This investigation was undertaken to get the answer of the four specific questions, in the light of newly published documents on the Cripps Mission and other relevant source material. The questions were:

1. What were the Indian Aspirations?
2. What was the real intention of the British Government in sending the Cripps Mission to India?
3. Why did the Mission fail in meeting with these aspirations?
4. What were the reactions to the failure of the mission?

Now at the completion of the study let us summarise and conclude the answer of these questions, one by one, on the basis of the work done in the preceding chapters.

I. THE INDIAN ASPIRATIONS

The study of the Indian aspirations shows how the demand for mere administrative reforms developed into the demand for self-government and at last turned into the demand for the complete independence of India. During the British
rule, the growth of middle class in India gradually awakened political consciousness of the people. Identification of the growing class of English educated Indians was more or less complete with the power and policies of the British Government. They worked for national unity among Indians and demanded from the government certain administrative reforms. But there was no generosity in Britisher's policies. No matching concession to Indian aspirations, however modest, was considered possible or desirable. The loyalty and moderation of Indian nationalists met with apathy of the Government. Indians had asked for concessions and not for any power, and their method was of prayer and petition. But the Government's attitude towards Indian aspirations was reactionary which created discontent among Indian nationalists.

As a result of this discontent a section of the nationalists became radical exponent of the nation's aspirations. The policies of the British Government forced them to believe that the British rule was the great evil for India. They were convinced that independence was the birth right of Indians and the British Government had harmed India's national interests. Some indirect good might have resulted from the British rule, but the loss to India was heavy and crushing. They loved every thing Swadeshi. Their identification was much more with their mother-land and national interest. They did not identify themselves with the power
and policies of the British Government. On the contrary they were bitter and active critics of those policies.
The British Government dealt with all these radical aspirants for national freedom in a stern and ruthless manner.

In dependencies where the rulers and subjects belonged to different nationalities the growth of political consciousness and political activity lead the subject people to demand the liberalisation of administration and a share in power. Such a demand creates conflict between rulers and ruled, which develops into a struggle for power. Exactly this happened in India too. The British government was facing direct conflict with radicals, revolutionaries and extremists, but still identification of moderates remained with the power and policies of the British Government.

The British Government used the psychological moments to grant constitutional advances for Indians by sensing unrest among people. In other words every constitutional advance in India was a direct result of Indian people's struggle for it. Every such advance fell far short of Indian aspirations, but upto some extent, for the time being it broke the force and momentum of the radical aspirants. At the same time it silenced moderates for the time being and prevented them from being converted into radicals or extremists.
During Gandhian Era, politics of India shifted from struggle between national organizations and the Government to struggle between masses and the Government on large scale. In other words, political upheaval started among the Indian masses on large scale. As a direct result of non-co-operation and civil disobedience movement, and working of all white, Simon Commission, one can see Nation's clearly changed aspiration from self-government at the distant goal to complete independence at immediate effect.

As long as the Indian political leaders were uncertain of the political consciousness of Indian masses, they did not and could not openly put up a political fight against the imperialistic British rule in India. But when they realised the awakening of Indian masses, in very clear cut terms passed the resolution of complete independence for India at Lahore Congress in 1929.

Thus it can be seen that from 1885 to 1935, Indians struggled hard to achieve their desired goal. But during this long struggle they could get from the Government only solemn pronouncements regarding the future political advance of India. In fact, these pronouncements lacked sincerity. So-called political advance claimed on behalf of the Morley-Minto Reforms, the Montford Reforms, and the Government of India Act of 1935 did not amount to any real transfer of power in the Indian hands.
This negative attitude of the Government towards the Indian aspirations created gradual frustration among individual Indians, and it is a psychological fact that frustration of individual power drives give rise to an increased desire for compensatory identification with the collective national aspiration for power. Frustration among individual Indians reached at its height during the Second World War; and identification of every Indian was entirely with national demand of the establishment of responsible democratic government in India.

India had acquired a special position from the point of view of war strategy during this critical period. Britain was well aware of this strategic importance of India and was willing to exploit all the possible Indian resources for victory in the War, but at the same time was not ready to concede to any real political power in the hands of Indian leaders.

