Appendices
Appendices

APPENDIX I

T.S. Archives:
Ref: AB II B. File 13

MANIFESTO

On the proposed reforms:

The following Draft is a statement of opinions, and not
an ultimatum to anybody. We are prepared to listen to
arguments against them, to change them if better proposals
are made.

1. (a) That we reaffirm Resolution XII Clause (c) of the
Congress of 1916, and the Resolution on Self-Government
of the Congress of 1917, and declare that nothing less
than Self-Government within the Empire can satisfy the
Indian People, and, by enabling it to take its rightful
place as a free and Self-Governing Nation in the
British Commonwealth, strengthen the connection
between Great Britain and India.

(b) That we regard the proposals of the Rt.Hon. the
Secretary of State for India and H.E. the Viceroy as
not affording in their present form that substantial
step towards Self-Government....

(c) That we regards the following changes in the Bill to be
laid before Parliament as the least that can be
regarded as a substantial step towards Responsible
Government, establishing complete Provincial Autonomy,
as demanded by the late Mr. Gokhale, the Memorandum of
the Nineteen, and the Congress-League Scheme.
accompanied by such transference to the Indian Nation, under the supremacy of the British Crown, within the period rendered necessary by the rapid changes brought about by the War.

(d) That we feel that the adoption of these changes is necessary to enable the British Nation to go into the Peace Conference with clean hands, and to justify its professions during the War.

(e) That we are of opinion that to render the Scheme possible even for a short period, as a first step, the following changes must be incorporated in the Bill to be brought before parliament.

"Government of India"

1. There shall be no Council of State.

2. Half of the Viceroy's Executive Council shall be Indian's, and one or more Ministers shall be added, if business require such addition, from the elected members of the Legislative Assembly. These may be nominated by the Governor-General in Council.

3. The reserved subjects shall be Foreign Affairs, Army and Navy, relations with Indian Ruling Princes, and those which affect Peace, Tranquility and the Safety of the Council.

4. The Budget shall be passed in the shape of Money Bills, and put to the Vote of the Assembly, except that part of the Budget which deals with reserved subjects; for
these a fixed sum shall be voted annually during the life-time of the first Assembly calculated on the annual expenditure on these subjects for 5 years before the war. The reserved subjects shall not include Customs, Tariff and Excise Duties.

5. In the event of the Government requiring more money for the reserved subjects, they must obtain it by the vote of the Assembly.

6. The proportion of the Muhammadans in the Assembly, laid down in the Congress-league Scheme, must be maintained (Provincial government).

1. In the Provinces all the Departments shall be transferred, except Police, Law and Justice, and these shall be transferred automatically at the end of 5 years, rendering Provincial Autonomy complete.

2. There shall be no Grand Committees.

3. The Ministers shall be nominated by the Governor-in-Council for the first Reformed Council, and shall be irremovable during its life-time; the Governor shall advise, but not control them.

4. The Provincial Budget shall be under the control of the Legislature, subject to the contribution to the Government of India, and during the life-time of the first Reformed Council, to the allocation of a fixed sum for the reserved subjects, voted annually, calculated on the annual expenditure on the subjects for five years before the war.
5. In the event of the Government requiring more money for the reserved subjects they must obtain it by the vote of the Legislature.

6. The proportion of Muhammadans in the Legislatures, laid down in the Congress-League Scheme, must be maintained.

Parliament and the India office.

1. The Control of Parliament and the Secretary of state must only be modified, as the responsibility of Provincial and Indian Governments to the electorates is increased. No power over Provincial Governments and Legislatures, now excercised by Parliament and the Secretary of State, must be transferred to the Government of India, until the latter is responsible to the electorates.

2. (Accepted) "The salary of the Secretary of State for India to be transferred to the British Estimates".

3. (Accepted) "The House of Commons to be asked to appoint a Select Committee on Indian affairs."

4. The Council of India to be abolished, and the India Office establishment to be order on the British Estimates order on the British Estimates.

Annie Besant Madras
P.Keshava Pillai Ooty
C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar Madras
S.Subramania Iyer Madras
B.L.D.,Ex-Judge, and Ex-Acting Chief Justice.
G.S.Arunadale Madras
B.P. Wadia
T.L. Crombie
Manjeri Ramaiyer
A. Rangaswami Aiyer
T.M. Krishnaswami Aiyer
S. Guruswami Chetty
V.C. Seshachariar
B. Chakravarti

Member, Bengal Legislative Council

Motilal Ghose
Hirendranath Datta (Solicitor)
I.B. Sen
Bejoy Krishna Bose
Gumara Chandra Sen
J.M Lahiri
B.K. Lahiri
Ray Jatindranath Chowdhury
Jitendranath Bannerji
C.R. Das

(was away at final draft, but had agreed to principles)
B.G. Tilak
(The manifesto substantially represents my views)
S.R. Bomanji
Rattansi DMorarji
Jamnadas Dwarkadas
Shakerlal G. Banker
(Agrees with M.A. Jinnah's vote,
Private and Confidential.

T.S. Archives. File 13
Ref: A8 II B
17-7-1918.

299
CHANGES

Government of India Certificate of the Viceroy should not apply except to certain reserved subjects which affect peace, Trucuity and Safety of the country.

Budget: Should be passed in the shape of money bills and the budget should be put to the vote of the Council; except that part of the Budget which deals with reserved subjects, and these shall not include Customs, Tarrif and Excise.

There should be three Indian Members in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Provincial Government

In the provinces all the departments should be transferred except Police and Justice, and devolutions should be in 5 years.

The Provincial Budget shall be under the Control of the Legislative with the exception of the reserved subjects above mentioned.

Fiscal autonomy is sine qua non.

During the life-time of the first Reformed Council the local Governments may be assigned a fixed annual sum for the reserved subjects calculated on the annual expenditure of the subjects 5 years before the war.
In the event of Government requiring more money for those subjects they can obtain it by the vote of the Council.

We maintain the proportion of Muhammadans in the Provincial and Supreme Legislatures as laid down in the Congress-League Scheme.

(sd)
Annie Besant

Subject to the Presidency of the Raja of Muhammadabad. I accept these proposals on the understanding that they ..........17-7-1918

..........are needed in the interest of unity of moderates and the nationalists in the Special Congress Session.

(sd)
B.G.Tilak
N.C.Keekan
17-7-1918
APPENDIX II

T.S. Archives. File 13
Ref: AB II B

HOME RULE LEAGUE,
BOMBAY
PUBLIC MEETING
Under the auspices of the Bombay Branch of the All India Home Rule League at Shantaram's Chawl at 6.30 p.m. (S.T.) Tuesday the 24th September 1918.
President Mrs. Besant

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution I

1. That this meeting of the citizens of Bombay declares that the resolution adopted by the Imperial Council on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Banerjee does not represent the view of the country, in that the reform proposals of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, do not as they stand, constitute a definite advance towards the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India, seeing that they do not fulfil the terms of reference of the Declaration of August 20th but maintain the autocracy of the Supreme Government and thus take no step towards responsible Government, and it therefore calls upon the Committee of non-official members appointed by the Imperial Council to adopt the modifications demanded by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League which alone can make the scheme acceptable to the country.
2. This meeting unreservedly approves of and endorses the resolution passed by the Special Session of the Indian National Congress.

A. Expressing the view that while the proposal for constitutional Reform contained in the Report of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford mark an advance on the present condition in some directions, the proposals as a whole are disappointing and unsatisfactory.

B. Asserting the fitness of Indians for Responsible Government and repudiating the assumption to the contrary contained in the Report.

C. Laying down the modifications of the proposed Reforms which are absolutely necessary for the scheme to constitute a substantial step towards responsible Government.

D. Demanding Fiscal Autonomy for the Government of India.

E. Demanding that a declaration of Rights as set out in the Resolution, be embodied in the Bill for Indian Constitutional Reforms.

Proposed by-Mr. M.R. Jayakar
Seconded by-Mrs. Jammadas Dwarkadas
Supported by-Mr. N.B. Vibhakar

Mr. Gokhale.
Resolution II

1. This meeting of the citizens of Bombay expresses its strong disapproval of the procedure adopted by Government in introducing in the Imperial Legislative Council on the motion of the Finance Member a resolution committing the country in vague terms to a further contribution to the Imperial Government for the War as:

A. The procedure followed is unprecedented and unconstitutional and has thrown upon those who have no power or control over the expenditure of the finance of the Country, the responsibility for a vast expenditure, the need for which has not yet been shown to have arisen and the Country's capacity to bear which has not even been discussed and should first be demonstrated.

B. That while the people of India are willing to undergo all the sacrifices that can reasonably be demanded of them in struggle in which the Empire is engaged, as has been shown by the manner in which they have acquiesced hitherto in sacrifices which have exceeded those of any other part of the Empire outside the United Kingdom, having regard to the burden they are now bearing and the impoverished state of the country, to commit them to a further vast expenditure by such procedure as has been adopted is gratuitous, unjustifiable, and indefensible on any grounds whatsoever.
2. This meeting strongly condemns the conduct of those Indian non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council, who, failing to realise the responsibility resting upon them as the representatives of the people, voted for the resolution of Sir William Meyer without demanding on their behalf adequate time for the due consideration of so important a matter.

