already played its part well and I have no doubt whatsoever that it will excel its tradition by answering the call of the hour and mustering in thousands to repeal the evil forces that are threatening the democracies of the world. Sardar Naunihal Singh, M.L.A., Sardar Jogendra Singh Mann, M.L.A., Sardar Bahadur Gurbachan Singh, Deputy speaker of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, and Sardar Raghbir Singh Sandhanwalia, President of the Khalsa Defence of India League, had criticised the Congress proposals and issued the following statement to the Press: "We have noticed with great surprise and alarm the drift of Congress towards direct action in these critical days. We, who are fighting for the defence of India, are no less anxious than when peace is gained, India may also gather the harvest of the great sacrifice she is making.

"At this critical hour it would be almost suicidal on the part of the Congress to start any movement which may lead to the dissipation of our energies and the undermining of our war effort."

85. Ibid.
86. Formed in 1941 with the object of encouraging Sikh recruitment to the army.
"His Excellency the Viceroy's Cabinet has been Indianised, but has not yet begun to function. It should be given an opportunity to work for a settlement such as the people of India desire. Whatever the Congress leaders may think, those who are fighting on our far-flung frontier men drawn from India, Empire countries and America would not be grateful if Congress starts a campaign of disruption in these critical days. On the other hand, the new Cabinet should no more delay a declaration of its policy, its determination to maintain the integrity of India and its resolve to make the Government of India". 87

Linlithgow also asked Glancy to take care of the state of morale of police force with particular regard to possible action against Congress. 88 Glancy replied that the sanctioned strength of the Punjab police was 9,000 more than the pre-war strength. Although the police force as a whole was working under considerable strain and they were short of experienced officers but the morale was good. The Inspector General was satisfied that the force would be able to tackle a mass movement by the Congress. 89

Linlithgow suggested to Glancy that it would be important to give District Officers in particular a line, and he should also consider the possibility of fairly active propaganda in respect of their action in towns. In suitable localities District Officers or their subordinates might read a short message designed to steady and reassure the public. Expediency of posting notices on public buildings might also be considered. Linlithgow also considered using the National War Front move extensively in this connection. Glancy informed the Viceroy that he had instructed the Deputy Commissioners to explain to District War Committees which were of course quite distinct from the War Front the way in which Congress had taken action designed to betray the country. This would seem to be an effective way of rallying the opinion of those who were well disposed. District Officers would no doubt take other opportunities of putting across the Government's point of view and this could be done with good effect in interviews.

Even before the start of the Quit India Movement, the Chief Secretary, Punjab Government, sent detailed secret instructions to the Deputy Commissioners about the measures to be taken against the 'agitators'. The Deputy Commissioners were further

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90. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR. F.No. 125/23, Linlithgow to all Provincial Governors, August 3, 1942.

91. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR. F.No. 125/91, Glancy to Linlithgow, August 5, 1942.
advised: "It should be borne in mind that by far the most effective method to suppress any campaign of this nature is to arrest as quickly as possible the leaders, organisers and active members of all associations promoting it, and to continue to arrest subordinate leaders, if they seek to encourage the campaign after the first blow has been dealt".\footnote{From Chief Secretary, Punjab Government to all D.C's in the Punjab Secret letter No. B-4332-50-B.D.S.B, dated: 30 July 1942, D.C.Rchtak Records(Conf), F.No.H/40, p.111}