As a protest against this policy of the Government, Congress, recalled its ministries from all the eight Provinces. Also, almost all other political parties, independent responsible political leaders, and other prominent publicmen voiced Indian people's demand for the establishment of responsible democratic government in India vigorously. Thus, the political deadlock arose between India and Britain.
At this juncture, there was a general disbelief among Indians regarding the British promises. Bitterness was growing towards the Government. Average people were doubtful about the intentions of the Government, and most of the people were certain that the British did not want to give up any power in India. Moreover, the Prime Minister Churchill's utterances during a debate in the House of Commons on September 9, 1941, on the applicability of Atlantic Charter, to India, proved to be a great shock to Indian aspirations. All the distrust and suspicion were converted into a definite belief in the insincerity and double-dealing of the British Government. Most of the Nationalists seized on it as a clinching proof of British dishonesty.

The British policy of "divide and rule" came at its ugliest during the war. All possible groups and parties whose grievances, fancied or real, could be exploited were invited and ranged on one side in order to show the world that there was a larger 'non-Congress India than 'Congress' India. The belief among the Indians that with the enjoyment of a little bit of Provincial Autonomy they were marching towards their goal of independence, was vanished. The problem which was purely 'political' one, the British diplomacy tried to paint it before the world as 'communal' one. The Government's attitude had raised doubts and bitterness in India, and situation of the War had awakened India to a sudden sense of reality. Every day the war was coming nearer and nearer to
India. The people felt insecure which in turn created great feeling of the frustration.

From all the available source material it becomes quite clear that at this stage, almost all the main political parties and high ranking public men of India were asking for the establishment of responsible democratic government in India. In other words, when the Cripps Mission was announced in March, 1942 to solve the Indian political deadlock, India's national aspiration was to have a responsible democratic government.

THE CRIPPS OFFER

The essence of Cripps offer was that Britain would recognize India's independence 'after' the war if demanded by a constituent assembly. The only change that could be made 'during' the war was that the Viceroy's Executive Council would be entirely Indian and consist of leaders of the political parties. In order to solve the communal problem the scheme gave to the Provinces option to join the Union. While India's demand was of change in the Government system immediately, Cripps proposal laid emphasis only on the future.

In fact, the weaknesses of the Offer were obvious and in certain respects it was not only disappointing but positively dangerous. It appeared to bless a triple or four fold vivisection of the country, a prospect too horrible
to contemplate. Also the Constituent Assembly proposed was unrepresentative in character in which there was no room for democratic representation of the people of the States. Even there was no definite time-limit to the transfer of authority. The principle of Cabinet responsibility at the Centre too was not accepted for the transitional period. Thus we can clearly see that there was a very big gap between India's national aspiration and the Cripps Offer.

2. REAL INTENTION IN SENDING THE MISSION TO INDIA

Before the publication of actual British documents on the Cripps Mission there were many speculations regarding the dispatch of the Mission. It was generally assumed in Indian political circles that the dispatch of the Mission had been primarily caused by the pressure of American opinion in the wake of sweeping Japanese victories in South-East-Asia since December, 1941. Both Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Maulana Azad supports this view in their autobiographies. This view was confirmed by none else than Winston S. Churchill, head of the British Government at that time, and collaborated by the authorized biographer of King George VI.

V.P. Menon's authoritative account of the transfer of power contained enough to indicate the various factors involved: the sweeping Japanese victories, Chinese concern about the Indian political situation, and finally, a demand
in Britain and the United States of America for a new declaration of policy towards India. H.V. Hodson emphasized the role of Sir Stafford Cripps himself, who began working on a new India policy almost as soon as he became a member of the War Cabinet on 19th February, 1942.

So far as the American part in the dispatch of the Mission is concerned, some of the important documents concerning it had already been published by the US Government along with other documents relating to American interest in India during 1942. By themselves, however, these documents did not enable one to have a full picture even of the impact of the American moves on the crucial decisions relating to the dispatch of the Mission, to talk nothing of the other factors involved. Two recent studies by American scholars A. Guy Hope and Garry R. Bess, also mention US pressure as one of the important factors responsible for the dispatch of the Cripps Mission. Whereas two Indian authors M.S. Venkataramani and B.K. Shrivastava hold different view. They do not give much importance to American pressure for the dispatch of the Mission.