Proposed by - Mr. B. S. Horniman

Seconded by - Mr. K. M. Munshi
Resolution III

1. This meeting of the citizens of Bombay recognises the need of reducing the price of cloth for the use of the poor, but does not consider the means proposed to be adopted under the Cloth Control Bill as either adequate or satisfactory.

2. This meeting views with apprehension any unnecessary interference with the textile industry which will subject it to the evils of red tape and feels that the only means of reducing the price of cloth would be to increase production by the mills working day and night by double shift under facilities to be given by the Government in respect of labour, coal, cotton and stores; provided that along with this, steps are taken to check speculation in cotton cloth and yarn and powers are taken by the Government to take over imports from Japan and Lancashire at fair prices.

Proposed by-Mr. M. Subedar

Seconded by-Mr. Naraindas Purshotamdas
1918
Dear Mrs. Besant,

We are strongly of the opinion that now that the ice has been broken and friendly relations have been established between the Labour Party and the Indian National Congress that the matter should not be allowed to rest at the point, and we think that a formal invitation should come from the Committee to the Labour Party asking them to send a Fraternal Delegate to the next Indian National Congress.

As you are no doubt aware, the Labour party sends a Fraternal Delegate to America and Canada as well as to countries on the Continent, with whom we are not at war.

The view has been expressed that they should get into closer touch with the Movement in the various parts of the Empire, and therefore if this suggestion be adopted, it would be the means of bringing this desire into practical politics.
The Labour Party will hold its conference in June and it is at this Conference that the election of these Fraternal Delegates takes place, it will therefore be necessary for the invitation to come as speedily as possible so that it can be placed before the Conference and the letter should be worded asking them to place the matter before the full meeting of the Labour Party Conference.

Yours sincerely  
(Signed) John Scurr

To the All-India Home Rule League Council

My dear colleagues,

Having in view the critical state of the political conditions of India, I think that we should do well to consult each other on the policy that we should adopt as a body. I therefore request you to be good enough to send to me your answer on the following points:

1. Shall we hold a Special Home Rule Conference at the place selected for the Special National Congress, immediately after the close of that Congress?

2. Shall we hold a General Council meeting to formulate a policy to lay before such a Conference? If so, shall we meet? and in what place? or shall we discuss by communication?

3. As our organisation has suffered in practical working, especially in Madras Presidency, by the abolition of the office of Organising Secretary, will you reappoint Mr. George Arundale to that office until the next Annual meeting?
Bombay Presidency alone is sufficiently well organised to make an appeal to all the Branch league effective, when a sudden need arises. There is not available for my use even a register, giving the names of all Branches and their Secretaries.

4. Is it desirable to hold Provincial Conferences, with a view to devising means whereby Home Rulers can help in the defence of the Motherland?

Yours faithful servant.
President, A.I.H.R.League

P.O.Box 33
Madras E.
19 June, 1918

T.S. Archives File 13
Ref: A B II B

ALL-INDIA HOME RULE LEAGUE

The Council of the Home Rule League will meet at Rai Bahadur Sultan Singh's House, Kashmir Gate, at 9-30 a.m. on December 31st 1918, for the transaction of Business.

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AGENDA

1. Presentation of Report.

2. Presentation of Balance Sheet.


4. Changes in constitution, to simplify the carrying on of the work

5. Election of Executive-President, General Secretaries, Treasurer, Organising Secretary.


7. Any other business brought forward by Secretaries.

309
DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

1. That the All-India Home Rule League most respectfully begs to convey to His Gracious Majesty the King Emperor its deep loyalty and profound devotion to the throne and its congratulations on the success which has crowned the great war for the Freedom of Nations.

2. That the H.R.L. welcomes the announcement of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to this country, believing that his presence will strengthen the connection between India and Great Britain.

3. That this Conference desires to place on record its profound appreciation of the brilliant gallantry of the Allied Armies, and especially of the heroic achievements of the British Indian Army, and conveys to them all its most cordial congratulations on their having jointly won Freedom, Justice and Self-determination for humanity.

4. That this Conference affirms that Home Rule—the complete autonomy of each Nation within the British Empire in all internal affairs—is absolutely essential to the stability of that Empire, and therefore demands the passage at an early date of an Act of Parliament, granting Home Rule to India, and the "machinery of autocracy"—a vast population who do not share, though under your Majesty's sceptre, the elementary rights of security of life, liberty of person, and possession of property, which should be theirs, unless deprived of them by a sentence duly passed in one of your Majesty's Courts of Justice after open trial, as assured by Magna Carta and other laws on which depend the allegiance of the subjects to your Majesty.
Wherefore your Petitioners humbly pray that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to grant, through such constitutional ways as are available, this our humble Petition:

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray."

7. That a Petition to Parliament be drawn up by the following persons to be presented by the deputation as arranged by the British Auxiliary; The Hon. Mr. M.A. Jinnah, Messrs. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, K. Telang, and the President of the League.

8. That the British Auxiliary, in consultation with the Deputation, arrange for a Home Rule for India Conference in London, at such date as the British Auxiliary shall decide.

9. That a vigorous propaganda for the furtherance of the object of the League be carried on in India during the coming year.

APPENDIX III

T. S. Archives File 13
Ref: AB II B.

AN APPEAL TO THE NATION, CLOSE UP THE RANKS,

BY ANNIE BESANT, D.L.

(President of the National Home Rule League, and Ex-President of the National Congress, 1917).

As a bugle-call sounds through the din of battle, through the thunder of guns, calling on the fighting men to advance or retreat, so has a silver trumpet-note rung out from realms invisible, calling on scattered parties,
fighting for the Freedom of the Indian Motherland, to close up their ranks and advance together, to capture the Government of their own country, to establish Swaraj. That trumpet-note rings over the battle field where Autocracy and Representative Government are locked in deadly strife, which must lead to the triumph of one or the other. It is the same battle as was fought out in Europe between the Allies, who fought "to make the world safe for Democracy", and the Central Powers, who fought for the establishment of a worldwide Empire based on military force, directed by a War-Lord, who claimed to be the Vicegerent of the Most High. The issue of that struggle freed many subject Nations, but they were all white. They were helped by coloured men, by Indians from the east, by Africans from the South; these coloured hosts poured out their blood to free white men in Europe; they returned to their own lands to find white men dominating their own people as the Kaiser had sought to dominate Europe. Europe was set free; India, the heart of Asia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, with Egypt and the whole African Continent, remained under white yokes. The issue which statesmen should have strained every nerve to avoid the issue of the world-domination of the white races over the coloured has been forced to the front, and has to be determined, are the great struggle that began in 1914 can find its ending in a world at peace.

I have spoken above of "realms invisible". Let me put it more plainly. I believe that the world is governed ultimately, so far as our Solar System is concerned, by Him
whom the Greeks called the LOGOS, the WORD and that WORD is the Voice of GOD, GOD for this portion of His universe. His Viceroy, rule the planets of which our world is one. In our world, He has spoken through His Messengers, whom Hindus and Buddhists call Rishis, Christians and Muhammadans Prophets, and he uses Devas or Angels, the Hosts invisible with them. All the religions including the Zoroastrians, believe in this, through to many may be a "a pious belief" rather than an active fact. All acknowledge it in their prayers, even if they ignore it in their lives. A practical active belief in it underlines all my own life, since I am what is some times called "a practical mystic". I believe, as the soldiers in the battlefields of north-eastern France, that the "Patron Saints" of England and France, S. George and S. Joan, the Maid of Orleans, and many Angels, helped the human warriors in those deadly struggles, and saved the grey hosts from rolling over them to victory. To me, the decision of the British Cabinet, establishing the dominance of the white race in Kenya, of 9,000 whites over 22,000 civilised coloured men and 2,50,000 mostly uncivilised coloured men, is answered by that "silver trumpet-note from realms invisible," calling on India to lead in the Struggle for Freedom for the coloured races of the world, and to that end to close up her ranks.
Be that as it may, there are reasons enough and to spare why he should lead it. The Cabinet of Great Britain, in the appropriately named White Paper, has thrown down the challenge, trampling on the resolution signed by Britain in the Imperial Conference of 1921, and making it a "scrap of paper"—did the Kaiser in 1914 with the Treaty of the Neutrality of Belgium, signed by Germany. (In this we must not include the South African Government, as General Smuts refused to sign the Resolution, and therefore has not broken his word). The Kenya decision is the decision of the Cabinet Major Ormsby-Gore has told us. The question to be decided, therefore, is: shall the British Empire become a White Commonwealth, ruling over subject coloured races all the world over, or shall it be an Indo-British Commonwealth "Indo" standing for the coloured races as "British" stands for the White?

