CHAPTER - VII

TOWARDS THE GOAL TO FREEDOM:

THE QUIT-INDIA MOVEMENT 1942 AND AFTER

In order to appease the freedom fighters the British Parliament enacted the 1935 constitution and imposed it on the people. The constitution came into force in 1937. Accordingly general elections were conducted and the Congress Party formed the ministry under C. Rajagopalachari in 1937 in Madras Presidency. But this settlement did not last long due to the Second World War.

The outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 created an embarrassing situation for India. Great Britain announced India’s entry into the war, neither with the consent of the Central Legislature nor with the approval of the political parties. Irked at the attitude of arrogance, the Indian National Congress declared: “the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people and they cannot permit their resources to be exploited for Imperialist ends”. It called upon Great Britain to declare her war aims, to tell of the new world order that she wanted to erect and to accept India’s demand for complete independence. But there came no satisfactory response, for Viceroy Linlithgow merely stated that at the end of the war the Government would be prepared to modify the Act of 1935 in the light of Indian wishes.
After bitter experiments that the country received at the end of First World War and humiliated at the imposition of a Second World War on India, the Congress refused any support to the war efforts. In protest the Congress ministries resigned and went out of power.

In October 1940 the Congress launched the individual Satyagraha. Vinobabhave led the movement and he was followed by Jawaharlal Nehru. For the conduct of the Satyagraha the Congress formed committees, issued pamphlets and raised slogans. The Satyagrahis from the Tamil districts went to Delhi to join the demonstration. However, the administration dealt with the situation through lathi charges and arrests. More than 14,000 people courted arrest. As no serious trouble was anticipated the Government released all imprisoned Satyagrahis in December 1941.

In December 1941, Japan entered the war on the side of the Axis Powers and its spectacular successes during the early months of 1942 forced the British Government to make an earnest effort to resolve the deadlock in India. So Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister of England sent Sir Stafford Cripps (the leader of the House of Commons) to India. On 23 March 1942 Stafford Cripps landed at Delhi. Soon after reaching India, Cripps communicated the draft declaration to the members of the Executive Council (on March 23, 1942) and two days later to the Indian leaders. On March 29, these proposals were made public at a press
conference. Gandhiji called the Declaration 'a post dated cheque" to which someone added the words, 'on a failing bank'.

On 9th November 1940, the Government of Madras issued a press communique expressing their strong disapprobation of the conduct of students in absenting themselves from classes and organizing demonstration calculated to interrupt the functioning of the college.

On 16th November 1940 under the auspices of the Madras Students' Organisation, a demonstration to be followed by a public meeting was organised in Madras to protest against the government communique. They took out a procession, and conducted a meeting at Marina beach with Latif Afghani of the Madras Christian College in the chair. Latif said that they had assembled there to tell the government that they were prepared to fight for the freedom of the country. He urged the students, as the educated section of the people, to fight for peace, freedom and progress the pillars of civilization. R.Achuthan (Law College) pointed out that protests and demonstrations were not enough for them. He urged the students to close their ranks to fight against imperialism. N.C. Ram of Christian College said that the students should fight their opponents without any bitterness and convert them by means of love, peace and non-violence. Ganesan of

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1 B.L. Grover, A New Look on Modern Indian History, 1984, PP. 541-542.
2 G.O. No.629, Education, 24 April 1941, TNA.
Presidency College said that in the event of C. Rajagopalachari and Vallabhai Patel being arrested, it was their duty to bring them out of the prison.

Besides the Madras Student's Organization had another meeting on 16th December 1940 at the Triplicane Beach with Sultan Muhammed, of Madras Christian College in the chair. The meeting protested against the arrest and detention of six students of the Annamalai University, Chidambaram on 13th December 1940, on the ground that they were spreading communism. Subsequent events had resulted in a brutal lathi - charge by the police, in which students were beaten as well as dragged along the ground. The activities of the police who suspected communist activities in the Annamalai University sparked off disturbances there. In the evening of the same day a police party conducted search for alleged communist literature in certain rooms of the students at the Annamalai University hostel. Government made careful enquiries and trapped into Jail,\(^3\) on 13th December 1940, eight students who were considered to be the leading members of the communist "cell" in the university. These incidents gave occasion to a number of meetings of students as well as other bodies at Chidambaram.\(^4\)

The protest against the lathi-charge was taken by the All India Students Federation and they decided to observe hartal leading to the closure of all

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\(^1\) Indian Express, 23 November, 1940.