But now, after the publication of the first volume of British documents on the transfer of power we have no longer to depend on surmise, or guesswork, based on some hints in a few memoirs or scanty materials in some other publications. We have now concrete facts based on solid documentation.
available to us. The text of Amery's letter to Linlithgow, dated 2 March 1942, which was not available before reveals: "... Winston, after making infinite difficulties for both of us in respect of whatever constructive suggestions we put forward, has now, as his wont—seen the red light (especially the American red light) over night". His another letter dated 10 March 1942, which was also not available before, confirms the pressure; "... Meanwhile, the pressure outside, upon Winston from Roosevelt, and upon Attlee and Co from their own party, plus the admission of Cripps to the War Cabinet, suddenly opened the sluice gates, and the thing moved with a rush". It is now clear that under the cumulative pressure, mainly from America and partly from China, British War Cabinet members, Labour party of England, and other critics of the Government's policy regarding India, Prime Minister Churchill was compelled to announce Cripps Mission. In other words the Mission was not the outcome of any genuine appreciation on the part of the British War Cabinet of the need to meet the India's national aspiration. The establishment of the responsible democratic Government in India was not the real intention of the British Government.

We can now categorically say that, by sending Cripps to India British Government was only interested in pacifying international critics and critics at home of its policy towards India, rather than satisfying Indian aspirations.
As Amery wrote to Linlithgow on 13 February, 1942: 

"... if the offer is rejected, the public here, in America, in China and in large measure even in India, will realize at least that the real difficulty lies in the unreasonableness of Indian politicians and the incompatibility of their respective domestic policies". After the perusal of the documents there is no doubt that the British diplomats were well aware that most probably the Mission would fail. Amery wrote to Linlithgow on 2 March, 1942: 

"... As a matter of fact it seems to me that the bark of the new declaration is in many ways more alarming than its bite... My impression as to the whole business is that Congress will not accept". British diplomats were more interested in rejection of the offer than the acceptance of it. Cripps, the extreme left winger was selected purposefully to advocate the reactionary and limited policy. Amery in his dispatch of 10 March 1942, writes to Linlithgow: 

"From the point of view of putting across what is essentially a conservative policy, both as regards the future and as regards the immediate refusal to transfer control of the Executive, there is much to be said for sending out some one who has always been an extreme Left Winger and in close touch with Nehru and the Congress.... The result in the end should be both to increase the chances of the success, slight as they are, and to mitigate any blame thrown upon the Government as a whole for failure". He further observes: 

"I think Cripps fully realises the
difficulties in front of him, and the prospect of his being denounced both by Congress in India and by the Left Wing here, for having lent himself to so reactionary and limited a policy... he really means to play the game by the Government policy and by you". Thus the British Government's own documents state that the offer was empty of any substance of independence and was in essence a fairly conservative, reactionary and limited one.

3. FAILURE OF THE MISSION

Failure of the Mission has been the subject of speculation ever since the announcement of the termination of the Mission on 11 April, 1942.

According to the British official view the pacifism of Gandhi brought about the failure. Sir G.S. Bajpai, the then Indian High Commissioner in the British Cabinet and held that the Cripps Mission was designed merely to placate American opinion.

In the opinion of Cripps himself Gandhiji primarily and the Congress Working Committee as his blind followers were answerable for the failure where as Gandhiji and Congress Working Committee completely denied this charge.
According to an American Journalist Louis Fischer Cripps was stabbed in back by Churchill and other British Cabinet members who differed from him. As a result the failure came. But Laski put the blame for the failure of the Mission on Cripps.

Hodson, who had first hand information regarding the Mission, rejects the view that it was Churchill's intervention which led to the failure of the Cripps Mission, but admits that on a delicate point relating to the Johnson-Cripps formula Churchill backed Linlithgow against Cripps. He, however, asserts that Churchill had no option but to follow the course that he did and that the fault really lay with Cripps, who negotiated on such an issue to a point of virtual commitment without the clearest understanding with the Viceroy. Hodson takes care to point out that the fault did not lie with Cripps alone and that the War Cabinet had committed a fundamental mistake by sending an emissary to promote policy in India which had not been fully agreed with the Viceroy, though he would have to carry it out.

V.P. Menon also stressed that there was no proper understanding between the Viceroy and Sir Stafford Cripps, nor between Sir Stafford Cripps, nor between Sir Stafford Cripps and the British Cabinet. According to him because of this lack of understanding the Mission met with failure.
B. Shiva Rao, who played quite an important role in keeping the negotiations on Defence moving, also thinks that the Viceroy's resentment at not being associated by Cripps in his negotiations with the Congress leaders might have greatly contributed to the failure of the Cripps Mission.