Now, in the answer to this, the main element is the winning of Swaraj by India. She cannot use her strength while she is a subject Nation. I know that Mr. Lloyd George said, during the War, that the term "subject Nation" should no longer be used. But why not, so long as it represents a fact? Taxation against the will of the representatives of the people is the chief sign of subjection, and the restoration of the grant for the Royal Commission on the Services and of that for the Railways, and the Certification of the Finance Bill, were three cases in the session of such taxation.
Lord Ronaldshay acted in the spirit of the Reform Act though its letter gave him power—as did the Viceroy in 1921 and 22—when, on the refusal of the Police Grant, he explained a need for it, and saying that he could not discharge his responsibilities without it, and that it was for him resign if there were a definite breach between the Council and himself: re-submitted it to the Council, which then granted it, with a reduction which he accepted. In this struggle, Swaraj is our main objective because, with that the power of White hall will be broken, and we can protect our own Nationals. Kenya is only a skirmish, but none the less must we fight it, because the whole principle is involved. In the main struggle we shall win; this is but an outpost affair. But the silver trumpet-note bids us fight it, and therefore to cease our quarrelings to abandon our dissensions in the face of the Kenya crisis, for this threatens our advance to Freedom, is a barrier in our ways; we should be, we must be, one great band of brethren, standing shoulder to shoulder, feeling that the insult and humiliation of India, our Motherland, and that the insult and humiliation bid us to have done with discord, and to renew our active brotherhood, as children of one Bharatmata, as we felt it in the unity which carried us forward so mightily and wonderfully from 1914 to the end of 1918.

Three solemn duties lie before us, necessary to the winning of Swaraj: First, to set our own house in order by cleansing our hands from the sin of untouchability;
we cannot rationally protest against coloured untouchability abroad until we abolish outcaste untouchability at home. And this we can do without legislation, each in our homes and circle of acquaintances and neighbours, although legislation is also eminently desirable. True, the Kenya decision sanctions it in fact, though not in word, and the setting apart of an area in the lowlands for Indian is like our setting apart villages for outcastes.

Second, to consult on measures to be taken to bring home to Great Britain, her Cabinet, and the white settlers in Kenya that the Kenya decision is intolerable and must be reversed. When Confucius was asked whether he would return good for evil, being a statesman dealing with National affairs, and not a Sannyasin, he answered: "With what then will you return good? Recompense good with good, and evil with Justice. "Reciprocity of treatment is justice between Nations, and has been definitely sanctioned as the Right of every Nation towards other Nations. We have to consider what Effective measures we can take. I regret the proclamation of a hartal for the 27th; for the first attempt led rioting and bloodshed at Delhi; others have been accompanied by rioting since, and, I may add, Mr. Gandhi forbade them, because he saw that no general hartal can be carried out without violence.

Some effective measures we must seek, for the Kenya decision assails the ideal of the Indo-British Commonwealth, and if its policy is followed that ideal will be destroyed.
The path followed by many, from 1919 to 1923, has not achieved its purpose, but by our divisions has encouraged Britain to commit the Kenya outrage.

Third, we should make 1924 memorable by the holding of a National Convention to establish Swaraj India in the only way in which it can be established firmly and without bloodshed by the elected representatives of the Nation meeting for that purpose in a Convention, because they cannot meet for it within the legislatures. But they can do it outside them, as the elected of the Nation, and if the Nation is behind them and behind the Commonwealth of India Bill which they frame, Swaraj will be won.

Let us then in common counsel against the common danger, a contest between white and coloured races that will wreck the civilisation of the world. There is no time to be lost. India's anger is natural, just and righteous. God grant it may attain its natural, just and righteous end in Swaraj, and God Forbid that it should become unmanageable, as I know it will do if the country remains divided as it is today.

Comrades, I was one of those who led you in the advance form 1914 to 1919. You elected me as President of the undivided Congress of 1917. Pardon me, then, if in this moment of National nay of world, peril, I address you in favour of Union and Peace.

Annie Besant, D.L.
INTERVIEW WITH Mr. MONTAGU

As I did know where the interview was to be, I called in at Mr. Montagu's tent. He came in ready dressed for dinner and apologised for so appearing. As we said the interview was at the Viceregal Lodge, I requested: "I have my car at the door, and we might go round together to the Viceroy's." I was amused at his first remark: "Now we are getting down to the real people." He had been having so many interviews with all sorts of people who did not so very much to count. In the car I took the opportunity of asking him whether he could not really come to the Congress. He replied, "Mrs. Besant, my work is already very difficult; I do not want to make it impossible." He is trying to pull the bureaucracy round, and has therefore to avoid all public demonstrations. He said, "We won't press you, but now you are here we do not seem to have much opportunity of making our feelings known, and it almost looks as though we did not care. There are no public demonstrations at the railway stations and so on, and you might think India is not glad to see you, but public demonstrations are not permitted." By this time we had got to the Viceregal Lodge. He went in and I was taken by an aide-de-camp into a big room--the same room where I was before. Mr. Montagu and the Viceroy sat in two big armchairs, and I took a third, making the apex in a triangle of three.
I said nothing. I thought it was their business to start. Then Mr. Montagu said: "When I was here last, Mrs. Besant, you were engaged in educational work. Why did you go into politics?" I explained that when I first came over to India I had been asked many questions on political and social matter, but that I had refused to answer them, as I knew nothing about the conditions out here. That I entirely with religious work and religious lecturing. That in 1897 I began my educational work, and the first thing in that was that Sir Antony Macdonald declared in a Blue book that we are seditious, we said nothing, but went on quietly with our work, but took no Government grant, hoping thereby to be left free; but Government was altogether unfriendly and we were continually coming up against it and lived in an atmosphere of continual government obstruction. Then Lord Minto came over, and I was in Shimla and was invited to meet him, and he asked me whether I could tell him of the unrest that there was in the country. I answered that he ought to divide the unrest into two kinds; the righteous unrest, which was very largely due to the spread of English deals and English education, and outside that (there were people) ready to take to violence. These two, I said, ought to be kept quite distinct. After that I kept in touch with him and from time to time he discussed with me the questions and difficulties he met with. That brought my mind no to political matters.
Meanwhile the general state of unrest had had a definite result on the young men... but we allowed free discussion of these matters and ourselves talked with them sympathetically, so that we had taken into our College boys who had got into trouble in Bengal—one who had been expelled, and one who had been tried in the conspiracy case at Alipur, and been acquitted; that we had taken others in also and our treatment had resulted in turning them into good citizen; that in this way we had done most valuable service and that after a time even the Government of the U.P. had been in favour of our methods. But all the time we were troubled by the suspicions, doubts, and questionings on the part of the Government which made all our educational work exceedingly difficult. Also about this time I had seen something of Mr. Gokhale and knew many other Congressmen, so that my mind was gradually turning in that direction, and in the visits when I was over in England I gave several political lectures about the condition of India and the relation of England to this country. Then came my election in 1907 to be President of the Theosophical Society, and I had to leave Benaras, and though I continued to be President of the Board of Trustees, I could no longer keep up my close touch with my educational work. Down here in Madras I found just the same difficulties but here there were no schools in which I could help. At last I became convinced that nothing but a change in the Government of the country was of any use, and that no educational work for the uplift of the people was possible as things were:
and that drove me to consider the whole question of the Government of India, and to finally resolve up definitely political work.

I therefore began in 1914 by starting the "Commonwealth" with a view to taking a very active part in politics. I talked over the whole position with Mr. Gokhale, and both with the young men. Naturally, they, being young, were attracted to the more violent and showy methods, and it was very difficult to get them into constitutional ways of working. We agreed that when he returned from England, he should be President of the Bombay side of this movement that we would start, and that we would work together keeping the needs of the young men in view. We also agreed to have a little body of half-a-dozen people or who could trust each other and would work together. But when he came back, he was too ill to do anything. Meanwhile, on my return from England, I had started a daily newspaper, and in October of the following year Lord Pentland and had explained to him my position with regard to the paper, because of some trouble that had occurred in connection with one of the Councillors—

I told him, quite frankly that, so far as I could judge, there was no class really loyal except the educated, and that people were everywhere being alienated by suspicion and distrust. In 1914 practically the whole of the Madras Bar had volunteered for the War—a splendid opportunity but they had been rejected and the result was feeling of great disappointment and resentment.
I told Lord Pentland that I would work with him so far as to War was concerned, but in those matters where I disagreed with him, I should have to speak out, and I left him saying definitely that whatever he did, whether he stopped the paper or interned me, I should keep on along the lines I had marked out, because I thought that necessary for the well-being of the Empire.

But I must go back to 1914. When Mr. Gokhale returned he was desirous of drawing the Extremists back into and his friends, and learned what they wanted Mr. Gokhale had drawn up a resolution which I was to move in Congress to heal the split and everything was in train for that when a very unfair attack was made Mr. Gokhale touching his honour, and he gave up the work for the moment and was somewhat annoyed with for a few days. He wished me not to bring in the resolution because I said that I had promised to bring it in and therefore I must do so. When I explained that I felt strongly on this point we agreed and said I was right to do as I promised. He again drafted the resolution, but next February he passed away, and I was left to carry on our plans alone. At this time I had written over to England to form a league there not yet named, but it was rather discouraged by Sir William Wedderburn and his party, who thought the time was not propitious. All this time I was going on with newspaper propaganda, and had made attempts to draw people together, and, to some extent, succeeded. But when I proposed a definite League to work for Self-Government, the leading Congress men were against me.
I began in Madras and went to Bombay and to Calcutta and met the leaders, but they were against any immediate action. It was decided to meet again at Bombay, when the Congress met. We met at Christmas, and it was decided that Congress should take up educative propaganda work, and I agreed to hold my scheme of the Home Rule League over if the propaganda was started before the end of August. The Congress League Scheme was started but the no educative work was done, and I therefore started the Home Rule League on September 1st, and we have been working ever since, by lectures, classes and pamphlets, and forming branches. Our objects are the same as the Congress, and in 1916 the Reform Scheme was adopted by Congress, and the Home Rule League and other bodies were asked to work for it, and we have worked for it ever since then.