The arrest of Gau.iji and the members of the Congress Working Committee and many other prominent Congress leaders in Bombay was the starting point of the Quit India Movement in Punjab. The events in Bombay signalled the Punjab Government to act. The Punjab Government made a concerted effort to crush the movement with a heavy hand. Immediately after the arrest of all-India Congress leaders in Bombay, the whole machinery of the Provincial Government was set in motion to face this challenge. Some of the Congress members from Punjab like Jagat Narain, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, who had gone to attend the historic session at Bombay, were arrested by the Punjab Government in obedience to the order of the Central Government. Mr. Dev Raj Sethi, Pandit Sri Ram Sharma, Chaudhry Sahib Ram, Chaudhry Krishna Gopal Dutt, Sardar Pratap Singh, Shrimati Shanno Devi, Munshi Hari Lal, Cmt. Chaman Lall, Mr. Bhim Sen Sachar,
Deth Ludershon, Sardar Chaman Singh, Dr. Sant Ram, Baba Kuri Singh, Sardar Harjab Singh, Master Kabul Singh, Chaudhry Kartar Singh and Lala Deshbhandhu Gupta (all M.L.A's) were arrested. Punjab Government arrested even those innocent persons who were engaged in their private professions. Not only that, it even arrested those who were not even prepared to take part in the policy of violence and sabotage. Besides, arrests were made of those persons who had not taken part in the political work for a long time in the past. They were arrested on suspicion and were put behind the bars. They were kept in jails of Shahpur and Mianwali which were considered the worst jails of the province. A large number of persons were either detained under various laws of prosecution and conviction or Defence of India Rules. Consequently, the Punjab Government arrested about 1432 persons by October, 1942.

Within the span of a few days, the Government put innumerable persons in jails. Even such men and women, who had given up their connection with political organisation and retired from political life long age were trapped. Many families were deprived of their only breadwinners and left to their fate. Lal Pindi Das was one among those persons who had retired from Congress politics.

95. Home Political, 18/10/42, 1st half of October 1942.
96. The Tribune, September 5, 1942.
long ago. He was arrested. Three brothers, the breadwinners of a big family of Amritsar, were put behind the bars. Only one among them had brief political past. He was engrossed completely in his professional work when the police arrested him. His brother Vir Dev Veer, a leader of the Hindustan Scout Movement who had never taken active part in any political agitation or movement was also arrested.  

The local police officials, without consulting the Deputy Commissioners of their districts, ordered their subordinates, the police constables, to get hold of every Congressman, and put all of them in jails without any rhyme or reason. The police officials were being given blank sheets of warrant paper which were signed by the concerned officials. Sub-Inspectors of Police were empowered to put the name of anybody on the list and could arrest anyone at any moment. Consequently they arrested innumerable Congress People under section 129 of the Defence of India Rules. It could be summed up as a policy of indiscriminate arrests generally without justification and sometimes, without even proper scrutiny.

Apart from arrests, the Punjab Government also tried to tackle the movement by other methods. On August 10, 1942, the Government of Punjab, acting on the behest of Central Government,  

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97. Ibid.  
98. Ibid., September 28, 1943.  
issued a notification by which the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and the District Congress Committees and others organisations which were affiliated to the Congress-like Socialist Party were declared unlawful. The Government had imposed certain restrictions on the publication of the news and comments in connection with the measures it had adopted to grapple with the dangerous move the Congress was threatening to launch. On August 13, 1942, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab, attacked the Congress party for being "cowardly". At Cairo, where he was on a visit to meet the Indian soldiers, he observed. "I am confident that all patriotic Indians and Punjabis particularly will see to it that the brothers fighting our battles against a most formidable and unscrupulous enemy are not betrayed". This statement clearly shows that he wanted to win over the people on emotional grounds. The views of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan are further corroborated by the statement made at Lahore in August, 1942, in which he had said: "As far as the Punjab is concerned, we have special reason to resent the movement which the Congress leaders threatened to launch. Hundreds of thousands of gallant sons of this province are fighting the enemy on various points of the battle field and the province as a whole is wedded to a policy of giving all possible help to win the war".