\(^2\) Fortnightly Reports, 4 January 1940.
educational institutions in the country.\textsuperscript{5} In this connection Sultan Muhammed arrived at Annamalai Nagar on 8 January. He was a student of Madras as well as a member of the working committee of the All India Student Federation (AISF). Permission was not granted to him to address the students within the precincts of the university. However, on 9 January, Sultan Muhammed managed to address a gathering of about 200 students just outside the university premises. He urged them to observe “Annamalai Day” on 15 January. Latif Afghani of Madras and Muhammad Ghazi of Nagpur, both members of the Student’s Federation, were expected to participate in the demonstrations. This added force to the determination of the students to proceed with the ‘Annamalai Day’ celebration inspite of the threats from the authorities.\textsuperscript{6} Smelling breach of peace in the university, the Sub-divisional Magistrate issued orders prohibiting certain agitators from outside; from entering Chidambaram on this occasion. Students whose names were found in the list furnished to the District Magistrate by the university authorities in strict confidence, were warned and a small body of reserve police was also despatched in advance to Chidambaram.\textsuperscript{7} Latiff coupled with the intervention of the pongal holidays foiled all attempts to celebrate ‘Annamalai Day.’\textsuperscript{8} The order laid down the condition that they should “enter into

\textsuperscript{5} Fortnightly Reports, 21 January 1941.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{7} G.O. No.629, Education, 24 April 1941, TNA.
\textsuperscript{8} Fortnightly Reports, 3 January 1941.
a bond, with their parents or guardians as sureties, not to take part in any communist activities in future.

In protest against the arrest of Akbari (a student of the Guindy Engineering College) Latif Achuthan and Ganesan (also students), the students of the same college went on strike on 21st and 22nd January 1940. The principal came out with a mass - fine order and the scholarship - holders who were absent on the strike days were required to give it in writing that they would not take part in such demonstrations during the rest of their college course. On 3rd February a deputation of students presented to the principal mahazar petition, signed by 456 students, requesting him to cancel the order imposing fines. 9th February was fixed as the last day for the principal to reply.9 Since they received no reply from the principal on that day, the students abstained from the classes the next day. On the promise of the principal that their request might be considered favourably, the students stopped demonstrations and started attending classes in the afternoon. Under the instructions of the Director of Public Instruction the principal imposed fines on students who absented themselves without leave10. The principal submitted a list of 11 students who were members of the Madras Students Organisation. He took a harder line with the students. The principal told that the students whose names had been submitted as leaders might be suspended for one

9  The Hindu, 29 June 1941, 10 February 1941.
10  Indian Express, 11 February 1941.
year. They might be dismissed from the college with a promise to bring back them to former position at Government’s discretion, if they apologized and gave an assurance of future good conduct. The Madras Students Organisation held a public meeting on 22 January 1941, at the Triplicane Beach with Aga Sahi of Presidency College in the chair, to protest against the arrest and detention. On 15th February seven students namely, D.Mahapatra, N.S. Sastri, Mohandas, M.Ramachandran, Ramakrishna Chaudhary, M. Antony and C.Pulla Reddi were expelled from the college for allegedly ‘objectionable’ activities. The government had decided not to grant mercy to the students under orders of expulsion, unless the Director of Public Instruction was satisfied that the previous recommendation had been based on false or incorrect information regarding the activities of these students.

A Tamil book entitled “Gandhi Malar Manavarkku”, which was banned by the Madras Government had exerted great influence upon the students. This book was Tamil rendering by V.Ramaswami and A.L. Natarajan of an English compilation by Sri Anand T.Hingorani, Gandhiji’s Young India and Harijan. The book contained Gandhiji’s views on students’ strikes, non cooperation, Satyagraha, boycott etc., Students bravely responded to the call of the nation and proved their

11 Indian, Express, 16 February 1941.
patriotism. Leaving the government schools and colleges was considered to be the safest and most honourable course open to the students according to Gandhiji's.