Before that Congress, I had been to Bengali, to meet some of the revolutionary party, which caused suspicion against me; I knew it must— it could not be helped. I did not meet them and discussed matters with them; I did not know their names, did not ask them, did not want to know them. They said they had lost trust in the Congress people; the young men wanted to act, and the older men would not act, and therefore they grew further and further apart. This widening process was going on, on both sides. The young men expressed great distrust in the leadership of these elders, but said that if I would make a movement, they must join. They asked me to get Lord Carmichael to withdraw the C.I.D. spying, the police espionage.
I talked things over with him; he expressed, great sympathy with the young men, who had a great idea, but were following it in a wrong way, were wrong in their methods of working. ( I said here to Mr. Montagu: "Mr. Montagu, if you will see Lord Carmichael, he will tell you exactly what passed between us.") I went on to say that I believed that the Home Rule League had drawn many young men away from the desire to join the revolutionary party, and therefore that it had been of immense service both to this country and to the Empire. Its most useful work had been that it has given eager young men something to do, something to work at. Since the scheme had been passed, we had done nothing else but work for it, and had not gone further, except that we had added to it the Local Government Scheme. (This brought me right up to the scheme).

Mr. Montagu said that he would like to take up the scheme; that there were one or two things about it that he would like to know.

First, the question of Local Government. I explained that we took up the present system of District Boards and Taluk Board, but added Panchayats, Village Councils. The villagers were not so densely ignorant as was made out; they had their own culture; they were shrewd and they knew their own business. The system of Sir Thomas Munro, about 1820 onwards and could easily be revivified.
We wanted the whole of these three bodies to be elected, and to have Local Government Board over it, not a real Board, but the real part of the Board that you know in England, the President of a nominal Board, to be represented were by an Indian member of the Executive council...

The Viceroy: "Suppose we give you the whole of that Scheme, why do you want Provincial autonomy as well?"

"Because without that there would be no means of getting money. We shall have the charge of Primary and secondary education, and we shall have to take up various village matters which require money, irrigation, roads, forest cares, small law cases and more and unless we have the means of getting money, that is, a Council with a large elected majority and control of the Finance... the scheme will be starved and will break down, and people will say that we have had our chance and are not fit for self-government".

Mr. Montagu: "That is true".

The Viceroy: "If you are given provincial autonomy, why do you want also to change the Imperial Council?"

"Excellency, for exactly the same reason. Your Government have the largest sources of supply. Unless we have a large majority and can control the purse, how are we going to be able to get the money? You can allocate certain reserves to the Provincial Council and others to the Supreme, but there may arise questions of deficits and surplus...."
The Viceroy: "But, Mrs. Besant, if you had that, you would be giving us more work to do, and we thought we should be getting rid of you. We shall have to look into all the financial details to inquire into the deficits, to supervise, to control.

Mrs. Besant: "No, Excellency, that is not necessary. If they get deficits they must manage to meet them themselves. We want definite sources allocated to each and certain money paid over to the Provinces, and then if there are deficits the people must clear them up. How else are they ever to learn?"

"But that will be a tribute from the Provinces to the Central.... Then he wanted to go into a lot of detail about finance but I said, "If you will pardon my saying so, I am not, Financier! I know the broad outlines, but not the details, and as there are two of our party- Mr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar and Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar- who have studied these matters, fully, I should be glad if you would put these questions on detail to them. This is not the (part) of subject and I have specially studied. (I was not going to be led away in to side issues of finance, on which I could easily be entangled.)"

Then Mr. Montagu said: "But this is a very big scheme! I should have thought that Local Self-Government would be enough for generation."
"Yes", I said, "it means that from the highest Council to the village Panchyat there is no link at which you can break—if you take any part out, the whole collapses. "The parts are all interdependent.

The Viceroy: "There is one thing I should like to ask. You are asking us for fifteen annas of self-government, why don't you ask for the sixteenth anna, and ask for responsible government straight out?"

"We will gladly ask for it," I said, "We are quite willing to ask for it, but we thought you wanted to give it to us by stages, so we did what we could to meet you and provided a stage."

The Viceroy: "Mr. Jinnah said that India was not ready for complete Self-Government. "Mrs. Besant entirely disagreed with that idea. "Look at some of the Indian States. Look how Seshadri organized Mysore. Have you any man who was his equal in statesmanship?

There is plenty of ability and power, but at present the best men are leaving British India because there are no careers open to them here. Mr. Montagu: "But we want to keep them here." Mrs. Besant: "That is impossible until you open careers for them here. You cannot keep these men until you give them power. They will go elsewhere, if they can have power elsewhere." The Viceroy: But why so great a change? "Because. Excellency, your Government is so inefficient, "I replied, "Inefficient" said Mr. Montagu. I think it is the most efficient in the world. Far more efficient than the English."
Mrs. Besant: "If by efficiency be meant efficiency in the postal service, railways, etc., machinery of Government, I will grant it. There is probably no Government more efficient than yours in these ways, except, perhaps, the German, but in the essentials of Government—the welfare and happiness of the people—you are inefficient."

The Viceroy was looking very solemn, and Mr. Montagu: "Will you put it in detail?"

"Take education, "I said. "In 1910, and 1911 Mr. Gokhale brought in his first Resolution and Education Bill. 1.9% of the population were being educated, he said. After 6 years, the percentage was given at 2.8. That is a disgrace to a civilised Government but even that is illusionary. If you take the details in education, you know from the discussions in England that if a child is only taught for four years, you might as well throw the money into the sea. At present you have 7½ millions of boys and girls in school. Of that 1½ number, 5 millions go out from the lower primary stage. Some cannot even read. That means that you might as well not have educated them at all....

"Let us take Agriculture. Two hundred and eighteen million out of two hundred and fifty-five million follow agriculture. Of these, accordingly to your own men, half—more than one hundred millions—have only one meal a day, they never have their hunger satisfied. When Lord Curzon was here he was greatly astonished at "the small resisting power" of the people—malaria seemed to carry them off, so quickly. Look at the life period here. It is 23.5."
The life period is shortening not rising, and the death rate is getting larger not less, while in other civilised countries, the life period is rising. Therefore I say you are inefficient as regards the agricultural population, the masses of the people. Their indebtedness is increasing, due partly to increased assessment. In one district in Bombay it was noticed that extra tax paid was equal to the extra amount borrowed that year. The result of such a policy is that the soil is getting exhausted, and therefore you are getting nearer and nearer to the revolutions of hunger—of all revolution the most terrible.

"Then take industries. The indigenous industries have gradually died out under the pressure of foreign competition. Germans flooded the whole country. Now the Germans are out, the Japanese have come in and they are worse, because their labour is much cheaper and they are under-selling us. In the future Japan is going to be your great rival in trade. If the Government was in our hands, we should put on import duties on foreign goods; export duties or things of which we have the monopoly. Excellency, the other day you were talking about the tanning trade, and you hoped for a great expansion; but in Madras such rules have been made that the export of hides as almost been stopped and they are rotting, while the merchants are threatened with bankruptcy."

Mr. Montagu: "But we have the same rules in England."

"Yes," I replied, "but you have the War at your doors and conditions are very different, with us the War is 7,000
miles away and its pressure is not felt in England. So a pressure that you put up with, to escape worse, causes discontent here and what is the good of an expansion of industries to us, if it is not going to help Indians?"

The Viceroy: "But they have an equal chance." I said.

"It is no good talking about equal chances, Excellency, as between Indians and Europeans: it is the white man who will always get the benefit under a white government, and the Indians will be worse off than before, becoming more and more employees of English." At each of these points they were silent. Then the Viceroy said: "We are proposing to give you Self-Government that is our objective."

"Yes," I said, "ever since 1833 you have been promising again and again, and each time you have broken your promise, and you cannot blame us that we no longer believe you, until you do something substantial.

"Yes," said Montagu, "that is true, we have made many promises and broken them and we cannot complain that the Indians do not trust us; this time we mean to do something."

"Well", I said, "When you really do something, we shall then be able to believe. By this time it was getting late I had been there more than an hour, so I turned to the Viceroy and said that they must have much more to do, and that ought not to delay them.

"Yes," he replied. "Mr. Montagu has another engagement." "There is one thing I want to say before I go," I said, "and that is on the subject of Japan and India."
In Japan you have a rising and an ambitious power, India is determined to be free, and if you do not meet her, you will be up against a Nation."

"Well, Mrs. Besant," said the Viceroy, "It is we who have made the unity."

"It is not a question of whether you have made it or not," I replied. "For the sake of argument let me grant that since the British rule came to India a unity has been remade... which had been submerged... I will grant that your education your literature your ideals of freedom have done very much, but it is here. Grant that you made it, how are you going to face it now?"

"Well," he said. "Japan is certainly a real danger."

"Japan is a very serious danger," I said. "Japan wants to have the primacy of Asia. If England is to keep her position in Asia, she can only do it with the help of Indian man power. And you cannot get at that power until India is free. It is not only a question of the defence of India; it is a question of the defence of Australia, with its long sea-board and... India is the only power that can guard that for you... only power near enough to guard it. And the real question is, will you have India free, so that, she will be your buttress, or will you refuse her freedom and lose your Empire?" It is no longer a question of how much the English people are going to give, of how much freedom India shall be allowed. India is determined to be free."
I said, "You will pardon my speaking so plainly." and Mr. Montagu answered, "We have also been speaking plainly." I wanted to leave that strong thought in their minds.