100. Ibid.
101. Linlithgow Collection, MSS.EUR.F.No.125/91, Glancy to Linlithgow, November 13, 1942.
102. The Tribune, August 14, 1942.
103. Ibid., August 2, 1942.
The Punjab Government also tried to win the public sympathy on its side. The Provincial Government issued a Press note on August 17, 1942 conceding further concessions to relatives of soldiers killed on war fronts and in active service. The concessions related to the exemption from payment of the fees charged in respect of entries relating to the acquisition of a right or interest by inheritance in the property of the deceased. Special attention was paid to Hindu susceptibilities. The Government tried to appease the urban Hindus, i.e. trading communities by granting certain concessions regarding General Sales Tax. Moreover, the Government kept on taking good care of social and religious interests in order to win over the mass of population. To terrorise the people into submission, the Punjab Government notified the Penalties (Enhancement) Ordinance No. J.H. of 1942 for the whole province. The Ordinance provided the enhancement of death penalty for certain types of offences such as looting, arson, voluntarily causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons and sabotage.

In order to effectively deal with the hartals, the Government of India passed a new rule 81-D of the Defence of India Rules which authorised the district Magistrates to break-open the shops of the traders who closed their premises due to hartals. The Indian

104. Ibid., August 18, 1942.
105. Home Political, F.No. 18/8/42, First half of August, 1942.
106. The Tribune, August 26, 1942 (Commenting on the Collective-Fines Ordinance, the Tribune said, "Happily for the Punjab no occasion for its use has so far arisen in this province")
Government pointed out that the above rules placed emphasis on the maintenance of supplies rather than on the law and order aspect of hartals. D.R. Suchwar, Deputy Commissioner, Gurgaon, made use of this rule. On August 13, 1942, he invoked the maintenance of "supplies essential" order in the town of Rewari where a hartal was being observed. The shop-keepers and owners of hotels and restaurants were asked not to close their premises and not to charge more than the price fixed in the schedule. The schedule was quite detailed and contained prices of 28 commodities of daily use. The list included cereals, pulses, bread, sugar, gur, dairy products, spices, kerosene oil, soaps, charcoal, fire-wood, medicines, fodder and vegetables etc.

On coming to know about some cases of stamping currency notes with Congress slogans in one of the districts of the Punjab, the Government issued an ordinance (No. Lix of 1942) which restricted the negotiability of currency and notes inscribed with messages of a political character. It was made known to public with the beat of drums that the defaced notes had been deprived of their legal tender character.

107. Field Office, Hisar Records (Revenue), F.No.S-64 A 52 p.11
108. Ambala Division Commissioner's Office Records, F.No.185/13(S)
109. Ibid., pp.89-91.
110. From Chief Secretary, Punjab Government to All D.Cs. in Punjab No. 16893-16924/B.D.S.B.dated Nov.,4,1942
111. See Press Communique, Ibid., p. 13.
In order to stop the participation of pensioners in the Congress movement, it was declared that their "active support or advocacy of civil disobedience allied movements, the professed object of which was the subversion of Government established by law in British India" would be held to constitute grave misconduct under the Civil Service Rules. If any retired officer supported the Congress movement, the Government could withhold or withdraw his pension.\(^\text{112}\)

To counteract the Congress propaganda, the Punjab Government pressed into service its vast propaganda apparatus; the pensioners, holders of Honorary Commissions and titles, Kursi Nishins, Zaildars, Safedposhes were asked to advise the people to send recruits to the army and help the Government with money and material.

In April, 1942, the National War Front opened its provincial branch at Lahore. Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the Punjab Premier, was its leader and J.C.W. Eustace, I.C.S., was appointed its organiser. The objects of the National War Front were: "to do everything possible to help to maintain public morale; that is to say to strengthen the war resistance of the people; to eradicate all elements who undermine it; and in particular to counteract

\(^{112}\) See copy of Government of India (Home Deptt.) letter No. 209/43 Estt. of March 1943 to all Provincial Govts., p.19
fifth-column activities of all kinds including especially all talk, thought, writings and rumours likely to produce defeatist mentality; to inculcate faith, courage and endurance; and to consolidate the national will to offer united resistance to Nazism and Fascism in every shape or form whether within or without the country, until their menace is finally overthrown. 113

