1. GENERAL REACTIONS IN INDIA:

On 22 March 1942 Cripps arrived in India and on 12 April he left for England. He stayed in India for 22 days. He created much hopes and raised curiosity about the offer by keeping its terms as top secret. He started long series of interviews and interviewed almost more than 70 people representing different organizations and interests. The fact that real negotiations were going on almost exclusively with the congress had raised people's aspirations. The Congress wanted to reject the 'cut and dry' offer in the very beginning, but Cripps succeeded to prevent that rejection. The Congress leaders were kept under the impression that the 'Cabinet' was going to get absolute authority except in the sphere of defence; namely, that the Viceroy would be bound to act on the advice of the majority except in defence, and that this would be done by convention. When this understanding was removed on 10 April, 1942, round about 2-20 p.m. negotiations broke down. Until now, success was in sight. India was anxiously and hopefully looking towards the negotiations. Suddenly at the eleventh hour when hopes of a settlement were running high a breakdown occurred. It led to the stiffening of the attitude of the Indian leaders and people at large. It
We have already seen that the Congress objection was not so much to the long term arrangement as to interim arrangements. Cripps had given an understanding to the Congress that with the exception of the Defence Department other departments would be completely in the hands of the Indians, and the Governor-General would act as a constitutional head. However, at a later stage, he withdrew that statement. The Congress wanted the Executive Council of the Governor General to work as a Cabinet. This the British Government was not prepared to concede.

It has been pointed out that the objections to the composition of the post-war constituent Assembly, settlement on the question of Pakistan on the lines suggested in the Declaration and the division of powers under Defence etc., were not pressed. The issue which proved fatal was the veto of Viceroy.\(^1\)

**VIEWS OF NON-CONGRESS PARTIES:**

The Hindu Mahasabha opposed the Cripps' proposals on two grounds. It was opposed to the freedom given to the provinces to leave the India Union and set up a separate Government of their own. The Sabha also objected to the election on the basis of Commu

\(^1\) See Congress Working Committee's resolution rejecting the Cripps' Offer, released to the press April 10, 1942.
Award which was antinational and undemocratic. Also in the opinion of the Sabha the Declaration was "nebulous, vague and unsatisfactory" with regard to the interim arrangements.

According to non-party conference leader Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar, the creation of more than one Union howsoever consistent in theory with the principle of self-determination, will be disastrous to the lasting interests of the country and its integrity and security.

The Sikhs also opposed the provisions relating to the non-accession of the provinces. They stated "we shall resist by all possible means separation of the Punjab from All India Union."

The Depressed Classes denounced the proposals on the ground that the necessary safeguards were not provided for their interests.

The Working Committee of the All India Momin conference came to the same conclusion, characterising the scheme as "absolutely unsatisfactory" and miserably failing "short of the expectations and...

3. Declaration of the Sikh All Parties Committee in a representation to Sir Stafford Cripps. See Leader, 17th April p.3.
aspirations of the Muslim masses."\(^1\)

The standing Committee of the All India States...harmful and injurious to the cause of freedom both in the States and in India as a whole."\(^2\)

The Muslim League opposed the creation of a single Indian Union. It was feared that if one single Union was created, the creation of another may become impossible. It also opposed the system of election by a single electoral college by proportional representation. This was not in accordance with the system of communal representation which enabled the Muslims, to send their own representatives. The league also objected to the method and procedure for the non-accession of Indian provinces. Their contention was that the provinces of India were created for administrative convenience and not on any legal basis. They demanded the redistribution of the provinces. They opposed the plebiscite by the whole of the adult population of India. They demanded the inherent right of self-determination for the Muslims alone. In short, the scheme was not acceptable to the league.

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2. Resolution of the standing Committee of the All India States People's conference rejecting the proposals. Report of the All India People's Conference 1942, p. 61.
because Pakistan was not conceded unequivocally and the right of Muslim self-determination was denied although the recognition given to the principle of partition was much appreciated. In fact the League was willing to accept the proposals, but as Congress rejected it, League could not accept it. It is also significant that all other interests and organizations rejected the proposals, only after the rejection of the Congress. In fact when the most powerful, the most representative and the most organised political party of India, Indian National Congress was about to accept the proposals with some minor modifications, success of the Cripps Mission was in sight. But suddenly, British Government decided to close the negotiations and withdraw the offer as it was not keen on a settlement.

**CRIPPS OFFER AND ACT OF 1935**

Another notable thing is that, like the 1935 Government of India Act, the terms of the Cripps Mission were born in the interplay of long-term notions of imperial strategy and immediate political considerations within the British policy-making process. Like the 1935 Act, these terms embodied an impracticable solution to the Indian problem and again like the 1935 Act

1. Resolution passed by the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League on the Cripps proposals. The resolution was released to the press on April 11.
Indian problem act, again like the 1935 Act, they were rejected by all important sections of Indian political opinion.

The negotiations were held in the atmosphere of uncertainty. Heavy war was going on and Allied powers were loosing at every war front.