But now, we are no longer constrained to depend on such hints and speculations for unravelling the mystery of the failure of the Cripps Mission. It is now clear, on the basis of hard documentation, that the Congress version of the sequenced events leading to this failure is quite correct. The immediate background and the real purpose of the Mission were the causes of its failure. The Mission worked in the atmosphere of doubts and uncertainty. No steps were taken to create confidence or to remove doubts from the minds of Indian political leaders regarding British intentions.

Now on the basis of the official documentation, it is clear that Churchill, Amery and most other members of the British War Cabinet were primarily concerned about creating a favourable impact on British and American opinion and proving the sincerity of the Government in dealing with Indian political aspirations. Indeed Churchill and his group would have been much less pleased if the Cripps Mission had succeeded.

In fact, Prime Minister was positively against any kind of concession for India. It is very clear after the study
of authentic documents on the Mission that Churchill prevented any settlement between Cripps and Indian political leaders. On 10 April, Cripps received four telegrams from London. Two of these were from Churchill and two from the War Cabinet. These telegrams raised several specific questions about the revised formula on defence, and finally remarked: "Generally speaking, the whole document is obscure and coached in terms derogatory to the Commander-in-Chief's position." In his reply to these telegrams Cripps felt constrained to add: "I am sorry that my colleagues appear to distrust me over this matter, and I am quite prepared to hand this matter over if they would rather someone else carried on the negotiations. Unless I am trusted I cannot carry on with the task." These lines clearly indicate that by 10 April Sir Stafford knew fully well that any major concession to the Congress point of view was unthinkable and that it would run counter to the thinking of the entire War Cabinet. Against this background, Azad's letter of the same date must have come as a relief to him. He apparently decided that the best thing for him was to treat that letter as a complete rejection of the Declaration brought by him and end all negotiations. It is thus clear that the opposition of the Viceroy backed by Churchill and the other members of the War Cabinet made it impossible for Cripps to continue with the negotiations. By doing this, Churchill successfully silenced the speculations about his alternative and tried to kill the political career of his potential rival, and at the same time he also made effort
to convince, Roosevelt and Chiang Kai-Shek that he valued their advice also in matters which were principally his own concern.

According to Maulana Azad, in the beginning Cripps had freely mentioned the prospect of the Viceroy's Executive Council functioning as a Cabinet, but changed his stand later and emphasized the difficulties in the way of such a development. This apparent volte-face on the part of Cripps has long been the subject of a controversy. Lord Linlithgow's son, Lord Glendevan, asserts that in his earlier discussions with the Congress leaders on the nature of the new Executive Council, Cripps went well beyond his brief. Eric Stockes also agrees with this view. But D.A. Low describes such a view as unwarranted and remarks that Cripps was not only careful never to travel beyond his brief, but convinced he should not. R.J. Moore broadly agrees with this view, but remarks that the allegation of volte-face levelled by the Congress against Cripps was substantially warranted.

Looking to all the available source material there are reasons to believe that in the anxiety of earning success, Cripps, in his conversation with the Congress leaders did exceed the limits laid down in the draft declaration and the instructions. The letter of the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow on Amery, of 14 April 1942, which was not available before, states: "Cripps in his extreme anxiety to meet Congress
claims and to secure the support from them which might have resulted in securing the support of other parties, may have taken chances in discussion which were dangerous, and I am confirmed in that view by statements such as those positively made by Kalam Azad in his letter of 11 April to Cripps and not contradicted by the later, that Cripps had talked freely of a "National Government" presided over by a Viceroy who would stand in much the same relation to it as the King does at home. Until the last moment of the negotiations, Congress leaders were kept under the impression that the Executive Council constituted of all the Indian members was going to get absolute power, except in the sphere of defence, and this would be done by convention. When this understanding was removed on 10 April 1942, round about 2.20 p.m. 'there had been a hitch in the negotiations'. Viceroy was asked to 'send for Nehru or possibly Nehru and Cripps together to come and see him and see if he could clarify the matter'. But the Viceroy was not prepared to do that.

When the failure of the Mission was in sight, Cripps tried to exploit Nehru's anti-fascist and Pro-Allies emotions and his friendly relations with later. But Cripps forgot that Nehru was as much an Indian as he himself was an Englishman.