I then got up to go, and they both rose, too. Mr. Montagu said: "You said just now that India did not trust us, and I think you are right. Does it trust you?"

"To a certain extent, yes," I said.

"Supposing we were to bring a scheme forward, will you take that scheme up and recommend it? They might take on your recommendation what they would not take on ours," he said.

"Mr. Montagu, "I answered, "If I agree with it, I will take it up and recommend it. I cannot, if I don't. "They accompanied me to the door. At the entrance, smiling I turned and said to them: "I want to ask both gentlemen a very straight question- I want the answer from both of you. You know I am going to be President of the Congress. There is some question of a deputation going to England. If I want to go to England, will each of you give me a safe conduct back? I do not ask you to answer me now, but I shall want that assurance from both of you before I go, "The Viceroy burst out laughing: "That is a straight question, Mrs. Besant." "Yes Excellency .... He laughed "Mrs. Besant, if you only knew how often ... We have wanted to deport you. We should have been so glad so often to get you out of the country."

"Yes, "I said, "but I won't leave here, until I am quite sure that I shall be able to come back."
"Well, you know," he said, "it is a very difficult matter for any woman to travel to England just now."

"Oh, it is not the danger that I mind", I said, "I don't care about that at all."

Afterwards I saw Mr. Thos. Roberts, Lord Donoughmore came out to meet us, but had another and it was then late appointment, we did not talk with him. Roberts took for granted that Self-Government would be given, but was impressed with the difficulties of drawing up a bill that would escape the criticisms of the sharp minds of Balfour and Lord Curzon ... and said that India would need for sometime English experts in industries etc., and that really good men would not come out if we made conditions disagreeable, or if they were not assured of good salaries.
APPENDIX V

EXTRACT FROM MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE
APPOINTED TO REPORT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
BILL, 1919 ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL HOME RULE LEAGUE.

The National Home Rule League welcomes the announcement of
August 20th, 1917, declaring that the policy of His
Majesty's Government is the realization of Responsible
Government in India, and it accepts the principle that the
advance must be by stages. But while conceding that the
advance should be greater in the Provincial Government, that
in the Government of India, and the present scheme is
transitional it submits that the maintenance of the
"machinery of autocracy" in the Centre (Montagu-Chelmsford
Report, para 289) for the declared purpose of passing
"permanent measures, to which the majority of members is the
Legislative Assembly may be unwilling to assent, "and to
perpetuate the official bloc" (para 276), outside matters
directly concerning the peace, tranquility and defence of
the country, Foreign Affairs, (excepting relations with the
Colonies and Dominions,), Army, Navy, and relations with
Indian Princes, will cause deep disappointment in India and
prejudice the success of the Reforms, and that the principle
of responsibility should be introduced into the Government
of India by the division of subjects into "reserved" and
"transferred" as urged by the National Congress of Bombay and
Delhi, the Muslim League of Bombay, and the Moderate Conference of Bombay, all in 1918 (See letter from the Government of India, dated March 5th, 1919 and enclosures for the Congresses and Conference of 1918 pp.97, lines 1-7: pp. 140, iii,3(a), 4(a); and 142 and 143, "Government of India,"(a)).

THE RECONSTRUCTION LEAGUE

A little group of Madras Home Rulers—discussing the possibility of launching an effective movement for laying the foundation of Swaraj and for training the masses of the village population in the elements of Self-government on their ancestral lines—decided to form an organisation for this purpose under the above significant name. Here is the outline as sketched.

Objects

1. The attainment of Swaraj by the organization and consolidation of National efforts, including specially there in the creation voluntary bodies, charged with the task of Local Government on the lines indicated in the Commonwealth of India Bill, lines that will not interfere with the bases of Swaraj laid down by the All-Parties Conference in Delhi.

2. (a) The education of the people in the necessity of making India self-sufficient in the local and economic spheres with special advertence to the establishment of cottage industries and co-operative centres by concerted and vigorous propaganda in the matter of the vigorous eschewal wherever practicable, of articles of foreign manufacture and especially of foreign cloth.
3. Co-operation with the Indian National Congress, Liberal Federation, Hindu Maha Sabha, Muslim League, Indian Chambers of Commerce, Trade Unions, Mercantile and Manufactures Associations of employers and of labour who work for the political and economic emancipation of India.

4. The prevention of the dumping on India of articles of foreign origin, intended to stifle the growth of National industries, such dumping being made possible in many instances by methods of unfair competition, such as the ignoring of the Washington Convention, bounties, combines and trusts.

Membership.
All men and women of the age of 25 and over paying a subscription of Re.1 annually or in quarterly instalments.

Volunteers may join between the ages of 21 and 25, propaganda in the matter of the rigorous eschewal, wherever provided that they have, if at college, completed their college career.

T.S. Archives, Adyar.

Ref: Part II. Subject files (BII) Home Rule League.

No. 18 Papers relating to the Reconstruction League started by Home Rulers to train the masses in the experiments of Self-Government on their ancestral lines.
List of the Members

Dr. Annie Besant, D.L.,
Post Box 904, Adyar, Madras.

Sir Victor Sassoon, Bart. M.L.A.
Ballard Estate, Fort, Bombay.

Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Kt. C.I.C.M.L.A.,
Ridge Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

The Hon. Ratansji D Morarji,
Vasanthi Vihar, Mount Pleasant Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Dr. G.S. Arundale, M.A.D.L.,
Post Box 904, Adyar, Madras.

A. Ranganathan Mudaliar Esq. M.L.C.,
Adyar, Madras.

B. Shiva Rao Esq.,
Adyar, Madras.

T.C. Srinivasan Iyengar Esq. M.L.A.
High Court Vakil, Madura.

A. Rangaswami Aiyar Esq. B.A.B.L.,
High Court Vakil, Madura.

N. Sri Ram Esq.,
Adyar, Madras.

The Raja Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode, Kt. C.I.E.,
Kollengode, Via Olavakot, (S.I.R.)

The Maharaja of Pithapuram,
Dunmore House, Madras.

N.C. Kelkar Esq., M.L.A.,
The "Kesari" Office, Poona.

Lala Lajpat Rai, M.L.A.

Hirendranath Datta Esq. M.A.B.L.,
139, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.

Pandit Iqbal Narain Gurtu, M.A.M.L.C.,
Shanti Kunja, Benaras City.

P.K. Telang Esq. M.A.L.L.B.
Theosophical Society, Benaras City.
D.K. Telang Esq,
Theosophical Society,
Adyar, Madras.

Jamobed N.R. Mehta,
Chairman, Municipality, Karachi.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru K.C.S.I
19, Albert Road, Allahabad.

Smt. Sarojini Naidu,
Tej Mahal Hotel, Bombay.

M.A. Jinnah Esq, M.L.A.

Rukmini Arundale.

D.Gokhale,
922, Sadashiv Petti, Poona City.

A.R. Rangaswami Aiyar,
Sivagunga.

Rangaswami Iyengar,
Editor, Hindu.

Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, K.C.I.E.

Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Mrs. Dorothy Jinarjadasa,
Joint Organiser of Women’s Section, Madras.

Mr. D. Shiva Rao,
Chairman of the Provincial committee of the Trade Union
Congress, M... 

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya,
Editor, "Janmabhumi".

Dr. James H. Cousins.

Mrs. Margaret Cousins
Joint Organiser of Women’s Section, Madras.
APPENDIX VI

Mrs. Besant's Parting Message

To My Brother and Sister in India

(As I have to see H.E. the Governor tomorrow, 15th June, 1917, I think it is safer today, lest I should be interned and unable to speak.

ANNIE BESANT

"There are the times that try men's souls." Thus spoke one who faced the fiery furnace of trial, and who faltered neither in faith nor in courage. It is ours today to face a powerful autocracy, determined to crush out all resistance to its will, and that will is to prevent India from gaining self-government or home rule, in the reconstruction of the Empire after the War.