Japan had destroyed the U.S.A. fleet at Pearl Harbour in the Pacific by a snuck attack on 7 December, 1941. On 20 January Japanese had invaded Burma. On 15 February Singapore fell. On 8 March fall of Rangoon came, on 23 March Japanese occupied Andaman Islands when Sir Stafford Cripps had just arrived in New Delhi, and was giving his press statement. On 5 April Japanese naval raided Colombo and on 6 April Japanese air raided on Vizagapatam and Cocanada. Still Cripps was negotiating with Indian leaders. On 9 April Japanese naval raided on Trinconalee naval base, Ceylon. On 10 April, Cripps offer was withdrawn all of a sudden! Due to worsening of war situation sense of insecurity was growing in the minds of the people. The growing insecurity of the individual in society magnifies enormously the frustration of individual power drives. This, in turn, gives rise to an increased desire for compensatory identification.

with the collective national aspirations for power. Failure of the Cripps Mission and worsened war situation created frustration among the Indian people and identification of the Indian masses with the British power and policy became zero. On the other hand people fully identified themselves with the nationalistic power and policy.

Indian masses identified completely with the nation's demand for complete independence of India from the British Yoke. Naturally India's interest was at the heart of all national leaders. They were worried for the security of India as the war situation was worsening. For this reason, even on 10th April 1942, Pandit Nehru had said in a statement: "Whatever the result of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, the duty of every Indian to serve and defend India utter most remains. We cannot run away from this and seek safety. What safety is there for us if India is in danger? Who lives if India perishes? India calls and every Indian man and woman must listen to that call."

He again issued a press statement at Allahabad on April 15 four days after the failure of the Mission:

1. The Hindustan Times; 11 April, 1942.
In this statement he clearly shown that how far the Indian leaders went to settle with the British, only because of the war exigencies. It also shown how inspite of repeated re-buffs from British side, once again the Indian Leaders negotiated with the British only to achieve failure. One can clearly see the agony in the words of Panditji. He had faith in British state menship and who had identified himself with so called democratic front i.e. allied nations. Panditji said "It surprises me how far we went in our desire for settlement... We went to uttermost limits of concession in talks with Cripps... whoever comes from them speaks in the same accent as of old and treats us in the same way. Blood and tears are going to be our lot... soil of India needs them so that the fine flower of freedom may grow again."¹

Same day at Bezwada Rajagopalachari also issued a press statement. He said in his statement:

"I was very glad when Cripps' visit to India was announced and hoped that he would be able to set up National Government and put the Defence of the Country on rational and efficient basis. Unit Nations cannot leave India in this condition. A peopple and a Govern ment with no mutual confidence and unrelated to one another cannot face invasion. Leaders of United Nations must sweep cobwebs away a make truly total effort in India possible... Buried talent of India remains buried. Politics of the minorities were good counter-offens in old days against nationalism, but today nationalism is one great

¹ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, Press statement issued by Nehru at Allahabad on April 15.
munition which India requires to be put into motion.\(^1\)

Rajaji, who had almost completely identified himself with the Cripps offer and who was inclined to accept the offer pain­fully made above mentioned statement; only because of the duplicity of the offer.

On April 14 Rajendra Prasad also declared in his press a statement:

Apart from very doubtful future constitution to be framed by body of which about one-third were nominees of Indian Princes and which flung open the door for disintegration of India, interi arrangement contemplated nothing more than the August offer. No wonder British proposals have not been accepted by any one in this country Congress rejection is supported by all groups that have spoken.\(^2\) "Sir Stafford Cripps", said Pandit Pant, "has been propagating lies faithfully following in the steps of Amery and others, only his methods are more subtle and insidious.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\) The Hindu, Madras, Press statement issued by Rajaji at Bazwada on April 15.

\(^{2}\) The Amrita Bazar Patria, Calcutta, Press Statement issued by Rajendraprasad on 14 April at Patna.

\(^{3}\) Shyam Sunder: Political life of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant
Here one can clearly see that those national leaders who were the members of the Congress Working Committee and had first-hand knowledge about the negotiations were agonised and were feeling humiliated. Now, they were putting the inside story of the negotiations before the world. They were accusing the government for the breakdown of the negotiations.

Sir Tejbahadur Sapru, a well-known liberal leader, also stated in the statement issued at Allahabad on April 28, 1942, that "outstanding fact is that deadlock which Cripps came to solve continues and his visit has left behind sense of disappointment and frustration. It is particularly regrettable that negotiations should have ended so abruptly when gulf on question of defence had nearly been bridged. I regret Cripps should not have pursued matter further or that words of encouragement should not have been forthcoming from Viceroyal House." He refused to believe story that political parties concerned were not willing to assume responsibility, or that there was any danger of any India Cabinet entering directly into peace negotiations with Japan. Concluding the situation he said that because of the failure of the mission sense of frustration will be keener and tension between communities greater than before. He feared
that if deadlock continues there would be again conflict between
the government and one or other of the political parties with
disastrous results.  