After the failure of the Mission, guided by the patriotic motives, Cripps blamed most unfairly Congress and Gandhiji
for the failure of the Mission. This attitude of Cripps created many controversies regarding the failure of the Mission. But thanks to the publication of the original secret documents that now the charge against Congress and Gandhiji do not stand any more.

Gandhiji's views on the subject of participation in any war were well known. Moreover he had made it clear to the Congress Working Committee that it was perfectly free to come to its own decisions on the merit of the proposals. Mahatmaji who was absent from Delhi during the later stages of the negotiations, was not responsible for anything that took place. In spite of his adverse opinion expressed at the preliminary stage, the Working Committee entered into discussions with Sir Stafford and carried on. Gandhiji did not interfere. Eminent Congress leaders like Madan Upadhyaya, Jawaharlal Nehru and C. Rajgopalacharia have categorically declared that Gandhiji did not come into picture at all. Mahatma Gandhi, a great lover of truth, himself refused the charge that he had influenced the Congress Working Committee on the matter of Cripps proposals. On the other side, even after the publication of the secret documents on the Cripps Mission, the British Government could not produce single documentary evidence stating that Gandhiji had influenced the Congress Working Committee.

Cripps' standing at that time in Britain was high. He was regarded almost as the alternative Prime Minister, because
of his success in bringing about a break between Germany and Russia as British Ambassador to Moscow. With an Indian settlement under his belt, he could have overborne any resistance to its working. So he did every thing possible to earn success for his Mission. The voluminous record on his Mission, now available to us, inspite his volte face, controversy, unmistakably proves that Cripps meant to serve India well. On his own he did every thing to reach at satisfactory solution. When with some concession in the offer the solution seemed certain, he asked for permission from the British War Cabinet. But Churchill and his Cabinet members refused to give such permission and warned him to come back to original draft offer.

4. **REACTIONS TO THE FAILURE OF THE MISSION**

The offer was withdrawn all of a sudden by the Government and at the stage when success was in sight. In other words, great propaganda value of the offer was exploited at length and thrilled atmosphere was created. Hopes and aspirations were raised, and they were doomed when political purpose of satisfying America and other critics was served. Internationally critics were pacified to some extent and the radical section of the Labour Party and the Labour members of the British Cabinet became reconciled to Government policy toward India, and were annoyed with the Indian leaders. In some sections of China and America too, there was a criticism of Congress
and Gandhiji. The criticism was the result of the failure of the Mission. British Propaganda clouded the official American attitude against the Indian nationalists. As a result the State Department of America concluded that the charge of British sabotage was not substantiated. Thus, British propaganda succeeded to confuse American opinion and American official started thinking that the Indian leaders had turned down far reaching offer. However, public opinion in the United States refused to believe that negotiations were broke down on general broad issues. American people felt that settlement with India was still possible and essential.

In China also British propaganda tried to confuse the matter as to why Cripps Mission failed and thus Chinese apprehension and fears were reduced to verbal protests by Chiang-Kai-Sheck to Roosevelt. However, great disappointment was shown at the failure of the constitutional talks in India and several news-papers urged their renewal under Chinese-American mediation.

The equivocal manner of the presentation of the offer and the propaganda of misrepresentation with the deliberate purpose of turning world opinion against India and de-fame Gandhiji, caused widespread disillusionment and intense indignation. The British Government did not obey the psychological moment, which was demanding real further political advance for Indians. Even when on 23 March Japanese had occupied Andaman Islands, on 5th April Japanese naval
raided Colombo, and on 6th April Japanese air raided Vizagapatam, and Canada, the British Government was adamant and did not concede any relief in the cut and dry offer. So it is quite clear that the failure of the Mission in midst of such a critical juncture, provoked both disappointment and anger in India. Individual Indians, under the grave approaching shadows of the war, became impatient. They felt insecure and frustrated, feeling insecurity and frustration. Due to this anger, frustration, and insecurity, and also due to love and respect for the mother land, Indians identified themselves with the demand for a responsible democratic government more intensely and with much vigour. As a result the great political movement of 'Quit India' took place.

Other significant effect of the offer is that it made Pakistan almost inevitable. The offer, for the first time officially committed all the parties to Indian independence on the basis of Pakistan. By including the provision of secession in the offer, the British politicians committed Britain to abide by the Muslim League's partition resolution. After the Cripps Mission political dominance of Jinnah increased and he could, on December 25, 1942, confidently declare that he would realise his goal earlier than he had anticipated.