The National Congress has declared, in conjunction with the All India Muslim League, that India must be lifted from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire. To that end they drafted a scheme of reforms, which proposed that the Legislative Councils should be much enlarged and elected on as broad a basis as possible, with a four-fifths majority of elected members and that control of taxation and expenditure - the power of granting or refusing supply - should be placed in the hands of this Legislative Council. This is the feature of the scheme specially selected by H.E. the Governor of Madras for reprobation,
and although it had been planned in consonance with the
practice of the civilized—by the most responsible public men
in the country, and accepted by the great mass of popularly
elected at the Lucknow National Congress and the Muslim
League in 1916. The difference of opinion between the
Governor of Madras and the large majority of educated India
is a small matter; but the resolution to crush home rule by
force is a very serious one. It is practically proposed to
strangle by violence the political educative propaganda
which the Congress its own Committees, the Home Rule
Leagues, and other similar public bodies to carry on. We
are therefore faced by the alternative of disobeying the
mandate of the country or that of the Governor of Madras, an
alternative which has been faced in the past by all
countries which suffer under autocracies, and which India—
the last great civilised country to be subjected to
autocracy, save those under the central powers in Europe—has
now to face. For myself, as a member of the All India
Congress Committee, I elected to obey the mandate of the
country, in preference to that of the Governor of Madras,
which has no moral justification behind it, which outrages
British law and custom and imposes an unwarrantable, and I
believe, in illegal, restriction on the fundamental Rights
of Man. I know that this resolution of mine, setting myself
against the strongest in the world.
In the midst of a disarmed and helpless people, will seem to most an act of madness, but by such acts of madness Nations are inspired to resist oppression. Others will scoff at it as an easy martyrdom, deliberately courted, they have already done so to discount it beforehand, they who would not face exclusion from Government House, let alone the loss of liberty, the seizure of property, and the exclusion from public life, which has been my one work and joy for forty-three years. When I was twenty-five I wrote, anonymously, my first Free-thought pamphlet, and within a year, as I refused to attend the Sacrament I had ceased to believe in, I was turned out by my husband from his home. I did not then, and do not now, blame him, for the position of a Vicar with a heretic wife was impossible, and his friends urged him to the step. At twenty-six at the end of July, 1874, I joined the National Secular, for the first time heard Mr. Bradlaugh's lecture on August 2, and received my certificate of membership and had an interview with him a day or two later. On August 30, I wrote my first article in the National Reform and continued to write in it regularly, till he died in 1891. My real public life dates from my first public lecture on "The Political Status of Women" for the Co-operative Institute in August, 1874.

Since then my life has been given wholly to the service of the public, as I have seen service, so that the deprivation of the liberty to render service is the greatest loss that can befall me.
I know that the selfish and the unpatriotic cannot realize this, but those who have a similar Dharma—they will understand. Apart from the joy of service, life has no attractions for me, save the happiness that flows from a few deep and strong personal attachments. To surrender liberty and touch with those I love is to me worse than death. But to live free and with them, a coward and dishonoured, a traitor, a traitor to Dharma and to India, would be hell. I take the easier path.

Those who rob me of liberty will try to blacken me, in order to escape shame for themselves. The Defence of India Act was never intended to be used to prevent public political speech, free from all inactment to, or suggestion of violence, and accompanied with no disturbance of any kind. My paper could have been stopped by the Press Act, by forfeiture of security and confiscation of the press. But the Government is afraid to face the High Court, which has already pronounced its former procedure to be illegal. An autocracy is ever afraid of law, and hence the Government takes the step of shutting me up—a cowardly course—and hopes to prevent any public protest by striking down all who resist it. The Defence of India Act is being used to suppress all political agitation of an orderly character, so that the Government may pretend to England that India is silent and indifferent.
If any attempt be made to justify my internment by pretence of my entering into or recognition of any conspiracy, or communication with the enemy, I fling the lie in the slanderer's teeth. I know that some post cards with my portrait, supporting to come from Germany and said to be sedition, have been sent to friends; I have been told of them, but have not seen a copy. They may have been fabricated to Germany, or by the C.I.D. here, but I have nothing to do with them.

If it be said that I have carried on a "campaign of calumny" which I utterly deny, the fault lies with Lord Pentland, who could once again, have forfeited my security and confiscated my press. But then his Advocate-General would have had to prove it in Court and before the Privy Council, and that he could not do. It is easy for a Governor, if he has no scruples, to communicate a person from the safe security of Council meeting at Ooty, and then to lock up the caluminated. Such is the natural course of an irresponsible autocrat.

Such men, to protect themselves, as we saw in the case of Sir Reginald Craddock, having silenced their victims, proceed to blacken and defame them before the world. How else can they justify themselves? When the dry facts as to poverty, starvation, over-taxation, illiteracy, are stated, they are "calumny". To say that the average life period in India is 23.05, that in England is 40 m in New Zealand 60 is calumny. To publish a table of literacy in England, Japan, Russia, Baroda, and British India is "calumny".
To show that the raised assessment on land in one district was balanced that same year in the increased debt of the raiyots to the sowcars is "calumny". To show by these and many other facts that the autocracy in India is not even efficient is "calumny". To quote ancient books to show the state of country in the pre-British days is "calumny - if it shows wide-spread prosperity and wealth; if it tells of raids and wars, then it is history.

Let them talk as they will; they "come and go, impermanent". But Lord Pentland— a good but weak man, driven into tyranny by strong and ruthless men—will have to answer for his action before the Indian public, before the British Democracy, before history, which records the struggles for liberty, and before God. Will his conscience be as clear as wine?

I hear, but gossip is unreliable, that to avoid internment I shall be told either to go to England or to promise to abstain from political speaking and writing. I shall do neither; I do not run away from a struggle into which I had led others, and leave them in the middle of the filed. Our work has been wholly constitutional; there has been no threat, no act of violence, in nothing has the law been transgressed. We believed that we were living under the Crown of Great Britain, and had the constitutional right of speech and law-abiding agitation for reforms in the system of government under which we live.
Still, we were aware that we were living under an autocracy, which first punishes and then issues orders forbidding the act punished, and we took the risk; for the risk was personal, whereas the suppression of free speech means secret conspiracy leading to revolution, in which many suffer. I have often pointed out that in India liberty had deprived me of another 10,000 rupees. Now an Executive Order deprives me of my liberty. It is well. The world will learn how India is governed, and that while England asks India to fight against autocracy in Europe, and drains her of her capital to carry on the war, England's agents use all the methods of autocracy in India, in order to deceive the world into the idea that India is well governed and is content.
Q. How do you explain the decline of Annie Besant in the political leadership of the Congress?

A. Annie Besant came to India in 1894. Her first assignment was to awaken the English educated Indians to the greatness and relevance of the Ancient culture and heritage of this land. She was the first person to say that western scientific and material advantage was inadequate for the rejuvenation of man. This needed the insight and perspectives of Vedanta. She started the Central Hindu College in 1897 and it became the premium educational centre for nationalist India in the years before 1920. In 1913 she gifted the C.H.C. to the University for becoming B.H.U.

When the First World War started she wanted Britain to make a declaration that at the end of the war India should be granted Dominion Status - like Canada, Australia etc.

She was interned by the British and then she was elected President of the I.N.C.

When Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation movement she opposed that movement. She felt there was great danger of violence and communal conflicts and she opposed taking students out of educational institutions. She wanted India to pursue the path of constitutional agitation. So she became unpopular with all who supported Gandhiji. She continued to work for Indian freedom both in England and India.

Political unpopularity is not the yardstick of a person's moral worth because throughout 1920 the biggest hall, Queens in England was packed to listen to her on ancient wisdom of the
East. Her great role was to place before the people of this land the great mission they had in the changing world situation. Her message gained relevance after the end of the IIInd World War. But she had died in 1933.

Q. Why did Annie Besant retire from politics to return back to Theosophy?

A. She was dropped from the Second Round Table Conference because of her illness. If a person in politics is too old and too ill it is not a ban on having left politics. She did not leave politics, politics left her because it was now the politics of the next generation. She was the first person to demand a Constitution of India to be made by Indians. She moved the Commonwealth of India and for that she prepared a Nehru Report. Gandhi wanted complete independence whereas she wanted India to remain a part of the British Commonwealth.

Q. When Annie Besant never objected to the violence during Trade Union Formation in England, why did she object towards the violence during Non-cooperation movement?

A. The Trade Union in England of the Match Makers was the beginning of British Trade Unions. As she had experienced violence during that time she did not want these mistakes to be repeated in India. She felt that violence is a cycle and it is reversible so it is very difficult to keep a check on it.
1. Ghandhi and Annie Besant could not get on together when both believed in high moral structures? Elucidate.

Ramanujachary: I feel that they were not contemporaries. Dr. Besant was the forerunner to Gandhi and guided him in political sphere. She asked Gandhi to familiarise himself with rural India even before she felt he was sweeping the masses with slogans of non co-operation. Dr. Besant's work was to reawaken the masses. She did not aim either for popularity or superiority. When she saw Gandhi emerging as a political figure she did not want to draw cross currents with him and hence withdrew. Her aim was not leadership. With the emergence of Gandhi she withdrew and ideologically she did not believe with him.

2. Why did she retire from politics to return back to theosophy?

She joined theosophy in 1891 and since then she never left it. Even as the Congress President she continued her work for Theosophy. In 1893 she came to India, in 1915 she entered the politics and in 1917 left politics. Mrs. Besant is a wave; there is no stop to it, no one knows where she begins and stops.
3. Why did Gandhi become a taller figure than Annie Besant? Were her approaches not everlasting?

3. Gandhi became a taller figure because he was an Indian to begin with and was more suitable to the Indian situation as he could feel the pulse of the nation more than a westerner could. His austerity and simplicity touched the masses and the blessings of his political guru G.K. Gokhale helped him to attain the highest rung of the political ladder.

The political working of the Indian mind is very narrow. On one hand we speak of secularism yet on the other hand arouse feelings of people on the basis of religion, caste and colour.

4. Sir, What is your assessment of Annie Besant as propagator of Women's Movement?

4. I feel she is a Humanist. She was, as a person very deprived, a battered lady for no fault of hers. A person who victimised for her opinions on religion. Her questions on religion and philosophy were never met on the same social ground. She was thus cornered and driven to a state that fighting for women's cause became her second nature.

5. Sir, What is your assessment of Annie Besant?

5. She was a great lady strong in her purpose and intent in carrying out enthusiastically till the end.

Thank you Sir, for sparing your precious time.

R: You are welcome.