REACTION OF GANDHIJI :-

Gandhiji reacted towards the failure of Cripps Mission
in following words:

It is thousand pities that the British Government should
have sent proposal for dissolving the political deadlock which
on the face of it was too ridiculous to find acceptance anywhere.
And it was misfortune that the bearer should have been Cripps,
acclaimed as the radical among radicals and friend of India... the
proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts
each having different ideas into three parts each having different
ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, yet not as the
Pakistan of the Moslem League's conception, And it gave no real
control over defence to responsible ministers. Cripps having beco
part of the imperial machinery unconsciously partook of its qualit
It is almost invariable experience in India that Indian drawn into
it lose originality and become like their companions in service and
often outdo the latter in loyalty to the Moloch of imperialism.Had
Sir Stafford remained detached be would have conferred with his
radical friends in India and secured their approbation before
undertaking the mission. If it be said he could not very well do
so, that is what I mean when I say that having become part of the
machinery he was bound to fall under its spell.

In these words, one can see pain experienced by one of the
greatest Indian who claimed to be the greatest friend of the Britis
Government. Gandhiji was pained, mentally distrubed and shocked
by the attitude of the Government at this stage of ruin and disast

Sir Tejbahadur Sapru at Allahabad.
2. Harijan. April 19, 1942 M.K. Gandhi, in a leading article
under the title 'That ill-fated proposal'
From the very beginning he was against the acceptance of the offer, but Azad and Nehru on behalf of Congress were more moderate and carried on negotiations against the wishes of Mahatma till the abrupt end.

PRESS REACTION:-

The Statement an Anglo-Indian paper of Calcutta, declared editorially, 'so long as the India office and the Government of India draft the proposals, no emissary can succeed, and no effective effort will be made to cope with the hourly increasing danger to this country. A clean sweep of personalities is needed. Sir Stafford Cripps has been made a dupe, but the scheme will over-reach itself. It is folly so colossal as to be even too sublime to suggest that a foreign Government running a war on cumbersome British methods without the active sympathies of the people, can check the infiltrating ants. We regret greatly the announcement of Sir Stafford's immediate departure. If the diehard object is that he should return disgraced, that will not be achieved. Events can only bring discredit on the reactionaries.'

1. The Statesman, 12 April, Calcutta.
the views on the failure of the Cripps Mission expressed by a leading Anglo-Indian paper. "The Cripps Mission" commented the National Herald "was the result of American pressure. It was a stagemanager show to buy off world opinion and to feint preconcerted failures on the people of India."  

The Hindustan Times suggested in somewhat moderate language to Colonel Johnson that "without the hearty and enthusiastic cooperation of the people of the country, it will be impossible to defend the country against the menace which threatens it." If he agrees, then it is his duty to tell the British Government in language which they can understand that "they must first secure the cooperation of the people of India before thinking of the defence of India."  

Cripps offer and Quit India Movement: Cripps offer successfully confused not only the inter-

1. National Herald, April 24, 1942
2. The Hindustan Times 24 April, 1942
national critics of the British policy toward India, but also created difference of opinion and frustration among the Indian leaders. Jawaharlal Nehru was anxious to see India fighting by the side of the democracies. There was a conflict in his mind and therefore he was not sure of his position. Azad was of opinion that the Congress should organize the people to resist the Japanese aggression, and was convinced that a non-violent movement could not be launched or carried out in the existing circumstances. Gandhiji's followers like Sardar, Rajendra Babu and others depended upon the directions of the leader, who thought in terms of non-violence. Rajagopalachari advocated the acceptance of the Muslim league demand and the revizal of Provincial popular governments which had ceased to function since October-November 1939.

On April 29 the All India Congress Committee met at Allahabad. In his Presidential speech Maulana Azad made it clear that no further step would be taken by the Congress to approach the British Government. In other words the Congress would not initiate in dealing with Indian situation with the
British Government. Assail seconding the resolution moved by Rajendra Prasad, which endorsed and approved resolution of Working Committee about Cripps proposals described the interview with Cripps and said the proposals were not sincere but merely intended to putting of facade before world; Cripps' explanation of breakdown was intended as political propaganda among United Nations.

Also the Committee passed the following resolution:
The Committee would, therefore, expect the people of India to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting, our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the invader.  

The resolution recommended unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation against the Japanese and refused to render any assistance to them.

Gandhiji did not attend the Committee meeting but sent the draft of a resolution accompanied with notes.

In these notes he pointed out that India was held by force by Britain as an ally of imperialism, and therefore, Britain and its allies lacked the moral basis for the war. In order to provide moral justification for the war it was necessary that India should be made free and a treaty executed for the continuance of Allied forces in India. An orderly and peaceful withdrawal of British Dominion would save India from anarchy, and bring together the various groups in union and fellowship. The withdrawal, however did not imply the departure of every Englishman from India, but it might lead to an honourable peace all round.

Although the Committee did not adopt the draft of Gandhiji as worded by him, his point of view was approved, and the principle of non-violent non-co-operation was adopted as the right means for resisting the invader.