In a statement to the press, Miss Perin Bharucha, General Secretary of the All India Student's Federation, called upon the students all over the country to protest against the arrest of the national leaders and demanded the government to release them.

On 14th July 1942, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and adopted a resolution popularly known as the 'Quit-India' resolution. It demanded that the British rule in India must end immediately and reiterated the view that the freedom of India was necessary not only in the interest of the country at large but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, Militarism and other forms of imperialism.

The All India Congress Committee organised a meeting in Bombay on 7th August, 1942 to review the political situation in India and to adopt a course of action to be followed for the liberation of India. On behalf Madras Congress Committee, K. Kamaraj, the President of Madras Congress Committee, M. Bhaktavatchalam, S. Satyamurti, M. Muthuranga Mudaliar and a few others went to Bombay to attend the meetings.12

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12 Muruga Damuskodi, Kamaraj Oru Carithiram, p.70.
After a prolonged discussion on 7th August, the Committee reassembled at Gowllic Tank Maidan on 8th August, 1942. Nearly 250 members of the AICC and 10,000 visitors attended historic session wherein the famous ‘Quit-India’ resolution was passed. The resolution had been drafted earlier by Jawaharlal Nehru, who moved the resolution and Vallabhai Patel seconded it. The historic ‘Quit-India’ resolution was passed with only 13 members voting against it. Thereby “unfurled a flag to be upheld, indicated a mission to be fulfilled and declared a nation to be born.”

Moulana Azad, President of the Congress, explained the meaning of the resolution thus: “Let us not depend on promises. Let us have a declaration of Independence forthwith ... The slogan Quit-India means nothing more and nothing less than the complete transfer of power into Indian hand.”

The All India Congress Committee appealed to the people of India, to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot, with courage and endurance and to carry out Gandhiji’s instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. Addressing the gathering in the session, Gandhiji stated, “...from this moment onwards consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free and we

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14 D.N. Panigrahi, Quit-India and struggle for Freedom, p.3.
15 Congress Varnika, 100 years of the Indian National Congress Centenary Commemoration Volume, p.77.
are no longer under the heel of imperialism .. Do or Die, we shall either free India or die in the attempt. We shall not see the perpetuation of our slavery."16

On 9th August 1942 Congress leaders like Gandhiji, Nehru Patel, Azad and twenty other Congressmen were arrested in Bombay and taken to unknown destination. Rajendra Prasad was arrested at Patna. The Congress organisation was declared illegal forthwith. As a result of this, meetings, processions, hartals and demonstrations took place all over the Tamil districts.17

At Bombay, before his arrest Gandhiji had left a written message with his wife who in turn revealed the message to Satyamurthi. He at once called a meeting of all the remaining members of the AICC, numbering about 70.

Satyamurti read the message of Gandhiji to the members present and this was cyclostyled under his guidance.18 The cyclostyled instructions were then handed over to the members of the various provinces who were present there.19

After spending a day, the 9th August for arranging the despatch of cyclostyled message of Gandhiji, Satyamurti left for Madras by train on 10th August 1942. Other Madras State Congress leaders like Kamaraj,

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16 P.N. Chopra (ed.), Quit-India Movement. (British Secret Report) p.17
18 P.N. Chopra (ed.), op.cit., p.265
19 Ibid.
M. Bhaktavatchalam, Muthuranga Mudaliar and others also traveled in the same train to Madras.20

The British government had already drawn up a list of Congress leaders to be arrested if the Quit-India resolution was passed in the Bombay meeting. At almost every railway station enroute, the police were stationed. Knowing this, Kamaraj, the president of TNCC had decided not to go straight to Madras. As demanded by Gandhiji in his last message "AICC members are to go underground as long as possible to organise the campaign" Kamaraj decided to go underground to convey the message of Gandhiji and to organise the movement to the extent possible.21