(N.C. RAMANUJACHARY)
1. H.P. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott came to India and these organisations worked collectively for a short span of time and later separated why?

1. They came to India on the invitation of a pupil of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

They separated because Dayanand Saraswati wanted the organisation to be confined only to Hinduism while Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott wanted a wider movement including other religions.

2. How far so you think Dr. Besant succeeded in imparting has spiritual basis to reform Hindu social customs and habits?

2. She succeeded tremendously in imparting her spiritual basis to reform Hindu social customs and habits because she was interested in reviving Hinduism from the degeneration in which it had gone.

3. How did theosophy pave the way for her initiation into Indian politics?

3. She started first of all on the question of national regeneration on the spiritual outlook and then she reformed the educational policy and came to politics last of all.
4. Why did she lose her interest in politics and return back to Theosophy?

4. She never left politics. She carried on the work of drafting the commonwealth of India Bill which was her last political work. She had never left her work of theosophy.

5. What impact did Annie Besant leave on the Indian Society?

5. She left a tremendous impact on the Indian society. She brought about social regeneration reformist movement and confidence among the Indian people to win political freedom.

6. Sir, What is the significance of the snake, star, swastika and Om on the emblem.

6. The snake eating its own tail represents the encircling line. The moving Swastika is the movement of life itself. The two triangles are the triangles of spirit and matter respectively and 'Om' is the sacred word.

7. Do you think theosophy is spreading fast with people? If no, Why?

7. Well, I cannot say theosophy is spreading fast with people. As all organisations have their ups and downs similarly theosophical society also faces these problems. The reason of its not being so widespread is the lack of outstanding leaders like Dr. Besant.
8. How far has Annie Besant's the occupation with Theosophy and Hindu revivalism influenced her perception of Indian nationalism?

8. Her preoccupation with theosophy and Hindu revivalism very much influenced her perception of Indian nationalism. Infact when she was arrested for her political writings, the British Government asked her to restrict her writings to theosophy and she replied that "my theosophy is politics".

9. Her writing reflect her leaning towards the romantic school. Do you agree to it that she romanticizes the birth of Indian National Congress?

9. No, I do not agree at all. There was no romanticism infact she had a great passion for India and she belived that free India could influence world through to a great extent.

10. Sir, whom do you give the credit of laying the foundation of modern India- to Dr. Besant or Ghandhi.

10. I would say both and several others as makers of modern India.

11. When Dr. Besant never objected to the violence during Trade Union formation in England, why did she object to the violence during Non-cooperation movement?

11. She did not object to that violence in England it was a mass movement on a limited scale but Ghandhi's Non-cooperation was a large scale movement in India. She knew that violence of this movement would halt India's progress.

12. Why did Gandhi become a taller figure than Annie Besant inspite of their high ideals?

12. The reason was simple Dr. Besant differed from Gandhi's mass movement. She was not against individual civil dis-obedience but against mass disobedience.
13. Was she far ahead of her contemporaries?

Yes, she was very much far ahead of her contemporaries in her thinking and in her whole approach to life she was different from others and most of them because of her different thinking she was greatly misunderstood. For example she believed in India's place in the commonwealth of Nations. The people greatly objected to that but later Pandit Nehru was the one who stated that India should be a member of the commonwealth of Nations. She was able to perceive much of her contemporaries.

14. Was there a dearth of leaders in Madras that she was allowed to come to the political scene?

No, there was no dearth of leaders. There were a galaxy of leaders but the other leaders were retiscent to suggest direct methods. Her politics was more assertive than the other. She turned the political movements into mass movements. She was the first person to organise large scale meetings of the Indian National Congress.

15. Did you work for her?

I came to know her at a very young age but I did not work with her.

16. When both propogated for educational upliftment why did Gandhiji launch an attack on the bejeweled Indian princess?

When Gandhi made an attack on Princess she was afraid that the University would fail to get funds for its functioning. She even asked the press not to publish her speech at the Banaras Hindu University because if the princes were alieviated the University would get no funds. This she did not want.
Thank you sir,

BY Mr. ROHIT METHA
1. The Match girls strike in London and later the formation of Trade Union caused a lot of tension and fight in England, then why Dr. Besant objected to Gandhi’s Non-cooperation Movement?

1. Annie Besant I feel was not against the principle behind freedom but she was against the principle of Non-cooperation movement as it meant not to co-operate with government a principle that went against the working of the law of the land. There was conflict of means and ends. If you want freedom see that the means implemented are non-violent. The principles of Non-Cooperation were in practice used for selfish ends and thus she opposed it.

2. Why could Gandhi and Annie Besant not get together when both believed in high moral structures?

2. They could not pull on together as their policies were different. Gandhi gave way to the dictates of his followers. He compromised his principles of truth and non-violence in the actual course of events that occurred in Quit India (1942) movement when the masses became violent. Gandhi was unable to control the masses whereas Annie Besant, believed in constitutional democratic methods.

3. Why did Gandhi become a taller figure than Annie Besant? Were her approaches not everlasting?
3. When Dr. Besant entered politics Indians were able to appreciate very deeply her noble quality, so there was no opposition; she firmly stood by the spiritual heritage of India. Indian culture assimilated the cultures of other Nations. She was looked upon by the people as a symbol of regeneration of India. She was called "Saraswati" by the pandits of Benares.

The outer modes of her actions were on her rich experience of parliamentary life in England backed by her gift of Oratory. She worked for freedom assiduously through constitutional means and always worked through political negotiations and representation. George Bernard Shaw said that if she continued in England she would have been the Queen of England.

Only cultured and literate people were drawn to her by her devotion and dedication to Indian ideals, moral and spiritual heritage. The first idea of forming the Indian National Congress was started at Madras at the residence of Mr. Madhava Rao, a judge of Madras High Court along with fourteen other eminent persons of Madras and Mr. A.O. Hume who was a theosophist was also one of them. Initially the Congress was an 'armchair movement'. It was Dr. Besant who brought more organisation into it like parliamentary method of government and later she trained the youth in debate on facts and statistics through conducting mock parliaments.

Ghandhi was a man of the masses because being an Indian his contact was more with rural people and the simple ways of village life. He identified himself with people in different ways at the village level by touching their lives. He translated the
cultural values into action by providing occupation to villagers eg the Khadi movement. He wanted and saw to it that these principles were felt by the masses while her method was not merely to appeal to the masses through populisation but directly go deep to the people's cultural roots and utilize it for unfolding the inner or spiritual man.

4. Sir, your expert comments on Annie Besant as a propagator of Womens Movement?

4. Madame Cousins wanted to implement law against child marriage and to encourage widow remarriage. So Annie Besant in 1925 started the Stalwart Pledge for the Theosophical Society members that they would not marry their daughters before they attained sixteen years of age. They also pledged not to take any dowry and did not waste money through ostentatious expenditure.

5. Your assessment of Annie Besant.

5. She could study people and was able to transform them due to her deep insight. Very often she wrote in pencil and addressed everyone as My dear..... son or daughter and in this way reached closer to their hearts. She helped every individual according to his needs and did not turn away anyone by denying him help.

Thank you sir, for sparing your precious time.

BY DR. KANNAN

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367
1847. October 1st, born in London, 5.39 p.m.
1852. Death of father, October 5th.
1855. Met Miss Marryat who undertook her education till 1864
1861. First travel abroad (in Europe).
1866. Easter, met the Rev. Frank Besant, whom she married in Dec. 1867;
A very devout Christian, she met her first religious doubt and conquered it temporarily.
1867. Met Mr. Roberts, "the poor man's lawyer," who awakened her interest in the outer world of political struggle, and became her first tutor in Radicalism;
First experience of an angry crowd whom she pacified.
1868. Received first payment for writing: thirty shillings for a story in The Family Herald.
1871. Attempted suicide; for the first time heard her Master's voice.
1872. Met Mr. Thomas Scott who became her most helpful friend.
1873. Discovered the gift of oratory;
End of marriage: left home and husband, compelled to leave her small son with his father, and permitted to take her baby daughter with her; Left Christianity.
1874. Various attempts to earn a livelihood;
May 10th, death of mother to whom she was deeply devoted;
August 2nd, joined the National Secular Society, and met Charles Bradlaugh;
August 30th, her first article under the name of "Ajax" appeared in The National Reformer.
August 25th, her first public lecture: on "The Political Status of Women";
September 27th, her second lecture delivered: on "The True Basis of Morality";
Took part in the election struggle of Mr. Bradlaugh: her first experience of rioting, and of English politics.

1874-96. Atheist.

1875 January, resolved to give herself wholly to propagandist work, as a Freethinker and a Social Reformer;
Heard the voice of Truth;
Began lectures on the French Revolution, from the standpoint of the oppressed people.

1875-76 Experienced attacks from angry Christians, and from stone-throwing audiences.
1877. April 6th, arrested for selling the Knowlton Pamphlet; subsequently her first appearance in a lawcourt as her own advocate; the trial led to the establishment of the Malthusian League.

1877-90 Sub-edited The National Reformer.

1878. Deprived of the custody of her eight-year-old daughter, though ably pleading her own case;

1878-79. Championed the cause of Afghanistan.