On April 26, Gandhiji had written in Harijan:
"to India, her real safety and of Britain too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India!". Now the acceptance of his advice by the Committee to demand the withdrawal of the British and to resolve to resist the Japanese with non-violent non-co-operation laid on him the grave responsibility of resuming the lead of the Congress. In order to explain the implication of "Quit India" he filled the columns of Harijan in

elaborating the programme and answering the questions of the enquirers.

The attitude of the national leaders on the question of Indian independence was quite clear. Their press-statements and public speeches which were published from time to time in the papers, after the failure of the Cripps Mission clearly shows that how they were agonised, the way whole affair was handled. They had lost complete faith in British Government. Moreover approaching war had disturbed their minds. Added to the injury were the statements deliberately made by the British spokesmen for the political propaganda against the Congress and Gandhiji.

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, addressing a public meeting on 9 July declared:

We cannot effectively defend our country unless we are a free nation... Indian could help the Allies effectively only when her independence was recognised and conceded by the British Government. Sir Stafford Cripps, however, had made it clear that the British Government had no intention to transfer real power to Indian hands during the continuance of the war. It had also been made plain to us that we would have no real control over Indian defence. The duty of Indians was, therefore quite clear. We had now to redouble our efforts to secure freedom. 1

Pandit Pant wanted Indians to place no reliance on assurances of those who said they would grant India freedom. He declared that India had no sympathy whatsoever with

1. *Hindustan Times;* July 10, 1942; From the Speech made by Jawaharlal Nehru at Cawnpore in Public meeting.
aggressor nations, but she could effectively help the Allies in the present struggle only when she was free. 1

Jawaharlal Nehru also echoed same sentiment on July 18, 1942 speaking at a largely attended public meeting in Meerut. He said: "The only course open to the country is to fight British imperialism in order to increase India's resisting power to fight Fascist aggression". 2

On July 28, 1942, addressing a crowded meeting of college students in Ahmedabad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel said: "For three years the Congress followed the policy of non-embarrassment... the Cripps proposals which Mahatma Gandhi refused to consider at the very first glance, but the Congress Working Committee considered them for fifteen days at the end of which Sir Stafford Cripps changed his mind and laid the blame on the Congress Working Committee". He further said that during the course of negotiations, Sir Stafford Cripps gave out that the national government in India would be of the type of the British Cabinet but subsequently he had to withdraw that proposals. He came to India to create American opinion in favour of England. Proceeding Sardar Patel said that there was now no scope

1. Ibid.
2. Hindustan Times, July 19, 1942. From the Speech made by Jawaharlal Nehru at Meerut in Public meeting.
for negotiations on the question of independence of India.¹

Very next day, addressing an open air meeting at Ahmedabad of students on the occasion of the inauguration of the National Students' Union he said:

Mahatma Gandhi's last struggle will be short and swift, and will be finished within a week.² He said that no Indian would remain aloof from the coming struggle which would be unique of it type. Attempts were being made by the third party to divide Indians. But the Congress was prepared to hand over the administration of the country to the Muslims if it was offered to them. Continuing Sardar Patel said that the British and American press was perturbed as it was never before perturbed. The Congress was asked to wait till the conclusion of the war when India would be freed. If India was really to be freed after the war, why was she not freed before the war? The promises given during the last war were not fulfilled and India was given the Rowlatt Act and the Jalianwala Bagh for her unstinted help. The Congress had become wiser by experience, and wanted freedom for defending India against foreign aggression which was said to be imminent. Freedom of India would mean the end of all wars in the world.²

On July 30, at Benares, Acharya Kripalani, addressing the students of Hindu University said: "The British Government have mischievously misrepresented the Congress viewpoint with regard to the demand for National Government as a demand for abdication in favour of the Congress,

¹ Free Press Journal, Bombay, July 29, 1942. From the speech made by Sardar Patel at Ahmedabad.
² Free Press Journal, Bombay, July 30, 1942. From the speech made by Sardar Patel at Ahmedabad.
utterly disregarding the minorities. The Congress, far from asking power for itself, would be glad if the British Government asked Mr. Jinnah or the Muslim League, Mr. Savarkar or the Hindu Mahasabha or Dr. Ambedkar to form a true National Government, absolutely free from British Control. Britain has made no such offer because she wants to keep the Indian pie for herself. British statesmen are inadvertently playing the Axis game by denying freedom to India and giving excellent material for propaganda for the consumption of Indians. Referring to Gandhiji's contemplated move, Kripalani said:

Gandhiji has been compelled to contemplate a mass movement to resist hardships resulting from war measures, because it would mean schooling the masses in resisting actual invasion by Axis Powers if it should come. Continuing Kripalani said: "It is shameful for Sir Stafford Cripps, with his revolutionary antecedents, to appeal to America to help the British Government in suppressing India's struggle for liberty. If Americans lend their support to this unholy cause, they will be writing the blackest chapter in their history unworthy of George Washington's and Abraham Lincoln's glorious heritage.