In order to check the nationalist propaganda, the Punjab Government also decided to confiscate wireless sets of those who were known to be in sympathy with the Congress campaign; it was said that they were "misusing them to acquaint the public with enemy propaganda". In the event of the arrests of leaders giving rise to widespread disturbances, the Army General Head Quarters were asked to render all possible assistance to the District authorities. The Deputy Commissioner, Rohtak, expected trouble on August 14, 1942 and invoked the help of the Area Head Quarters, Delhi. The latter directed one platoon of 1/6 Raj. Rif. to move immediately to Rohtak. In case of trouble the platoon Commander was to act as required by the Civil authorities and he could open fire to disperse crowd. No chance was to be missed to show to the people of the town that the troops were present. 114 However, with the arrest of Congressmen and repressive measures adopted by the Government, the movement showed signs of decline.

113. Ibid.
When the intensity ofQuit India Movement showed signs of abatement towards the end of 1943, with the exception of few prominent Congress leaders, political detainees of Punjab were released from prisons. However, before their release, they were served with restriction orders, i.e. they could not leave the municipal limits or revenue limits of particular towns and villages without the permission of the District authorities. The restrictions adversely affected many internees and restrictees, especially the pleaders and doctors, 'whose source of livelihood was their professional practice. Due to these restrictions, the lawyers could not attend the courts of the neighbouring cities and towns. Their professional practice received a setback. This category included men like Pirthi Singh, pleader of Sonepat. Similarly, the doctors and vaids who were engaged in medical profession, could not go to attend their patients outside the restricted area. As a result they suffered financially.

On 15th January, 1944 Lord Wavell promulgated the Restriction and Detention Ordinance. Along with many other powers that this all-prevading Ordinance gave to the provincial governments, it gave them the power to keep a man cribbed, cabined and confined in a specified area. While even in the bureaucratically governed provinces, like Madras, Bombay, U.P. and Bihar, the authorities

had recourse to this extraordinary power in exceptional cases, in the Punjab the Government used it freely and fully. The movement of almost every person who was released from jail after the 15th January, 1944, was restricted. As a rule the people of internment selected was the person's ancestral town or village, irrespective of the fact whether, he had any means of earning his livelihood there or not. Many of them had settled down in cities and towns which suited them. In some cases the exodus had taken place generations ago. The ancestral homes of these persons were such that they could not provide them with any scope either for service or for business and the result was that not only the persons detained there were miserable, but their dependents were also in a pitiable condition. In some cases there were practically facing starvation. Several hundred innocent persons and their dependents were suffering terribly but the Punjab Government was not moved. The fervent appeals made to it for the removal of all paralysing restrictions seemed to have fallen on deaf ears.116

The history of the treatment meted out to the political prisoners in the Punjab during the Quit India movement is a long and painful story of vindictiveness, unscrupulousness, ruthlessness and brutality. In no other province, the Provincial Government and administration did treat their political opponents so harshly.

116. The Tribune, September 13, 1944.
and inhumanly as the Punjab Government.\textsuperscript{117} The Punjab Government attempted to squeeze the genuine and honest idealism of Congressmen. When the Congress leaders were arrested in August 1942, it was decided to treat all detenus and all political convicts in the same way.\textsuperscript{118} The Government selected the worst jails in the province for political prisoners. The prisoners were mainly confined in the following jails: Central Jail, Lahore; Women's Jail, Lahore; Old Central Jail, Multan; District Jails, Ambala, Shahpur, Ferozepur, Sialkot and Mianwali.\textsuperscript{119}

The Shahpur Jail condemned for political prisoners long ago was reopened and a number of detenus and convicts were sent there. This jail had become notorious as being the most unhealthy jail. Shahpur being a small and unimportant town, satisfactory arrangement could not be made for diet, medical aid and other necessities of political prisoners.\textsuperscript{120} Still political prisoners were sent there. There was hardly any prisoner who did not lose his weight or succumb to many diseases. A substantial number developed back-ache which made it most difficult for them even to walk. The soil of Shahpur was damp and full of salt peter and it was the jail where most of the eminent leaders of the province