1879. Met Edward B. Aveling, D.Sc., who became her tutor, "a marvellously able teacher of science subjects, the very ablest in fact, that I have ever met"; Met Herbert Burrow, took active part in Trades Union work among unskilled labourers and with Herbert Burrows led the Match Girls' strike to a successful conclusion. Matriculated at London University; Qualified as science teacher in eight different sciences.

1879-88. Helped to conduct a science school.

1880. August 25th, represented English Freethinkers at International Conference in Brussels; With Charles Bradlaugh began the battle for the rights of Atheists.

1881. Championed the cause of the Transvaal.
1882. Championed the cause of Egypt and Ireland;
Moved her office to 63 Fleet Street, from where she carried on her public work till 1891.

1884. Met George Bernard Shaw.

1885. Joined the Fabian Society;
Helped to form a Society of the Friends of Russia;
Championed the cause of the Soudan.

1887. Met W.T. Stead;
Helped to form a Socialist Defence Association;
November 13th, in the course of a struggle to establish the right of people to hold open-air public meetings, led and defended one of the processions to Trafalgar Square which were violently attacked and dispersed by the Police.

1887-90 Member of the London School Board.

1888. With Herbert Burrows organised and won the Match-Girls' strike which made possible the birth of the New Unionism;
Organised the Match-Makers' Union;
With W.T. Stead started the project of building up a "New Church, dedicated to the service of man"
Studied the hidden sides of consciousness, Spiritualism, etc., for a great despair oppressed her that her philosophy was not sufficient.
1889. Heard a Voice bidding her take courage for the light was near; 
Read and reviewed The Secret Doctrine; 
May 10th, met H.P.Blavatsky; 
May 21st, joined the Theosophical Society, and became the pupil of H.P.B.; 
August 4th and 11th, lectured at the Hall of Science on "Why I Became a Theosophist"; 
September 4th, met H.S.Olcott.

1890. Resigned from the National Secular Society; 
Met C.W.Leadbeater; 
Founded (with H.P.B.) the Working Women's Club at Bow.

1891. First lecture tour in the U.S.A.; 
1891. Succeeded H.P.Blavatsky.


1893. September, represented the Theosophical Society at the World Parliament of Religions, Chicago; 
November 9th arrived in Colombo, and on Nov.11th lectured on "Karma". 
November 16th, first landed in India, at Tuticorin, 10.24 a.m.; 
December, her first Convention Lectures delivered: "The Building of the Kosmos". Lectured at 12 towns in South India and attended the annual T.S. Convention at Adyar.
1893-94 First lecture-tour in India, attracting audiences of Thousands.

1894. Engaged in the Judge "case"; Toured in Northern India, lecturing at 18 places. Leaving India, travelled to England, Scandinavia, Australia, and New Zealand and returned to India in December for the T.S. Convention at Adyar.

First lecture tour in Australia and New Zealand; First address to Indian National Congress.

1895. January, settled in Benarasi; Translated the Bhagavad Gita; Awarded the Subba Row Medal; Summer, began clairvoyant research.

1896. April, lecture series in London, later published as The Ancient Wisdom.

1897. Reorganized the American Section; Edited and issued The Secret Doctrine, Vol.III.

1898. July 7th started the Central Hindu College in Benaras. 1899. Paid a brief visit to Burma and then returned to Benaras continuing her Central Hindu College work and left for England where she resumed her lecture work.
1900. First lectured in India on Social Reform.

1901. Started the Central Hindu College Magazine, which soon attained a circulation of 15,000.

1902. Joined Co-Freemasonry.

1904. Started a Girls' School in Benaras; Paid a visit to the Pope at Rome.

1905. Travelled and lectured in India, telling the Indians that the task before them was to make a self sustaining and self-conscious nationality.

1906. Engaged in the Leadbeater "case"

1907. July 6th elected President of the Theosophical Society; August, persuaded researches into occult chemistry.

1907-11. Increased the Adyar Estate from 27 to 253 acres.

1908. Founded the T.S.Order of Service (renamed, in 1921, the Theosophical Order of Service);

Formed the Sons of India, and the Daughters of India;

Started the Vasanta Press at Adyar.

Order of the Round Table started, with her as Protector;

Dec. 31st, made the first public announcement of the coming of a World Teacher.

1909. Adopted J.Krishnamurti and his brother;

Travelled 45,000 miles during the year.

Continued occult chemistry researches.

1911. January 1st, First delivered the Star Invocation; June started the Order of the Star in the East; Dec. 28, was present at memorable meeting of the Order; June 15, lectured at the Sorbonne, Paris, on the "Message of Giordano Bruno to the Modern World".

1912. Founded the Temple of the Rosy Cross; Founded the Order of Theosophical Sanyasis; Heard the oration of Pythagoras at Taormina.


1913. January 1st, transformed the Theosophist Office into the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar. Entered into Indian politics with the clearly stated Object of claiming Dominion Status for India within the British Commonwealth.

Handed over Central Hindu College to become nucleus of the Benaras Hindu University; Started the Theosophical Educational Trust; Sept., formed a small band, which later developed into the Order of the Brothers of Service; Reorganized the German Section.

of national reform:

July 6th re-elected President of The Theosophical Society:

July 14th, started New India (daily newspaper) which lasted fifteen years and revolutionized Indian journalism:

Started the Y.M.I.A. and donated Gokhale Hall (Madras) to be a centre of free speech.

July 15th, wrote her famous summary of "What Does India Want?"

Formed the Madras Parliament for parliamentary training and political propaganda; Dec 16th, inaugurated Adyar Arts League.

1916. Started the Home Rule League, which soon reoriented the National Congress to a new vigour;

Externed from the Bombay Presidency.

Started the Girl's College, Benaras.

1917. April 7th, founded the Order of the Brothers of Service. May 8th Women's Indian Association organized in Adyar under her Presidentship, from which grew the All India Women's Conference at Poona in 1927, and the All-Asian Women's Conference at Lahore in 1931.

June-September, interned by the Government of Madras;

August, elected President of the Indian National Congress;
Dec. 26th delivered her presidential address to the Congress, later published as The Case for India.

Started S.P.N.E. with a National University at Adyar under the Chancellorship of Rabindranath Tagore.

1918. Organised the Indian Boy Scouts, which amalgamated with the Baden-Powell Scouts in 1921.

1920. At the session of the Indian National Congress stood against Mr. Gandhi's plan of non-co-operation - stood alone (with five others supporting her) against shouting thousands, three brief years after being a national hero and acclaimed by vast crowds.

1921. April 6th, appointed Hon. Commissioner for All-India of the Boy Scouts Association.

July 6th, re-elected President of the Theosophical Society;

July 23-26, President of the first Theosophical World Congress at Paris (1400 delegates representing 39 countries);

July 26th, lectured at the Sorbonne in French;

Dec. 3rd, welcomed back to India J. Krishnamurti and brother;

Dec. 14th, Benaras Hindu University Conferred on her the Hon. Degree of the Doctor of Letters;
Degree, instituted Adyar Day, to begin 17 Feb.1922; started the 1921 Political Club in Madras, from which came idea of drafting a constitution for India.

1922. October, inaugurated the Brahmavidya Ashrama at Adyar.

1922-23. Engaged in the Martyn "case".

1923. Inaugurated the Youth Movement in the Theosophical Society; inaugurated the Brotherhood Campaign for which wrote the Powerful universal prayer, "O Hidden Life".

1924. Attended in Queen's Hall, London, the Golden Jubilee celebration of her public activities; also in Bombay and Madras.

1925. Took the Commonwealth of India Bill to London, to be presented in Parliament. Attended a great Star Camp in Holland; celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, to which 3,000 delegates came from all over the world; established Temples of the religions in Adyar; proclaimed three World Movements; Dec 28th, was present at a memorable meeting of the Order of the Star.

1926. Started the Theosophical Colony at Juhu, Bombay, laying a corner-stone.
1927. Started the Happy Valley in California, appealing for the Happy Valley Foundation Fund;
Eighty years "Young" this year, she gave fifty lectures in twelve countries of Europe in twenty-one days, travelling by aeroplane.

1928. July 6th, re-elected President of the Theosophical Society;
Recorded highest membership of the Society: 45,000 active members;
On invitation wrote a statement for the World Peace Union;
Was ill in London, and had to cancel Queen's Hall Lectures.
March 25th, announced the existence and work of the world of the World Mother.

1929. August 26th, inaugurated the fourth Theosophical World Congress at Chicago, sending there from a letter to President Hoover pleading for the abolition of war had to discontinue.

1930. Celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Blavatsky Lodge in Bombay, the foremost Theosophical Lodge in India;
Larai visit, to Benaras;

Last visit to England; presided over the Convention
Last visit to Europe; attended the Star Camp at Ommen, and presided over the tenth Theosophical European Congress at Geneva;

Attended the wedding of her granddaughter, Miss Sybil Besant, to Commander Lewis, in London on Oct. 1st.

1931. Celebrated the Blavatsky Centenary at Adyar in August;

Resolved to make Adyar a Flaming Centre of Life and Love.

Delivered her last address on Dec. 24th

1932. Celebrated the Olcott Centenary at Adyar in August;

Summed up the life-work of the two Centenaries in 25 words;

Awarded "Silver Wolf," the highest Scottish honour. 6th July, completed her 25th year as President of Theosophical Society, could not attend the Annual Convention; all delegates went past her bedside.

1933. Confined to bed September 20th, expired at Adyar, 4 p.m.