On July 31, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressing an open air meeting in Santaram's Temple at Nadiad town declared:

The will of the people will not be suppressed by repression that is being threatened. He said that at the age of 74 Mahatma Gandhi was out to launch an unprecedented mass struggle to wrest power from the British

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1. Hindustan Times; July 31, 1942. From the Speech made by Acharya Kripalani at Benares.
Government to resist Japanese aggression. Previous struggles were launched to effect a change of heart in the British Government or to register moral protest and were restricted to select few only. The present struggle which would include all the items of the previous struggles at a time, was restricted only by non-violence, all could take part in it without distinction. It would not be a struggle merely for going to jail. It would entail far greater sufferings, but not greater than those entailed by foreign invasion.

On the same day (31 July), Dr. Rajendra Prasad, giving an idea about the sufferings of the Quit-India movement, addressing an emergency meeting of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, at Sadaqut Ashram, Patna, said: "Shooting, bombing, confiscation of property - are all possible. Congressmen, therefore, should join the movement with the consciousness that they may be exposed to all these dangers. The new plan of action includes all forms of satyagrah based on pure non-violence. This movement is going to be the last struggle for India's independence. We can face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in armoury of satyagraha". Dwelling at length on the factors that led the Congress Working Committee to demand the freedom of India first, he said: "Till now the demand for complete independence had been made with some mental reservations."

1. Free Press Journal, Bombay; 1 August, 1942. From the speech made by Sardar Patel at Nadiad.
Faint hopes lingered in the heart that a way out could still be found for the preservation of Anglo-Indian connections. Britain has evaded our demand, so far, on the plea that she cannot transfer power to Indian hands as there is no unity in India. The Congress, has now come to the conclusion that there can be no unity until British power disappears. The foreign element in the body politic of the country has created new problems which cannot be easily solved. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, is now of the definite opinion that there can be no unity in India without Swaraj, though he once held the reverse view. This opinion is the result of bitter experiences and the outcome of the Cripps Mission.¹

On 1st August 1942, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru spiritedly criticised the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps on the Indian situation while addressing a public meeting in observance of Tilak Day. He said:

"Struggle—eternal struggle! That is my reply to Amery and Cripps. India's national self-respect cannot be a matter for bargaining. I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements? As far

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¹ Hindustan Times; 1 August; 1942; From the Speech made by Dr. Rajendra Prasad at Patna.
as the British Government were concerned there was no doubt that they had made it impossible for us to settle anything. If there was any doubt in any mind, look at the statements made by Cripps and Amery of late. 1

Again on 3rd August, addressing Congress volunteers at Daragunj he said: "The present Government is absolutely useless, incompetent and worthless, and it was not for it to save India". Further he added that, "in opposing Britain it was not our purpose to help Japan or Germany. We could not change masters. We would not tolerate any foreign domination and were out to win freedom". 2

Sardar Patel also said in Surat on August 2, addressing a public meeting:

Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party, and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself. The Congress could not wait any more because the country can not be defended by dependent people. Now Britain only would be responsible for any state of anarchy that may ensue as a result of the 'Quit India' policy. 3

From the above quoted speeches and statements of the prominent leaders and members of the Congress Working Committee, it can be clearly seen that the central and

1. Hindustan Times; 2 August, 1942. From the speech made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Ahmedabad.
2. Ibid; 4 August, 1942. From the speech made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Daraganj.
supreme idea in their minds was to organise "effective defence of India" and thus to avert the fate of Malaya, Singapore, Rangoon and Burma, in India. With this end in view, independence of India and formation of provisional National Government was desired. There was definite and distinct declaration of opposition to Japan or any other aggressor and positive sympathy with Allies. There was absolutely no pro-Japanese tendency in the expressions or minds of the Indian Congress leaders. However, it is also clear that Indian nationalist leaders had now no faith in British Government, on the contrary, there was bitterness in their mind for dirty political game which was cleverly played by the Government on them under the disguise of the Cripps Mission.

Thus failure of the Cripps Mission provoked the flame of 'Quit India' which turned into a great fireous movement against British imperialism led by Gandhiji on the basis of non-co-operation non-violence. Gandhiji himself stated that the 'Quit India' idea burst upon him suddenly and then kept on blossoming within him. He said: "It was the Cripps fiasco that inspired the idea. Hardly had he gone when it seized hold of me".

Cripps blamed Gandhiji and Congress for his failure. British Government started manufactured propaganda on this

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1. *Ibid., p. 124.*
line. This led to the stiffening of the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress. Indian people and Indian political parties started suffering from a sense of frustration. This frustration improved by hearing the war news about the Japan's advance toward the Indian borders. People became impatient and frustrated. They lost complete faith in British sincerity for solving Indian political deadlock. Political leaders and people of India thought that Britishers would leave this country only when they would be made to do so without counting the cost. Thus as a result of the failure of the Cripps Mission came the great 'Quit India' Movement.