\textsuperscript{117} Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.XXI, p.90.
\textsuperscript{118} Linlithgow Collection, Glancy to Linlithgow, December 30, 1942, IWS.WK.F.No.125/91.
\textsuperscript{119} Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.XXII, p.69.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., Vol. XXI, p.90.
like Bhim Sen Sachar, Hari Lal, Dewan Chaman Lal and Mahashe Krishan Virendra, Narendra and others had to spend their time. They were not even provided with charpoys for about two months and so they had to sleep on the ground, exposed to danger of snake and scorpion bite. They were hurled together in tents, sometime 8-10 in one tent, which would leak during rains. They were given such rotten vegetables to eat, which even the cattle could not touch. For many months they were given only tory green and Kanshiphal and aid to the relish of those dishes they were provided 'Iron batis' meant for ordinary convicts. As a matter of fact the attitude of the authorities towards them was harsh and inhuman. The jail of Mianwali meant for dangerous criminals was also opened for these political prisoners. Many political prisoners rotted there. The old central jail of Multan had become notorious for inefficiency, incompetence, brutality and high handedness of its officials. It had the distinction of being the first jail in Punjab where the political prisons were subjected to a severe lathi charge resulting in injuries to more than 100 prisoners. Conditions of other jails were also not different. This shows the magnitude of repression in the jails. Those poor people who were locked up in jails received very bad treatment. Besides, even the women-folk, by nature peace loving, were not spared. The cruel treatment to

which they were subjected in the female jail Lahore was pretty well known to public at large.\textsuperscript{122} The Government had no confidence in their own nominees that non-official jail visitors were not permitted to see the Congress detenus.\textsuperscript{123}

Diet sanctioned by the Government for political prisoners provides another proof of callousness with which they were treated. In beginning annas six a day was allowed for the diet which was quite inadequate for the maintenance of the normal health but later on raised to annas nine and pies three per day. The political convicts were still being given diet of annas six. The worst feature of the whole situation was that political prisoners were not allowed to supplement their diet at their own cost. They could not supplement even milk, ghee, curd or fruits which was necessary to sustain them. The Government did not provide balanced diet which was necessary to maintain their health. Some young men who were in excellent health at the time of arrest were physically wrecked.\textsuperscript{124}

Uprecendented restrictions on interviews and correspondence were placed. The prisoners were not allowed interviews with their relatives.\textsuperscript{125} Even little children were not allowed to go near them. Some of them were absolutely in the dark regarding the

\begin{itemize}
\item[122.] \textit{Punjab Legislative Debates, op.cit.}, p.387.
\item[123.] \textit{op.cit.,} Sachar, Shim Sen.
\item[124.] Ibid.
\item[125.] Linlithgow Collection, Glancy to Lord Linlithgow, December 30, 1942.
\end{itemize}
fate of their families. They were many who had left their families without any support whatsoever. Other provincial Governments had allowed interviews with the political prisoners. But in this province where a 'Responsible Ministry' was in power no such thing was possible. In certain jails even in cases of serious illness no interviews were allowed.  

In the beginning they were allowed to write one letter and receive only one in two months. After sometime a concession was given as a result of which prisoners were allowed to receive and write one letter in a month. The Government used its extra right to censor and to put restriction on their correspondence. The most deplorable thing was that when more than one letter was received in the name of a prisoner he was never given any chance to select any one letter he wanted. The result was that some unimportant letters were given and important letters withheld. In case two letters arrived for one detenus, one announcing the birth of his son and other informing of the death of his near relative, the post card announcing the death was given. Even important business letters were not delivered to the prisoners as a result of which some of them suffered heavy financial losses. No prisoner was allowed to enquire about the serious illness of any of his nearest relatives.

126. Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, op. cit.
127. Linlithgow Collection,  Glancy to Linlithgow, December 30, 1942.
129. Ibid., p. 92.
During the last Individual Civil Disobedience Movement, the Government had issued instruction that detainee Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava should not be handcuffed in future. But this time nobody was spared. Not only respectable and eminent persons were handcuffed while being transferred from one jail to another but some of them were even sent in fetters and bars. It had become a public scandal that eminent persons like Bhim Sen Sachar, leader of the opposition, Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava, Iftikhar-ud-din, Diwan Chaman Lal, Seth Sudershan, Sardar Pratap Singh and others were being transferred from one jail to another.130

The Government had not only tried to starve the political prisoners physically but mentally as well. From the very first, a strict ban was placed on reading of books and newspapers, but later on the ban was lifted on newspapers. In a number of cases even religious books were disallowed simply because the jail authorities, Criminal and Investigation departments, could not determine what a religious book was? Prisoners were asked to return books to one jail library and next day they were transferred from that jail.131

Alongwith books, prisoners were deprived of any kind of writing material. They could not keep even a small paper with them. Possession of pen or paper was considered a serious crime

130. Ibid.
131. Ibid.
in jail. Amongst the political prisoners there were legislators, lawyers, doctors and journalists who could not keep even a fragment of paper or a small pencil. Why? Because the Government thought that they would try to communicate with the people outside and thereby would try to control the movement.\textsuperscript{132} When Munshi Hari Lal, M.L.A. was going to Lahore to appear before the High Court, he demanded from Superintendent Camp Jail, Shahpur, a sheet of paper on which he could note down his notes. But the Superintendent expressed his inability to allow him any paper under the rules. The same happened in the case of many other prisoners. Many highly educated prisoners who applied for permission to keep writing material were not allowed this concession.\textsuperscript{133}

The Government also imposed a ban on the prisoners to have any outdoor games. In the beginning even playing cards were denied to them. After sometime this was allowed as a special concession, but they could not have volleyball, badminton or any other games. The Government was not interested in their good health. And that is why games were not allowed even at their own cost.\textsuperscript{134}

In some of the jails there were no electric lights. The prisoners were therefore supplied hurricane lanterns for use at night. But one lamp for four and sometime even for eight prisoners was the rule. The kerosene oil that was supplied to them did not last beyond 10 P.M.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., p. 93  
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
Prisoners were not given proper medical aid. Some of the men who were suffering from serious eye, teeth and other such troubles were not even allowed to get treatment at their own cost. They were not permitted to consult their private doctors.\textsuperscript{136}

The policy of the Government seemed to humiliate and torture the political prisoners. The Government did not give ordinary treatment to its political opponents. Even the Italian and German prisoners of war were being accorded better treatment. But these detenus were not given even that treatment which was given to political opponents in the civilized countries all over the world.\textsuperscript{137} Lala Jagat Narain, in regard to the treatment meted out to him said: "I had to sit all day and night under an electric lamp of 200 watts which gave me much trouble. I was tortured by various methods. At night when I used to sleep, the sentry by knocking his gun woke me up and for fifteen nights I did not even get five hours sleep".\textsuperscript{138}

Now the question arises why the treatment meted out this time (with India Movement) is different from that of the last civil disobedience movement. The reason was that this time there was a danger of invasion and war. The movement itself started as a rebellion, the slogan being, "Do or Die". Individual items were to include interference with troop movements, the cutting of telegraph and telephone wires, incitement to strikes and the fomentation of

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid.
no-tax and no-rent campaigns and efforts to subvert the police, the military, and Government servants as a whole from their allegiance. Such a movement could not be treated lightly by the Government who were responsible for encouraging the people to fight and for carrying on struggle. Under such circumstances any movement against the war could not be treated lightly by the Government. This movement was an all-India movement and the Punjab Government had to deal with it on the lines laid down by the Government of India.

Another question about interview. The policy of not allowing interviews was consistently followed by the Government of India in the case of high Congress leaders except for the interlude of Mahatma Gandhi's fast. The Punjab Government did the same. The reason was that the interviews were an admirable method of communications for political purposes.