3. **CRIPPS OFFER AND PAKISTAN**

In 1942, before the arrival of Cripps Mission in India, the Congress prestige and influence were high. The Governments of China and U.S.A. were earnestly pressing the cause of Indian Independence, which the British could not ignore. The Muslim League did not pull any weight with the community. Its ideal of Pakistan was not taken seriously in any of the Muslim majority provinces. The Labour Party in Parliament and its representatives in the coalition Government seemed anxious for a settlement. Political position in regard to the demand of Pakistan in March 1942 was extremely doubtful. Though claimed by Jinnah and the League it had no support from the Muslim majority provinces and from a number of Muslim organisations.
Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab did not subscribe to the theory of two nations and two sovereign states in India. In the Punjab Assembly, out of 84 Muslim members 73 were Unionists. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly the Leaguers could count upon only 40 votes in a house of 250. The North-West Frontier Province under the lead of the Khan brothers followed the Congress policies. Sind was faction-ridden, but in its Assembly the Muslim Leaguers were in a hopeless minority. In Assam again the Muslims were in a minority in the legislature and could not away the decision. In March, three Muslim Premiers—Pazul Haq (Bengal), Khan Sahib (NWF Province) and Allah Bakhsh (Sind), jointly sent a telegram to the Prime Minister; "imperatively demanding the immediate transfer of real power to India and the recognition of freedom so as to enable representative Indians to establish representative government with full powers to assume the responsibility of defence".1

Among the Muslim groups there were many who differed from the Muslim League on the question of Pakistan, e.g. the Jamiatul Ulama, Ahrars, Shias, Mominis, Ittihad-i-Millat and Khudai Khidmatgars. Although Jinnah had some very enthusiastic Leaguers in the minority provinces it would

1. Mansergh and Lumby, Ed; TOP; Document Number : 289; Turnbull to Pinnell, March 10, 1942; p. 398.
be wrong to say that they were in a body leaguers. In any case their destiny was outside Pakistan, although they shouted the loudest in its favour.

But the Cripps offer tremendously enhanced the influence of Jinnah over the Muslims, and his value in the eyes of Government as a counterpoise against the Congress. He got an opportunity to consolidate the position of the League and to spread its influence widely all over India when in May 1942 the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad finally repudiated Cripps' proposals, reiterated the demand for immediate transfer of power, and expressed its disapproval of Rajagopalshehar's resolution to enter into negotiations with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Rajaji had moved a resolution in support of Pakistan on May 2, 1942 at the Allahabad session of the A.I.G.C., but it "was defeated, 120 members voting against it and 15 members voting for it". However, Shri Rajaji's opinion though sincere, was damaging to national solidarity and gave encouragement to the League to feel more justified in its

1. Being the resolutions passed by the Congress. The All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee, Indian National Congress March, 1940 to September 1946; P.29.
demand for the partition of the country. Jinnah warmed up his propaganda against the Congress. He told the correspondent of the International News Service of America, if Britain yielded to the Congress political blackmail and approved a national state dominated by the Hindus there would be immediate and terrible chaos.¹

The Hindu-Muslim relations were seriously strained. The provision of non-accession provinces in Cripps' proposals was undoubtedly disastrous in this connection. On the one hand, it made the demand for Pakistan strong and, on the other, it raised dormant potentialities for its opposition. In Cripps' proposals, therefore, lay the germs of strained relations between the two communities of India. It was observed, 'The present day communal rivalry and antagonism is not the whole truth, it is a mere passing phase of a dangerous policy played in the interests of British Imperialism....'² Pandit Hridaynath Kunzru who commands the highest esteem of educated India for his intellectual capacity of rare order, honesty of purpose, eloquence

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1. Jamiluddin Ahmad, Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah; pp. 424-25.
and forceful expression, declared emphatically during the course of his address in opening the fifty session of the Indian Political Science Conference: "By their obstinate silence... they (the Government) allowed the forces seeking the dismemberment of the country to gain steadily in strength". The forces of disruption were opposed to Indian nationalism and could hardly escape unopposed by generality in the country. The Hindu Maha Sabha also picked up the gauntlet and it was natural that it should vehemently criticise and oppose the move for Pakistan. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee criticising the Cripps' offer stated that it would "sound the death-knell of Indian Unity and freedom... India will then become a veritable chess-board on which not only Indian provinces (constituted mainly on a religious basis) may fight with each other but interested foreign nations may find ample scope for fateful intrigues and dissensions."  

1. Ibid dated February, 1943: Page, 92  
2. A Phase of The Indian Struggle by Shyam Prasad Mookerjee 1942 Edition: Published by Monojendra N. Bhowmik, Kustia, Nadia: Page, 73.
It was natural, therefore, that some of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders should undertake tour of certain parts of the country and that B.S. Moonje and V.G. Deshpande visited the Madras Presidency to counteract pro-Pakistan campaign. But it would be wrong to assert on this account that the Mahasabha generated, in the least, militant spirit that mutilated Hindu-Muslim relations. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee explained the Mahasabha position towards the Muslims and delivering his presidential address in the 26th session of the All-India Mahasabha at Bileaspur, said that its attitude towards Musalmans "was not one of hostility or domination. The Muslim League policy was attacked because it was actuated by considerations which would retard progress in India."

He, no doubt, attacked the scheme of division from different angles of vision and brought enough logic to bear upon the subject.

1. The Modern Review dated July, 1942: Page 120: Notes
2. Ibid January, 1945: Page 2
3. A Phase of the Indian Struggle by Shyama Prasad Mookerjee: Page 71-80
The Modern Review rightly observed: 'As was expected, Jinnah is playing his usual game to collect the largest number of loaves and fishes.... So long his demand was for parity between Hindus and Muslims. Once this parity has been conceded, he started pointing out that the Muslims will be one-third of the total number of members in the Executive Council ...." His lieutenants were also infec with the same type of intoxication and their expectations soared too high. The spirit of Pan-Islamism entered. Chaudhuri Khaliq Uzzaman a distinguished leader of the League and he declared at a meeting of his party: "Pakistan is the first stage of a big programme of Indian Muslims. If Indian Muslims stood united in Pakistan, they could approach other Muslim countries- Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Turkey, and then standing together the Muslims could become great world power." No amount of persuasion could influence the outlook of the Leaguers and their aggressive activities poisoned the relations between the Hindus and the Musalmans.

In May Gandhiji started his campaign to advocate Quit India, and failing in his attempts to arrive at a solution of the communal tangle he naturally concluded that the presence of the British was responsible for the failure. Jinnah characterized the demand for 'freedom for India', 'National Government' as merely catchwords, deception and false propaganda, a "threat intended to coerce a distressed and shaken Britain to accede to Mr. Gandhi's demand". For the Muslims, according to him, the Congress demand was. "Supremacy, and Hindu dominion over all, at the cost of 100 millions of Musalmans". He predicted fearful consequences. "If the British, even with the help of America, adopt any measures which militate in any way against our Pakistan demand. I am firmly of opinion that it will lead to terrible chaos and disaster, as one hundred millions of Musalmans of India will never forgive the British if they are let down". Refering the resolution of 14th July of the Congress Working Committee, he declared that announcement of a mass civil disobedience movement "is a challenge to the British Government in the first instance. But it is a challenge to Muslim India, whose one and only object is by hook or by crook to bring about a situation which will destroy the Pakistan scheme.

i. Jamiluddin Ahmad: some Recent speeches and writings of Mr. Jin pp. 429-444
When on August 8 the All-India Congress Committee gave its sanction for the launching of the civil disobedience movement, Jinnah fully approved Government's arresting Congress leaders and taking firm measures to quell the riots. He said in a special interview to the Daily Herald of London in Bombay on August 14, "there can be no negotiations until the Congress Party leaders change their minds and drop their campaign. The policy of the Congress has been that power must be transferred from British Raj to Hindu Raj".  

These extracts clearly show that the Cripps offer made Jinnah powerful and he became determined to get Pakistan. In other words when Cripps Mission officially committed all the parties to Indian Independence on the basis of Pakistan, Jinnah became outspoken and politically his position became very strong. He could acquire the position of the Supreme Leader (Qaid-i-Azam) of the Muslims. His League could order about even the tallest in the community, for instance, he compelled the premiers of the Punjab and Bengal to resign from the National Defence Council and consured Sultan Ahmad on his acceptance of the membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Cripps Offer induced Jinnah to declare confidently on December 25, 1942 that he would realize his goal earlier than he had anticipated and that there would be no greater happiness for him than to see

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1. Ibid., p. 452.
Pakistan established during his life time. After the Cripps Offer dominance of Jinnah became inevitable and subsequently his extravagant demand divided India. In other words Cripps Offer made Pakistan almost inevitable.

4. **REACTIONS IN AMERICA** :

When Cripps negotiations broke down, public opinion in the United States refused to believe that negotiations were broke down on general broad issues. The feeling was held almost universally that the deadlock had been due to the British Government's unwillingness to concede the right of self-government to the Indians notwithstanding the willingness of the Indians to entrust to the competent British authorities technical military and naval defence control. It was impossible for American public opinion to understand why, if there was willingness on the part of the British Government to permit the component parts of India to secede after the war from the British Empire, it was unwilling to permit them to enjoy during the war what was tantamount to self-government. 1

American people felt that settlement with India was still possible and essential. But British Government applied every tactics of propaganda to confuse, American public opinion and State Department of America. British

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1. See Mansergh and Lumby; Ed; TOP; Document Number 611; President Roosevelt to Mr. Hopkins; Telegram; 12 April 1942; p. 759.
propaganda for time being succeeded and clouded the official American attitude against the Indian nationalists. Two different versions of the failure of Cripps Mission had been conveyed to the State Department of America. 1

(1) Johnson reported that the British Government had sabotaged the Cripps Mission. Churchill's rigidity and the Viceroy's negative attitude were the responsible for the failure of the Mission. According to him a satisfactory settlement on the defence issue had been in sight and Churchill the Viceroy and Wavell did not allow it. 2 (2) The Agent General for India, in his assessment to the chief of Near Eastern Division had observed that Nehru and Rajopalachari had every desire to arrive at a negotiated settlement with Cripps, but the Congress working Committee had defeated the negotiations Graham Spry; Cripps' Secretary, also blamed Gandhiji and his associates; who were according to him, unwilling to accept responsibility during the war. 3

Distorted and pro-British accounts run counter to Johnson's assessment. The State Department, therefore, concluded that the charge of British sabotage was not substantiated. Thus, British propaganda succeeded to confuse


2. Ibid., p. 640.

American opinion and American officials started thinking that the Indian leaders had turned down far-reaching offers.