Whenever the Government took recourse to repression it put forward this plea that it was doing in order to prevent bloodshed in the province. In reality the Government wanted to terrorise the Congressmen by effecting their arrests in large numbers and their concern for the maintenance of peace of the country was a mere excuse. The Government was doing every possible cruelty to Congressmen irrespective of whether he was an old person or an

140. Ibid.
141. Ibid., p. 207.
invalid. The pity was that the Government did not pay any heed to the lamentations and complaints of the affiliated people. The Government did not care for anybody. The Government was only keen to punish the Congressmen and their supporters.  

The Punjab Governor, Glancy, felt satisfied with the way he and his government dealt with the situation. He considered that one fortunate feature was that colleges and schools were on vacation till the end of September 1942, and consequently, the organisers of Quit India Movement had not been able to make use of students for their "nefarious" designs. He claimed that there had been no serious outbreaks of lawlessness and they had not to resort to firing. The Congress had never taken a very firm root in the Punjab and had been continually weakened by dissensions within the ranks.

He was happy that the Muslims, except for a small number of unrepresentative individuals, had shown no sympathy for Gandhi and his "Non-Violent outbreak of fanaticism". The Muslim papers exposed Congress "insincerity" and wrote strongly against the Quit India Movement. Similarly the Hindus in rural areas had not been substantially affected. The urban Hindus, though they were largely attracted by the Congress movement, were for the most part disinclined to go to the length of open and active support on any considerable scale. The Akalis were also less liable to be led into anti-

142. Ibid., p. 383.
143. Linlithgow Collection, M&L EUR.F.No. 125/91, Glancy to Linlithgow, August 21, 1942.
Government demonstration. This was largely because of the "Sikander-Baldev Pact" and the inclusion of a Sikh member in the Governor-General's Council and the appointment of Baldev Singh as a Minister in the Punjab. 144

In Punjab, the British administration signified "unitary structure of non-regulation province by preserving the Mughal tradition of discretionary Government, uniting the executive and judicial powers in one person in total disregard of Montesquieu's ideas of separation of powers, appointment of military officers to conduct civil administration in place of officers from covenanted civil services". 145 This was the built-in-structure which has been called the paternal administration of Punjab Government. Throughout, the paternal administration of Punjab demanded complete obedience. It was for the rulers to decide the good of the people. Moreover, there was a tacit consensus between the British Bureaucracy and the Unionist Government to support each other for mutual benefits and the protection of imperialist interests. The Unionist and the British Imperialists were eager to win over the large section of peasantry on their side. The importance of peasantry was directly linked up with their policy of recruitment. The Punjab was the Sword Arm of India and the British were determined to maintain it. The Congress in Punjab had to depend mainly on infant middle class which could not match

144. Ibid.
145. Bhardwaj, O.P.(Ed.) History of Haryana, article - S.P. Shukla, "The British Rule In Haryana, 1900-47".
the combined strength of the Unionists and British Imperialists. Obviously any dissent to the wishes of rulers entailed ruthlessness and suppression to which the Congress leaders were exposed.

To sum up, it would be relevant to say that the launching of the Quit India movement produced different responses in different provinces. In the Punjab the British policy regarding this movement was of suppression, banning meetings and propaganda. The Government and its allies did not spend their time in sitting idle but waged a war against the nationalist elements. The Government of India issued instructions to all provincial Government and administration to muzzle all sort of nationalist activities. Consequently, all sorts of methods and tactics were deployed in order to overcome the situation. The leaders of the Congress were imprisoned and jailed. The treatment meted out to them was cruel and inhuman in the history of world. The adoption of these stringent and well-chalked out measures is not without reason. For political, military, strategic and economic reasons Punjab was very crucial to the British Empire. For winning the war, to have continuous recruitment for the Army Punjab had to be made a "safe" and loyal province. The British were largely successful in their aim.