5. REACTIONS IN CHINA:

In China, as it happened in America, initial reactions were against the British Government, for the failure of the Mission. Great disappointment was shown at the failure of the constitutional talks in India. Several newspapers urged their renewal under Chinese-American mediation. Sir Horace James Seymour, British Ambassador in China from March 1942, wrote to Cripps on 24 April: "It is evident that the Chiang-Kai-Sheks consider present deadlock to some extent a personal failure for themselves. According to Madame Chiang Kai-shek, Ching Kai-shek had hoped that their visit to India would go a long way towards galvanising both the Indian people and British officials into a sense of imminent danger but they had apparently failed... She stated in confidence that she knew for a fact that Congress was ready to break with Gandhi and his doctrine of passive resistance, had independence been granted at once". In the same letter he mentioned that "There is some criticism of Gandhi's attitude". Next day (25 April) he had sent another telegram to Mr. Eden, Secretary of State for foreign affairs since 1940, that "Chiang-Kai-Shek has now told me that he is not unduly disappointed at the turn of affairs.

1. Mansergh and Lumby; Ed; TOP; Document Number 680; Sir H. Seymour to Sir S. Cripps; Telegram; 24 April 1942; p. 837.
in India as he feels that a satisfactory settlement will be reached sooner or later.¹

One can see that in China also British propaganda tried to confuse the matter that why Cripps' mission failed and thus Chinese apprehension and fears were reduced to verbal protests by Chiang-Kai-shek before Roosevelt.

6. **REACTIONS IN ENGLAND:**

From the beginning of the war, radical section of the Labour Party and the Labour members of the Cabinet, like Attlee and others, were very critical of the British Government's policy towards India. They were constantly demanding some measure to get whole hearted support of India in the war. They became reconciled to Government policy towards India, and were annoyed with the Congress attitude. The belief that Gandhiji had characterized Cripps' proposals as a 'post dated cheque on a crushing bank' hurt the feeling of many English people who were sympathetic towards India and her demand for freedom because they thought that this was an unkind remark for England when Britain was drawn in life and death struggle.

When Linlithgow asked Amery for the Cabinet reactions, to Cripps' report, Amery replied:

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1. Ibid; Document Number: 691; Sir E. Seymour to Mr. Eden, Telegram; 25 April; p. 852.
The answer in brief, comic though it sounds, is that there was no report and no reaction. Cripps prepared us sort of report for the Cabinet, apart from his speech in the House which he drafted on his journey home. More extra-ordinarily still, Winston decided that there was no particular point in his telling the Cabinet anything about his experiences and conclusions, and in fact Cabinet has not discussed the matter at all since he returned. Even the India Committee has not been summoned, and there is, I think, a unanimous feeling in the Cabinet and a very general feeling in Parliament and outside that Cripps did the best he could, that Congress was supremely unreasonable, but that on the whole the after-effects of the mission may be good in India and the immediate effect excellent in America. Winston may, of course, have been influenced, in deciding to avoid Cabinet discussion, by a reluctance to bring up the question of how far Cripps went beyond his instructions. He may have preferred to let bygones be by gones and get shed with urgent war business. 1

Again he wrote to Linlithgow on 10 June about the Churchill's attitude towards the Indian problem and the Cripps Mission. He wrote: "(The Cripps Mission) has by now receded into the background of his mind. For him, the main thing about it has been the good effect in America; for the rest, he isn't interested, really disliking the whole problem as much as ever before". 2

These comments are enough to conclude the reaction of the British Government towards the failure of the Cripps Mission. From the point of view of the British policy

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1. Ibid; Vol. II; Document Number: 28; Mr. Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow; 6 May 1942; pp. 42-43.
2. Ibid; Vol. II; Document Number: 138; Mr. Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow; 10 June 1942; p. 197.
Cripps Mission succeeded in pacifying international critics, and critics at home of the Government for its policy towards Indian political problem. It also succeeded in increasing tension of the communal problem in India. It created difference of opinion in Congress leadership as a result of which leader like Rajaji resigned from the Congress. Thus the mission did not disappoint the British Government.

In general, in the international world as well as in India, British propaganda and counter statements of the Indian political leaders, created confusion about the failure of the Cripps Mission. According to Indian leaders the whole affair was a propaganda gesture, a cruel hoax to Nationalist aspirations, while according to British view Indian leaders were not ready to accept the responsibility and they were responsible for the breakdown of the negotiations. So it is necessary to find out the real reasons of the failure of this political mission, which created much heat and many contradictions.