While others got down at Madras Central Railway Station, Kamaraj had got down through the back door at Arakanam, in the guise of a musalman and went to Ranipet. On their arrival at the Central Railway Station, Muthuranga Mudaliar, Bhaktavatchalam and others were greeted with arrest warrant and taken into custody.22 Satyamurti was arrested at Arakanam junction on August 11th, 1942 and was taken to Vellore Jail and was detained there under the Defence of India Rule.23

Unnoticed by the police, Kamaraj went to the house of Kalyanarama Iyer, a veteran Congressman of Ranipet. Along with Kalyanarama Iyer, Kamaraj went to

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22 Personal Interview with Sri R.R. Delaval
23 Indian Annual Register, op.cit., vol.II,p.18.
Thiru. K. Kamaraj
President
Madras Provincial Congress Committee
Tanjore where they met Congress workers at the house of T.R.V. Narayanasamy, President, Tanjore DCC. Cleverly avoiding arrest, by dressing like villagers they reached Trichirappalli and contacted local Congressmen at the house of M.S. Rangaswamy, President, Trichy DCC. Then, they went to Madurai and met local Congress leaders and Congress workers. From there, Kamaraj sent Kalyanarama Iyer, who was accompanying him, to Tirunelveli district, while he alone went to Ramnad and contacted congressmen there. He returned to Virudhunagar, after finishing his organising work, giving the congress workers instructions as to what should be done, and he himself sent word to the police for arresting him. He was arrested on 16th August 1942 and detained under DIR. It is said that Kamaraj had preached the movement in almost all the Tamil districts. Kalyanarama Iyer had also met the same as soon as he returned to Rani Pet after organising the movement in Tirunelveli district.

The TNCC President Kamaraj had discussed with the Congress workers during his secret visit, the ways and means to carry out the movement successfully. He had also circulated the cyclostyled instructions of Gandhiji and the AICC's Bombay resolution among them. It was confirmed by a CID report that

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26 Dinamani, 17th August 1942.
27 Personal interview Sri Pada Sankar.
Kamaraj, President TNCC went underground for a few days after his return from Bombay during that time he organised the movement in Tamil districts.\textsuperscript{29}

On 9\textsuperscript{th} August itself, the Madras Government declared TNCC as an unlawful association. The order read: "whereas the Government of Madras are of the opinion that the association known as TNCC has for its object interference in the maintenance of law and order and that it constitutes a danger to the public peace ... His Excellency the Governor of Madras is hereby pleased to declare the said TNCC to be unlawful association.\textsuperscript{30}

The same day the Madras District Congress Committee was also declared as an illegal association.\textsuperscript{31} One after another, Congress Committees were declared illegal and the Tamilnadu Congress stalwarts were put behind the bar. Though, Congress Committees were declared illegal all over India, orders banning each committee were issued in different periods. For instance, the Town Congress Committee, Karaikudi, Ramanad District, was declared illegal on 16\textsuperscript{th} September 1942.\textsuperscript{32} Searches were made in the TNCC office and it properties including important documents were confiscated. Its fund was brought under the control of

\textsuperscript{29} Report of Special Branch CID, Madras, dt. 23-8-1942 cited in P.N. Chopra (ed) op.cit. p.324
\textsuperscript{30} G.O. No. 2545, 7\textsuperscript{th} August, 1942, Public (confldl.) and also see Appendix – A.
\textsuperscript{31} G.O. No. 2545, 9\textsuperscript{th} August, 1942, Public (Confldl.)
\textsuperscript{32} G.O. No. 2913, 17\textsuperscript{th} September, 1942, Public (Confdl.) and G.O. No. 3266, 13\textsuperscript{th} October, 1942 Public (confdl)
the Government and its office was sealed.\textsuperscript{33} Other Congress Committee too met with the same fate.

The leaders who could exercise a restraining influence on the people were imprisoned as soon as the passing of the resolution. C. Rajagopalachari had already resigned from the Congress on the issue of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{34} Other Tamilnadu Congress leaders like Muthuranga Mudaliar and Bhaktavatchalam were arrested at their arrival in Madras itself, without giving them any chance to exercise their influence on the people to organise the movement. Congress decided to wage a non-violent campaign against the British Government in India. The only leader who had met the congress workers in the Tamil districts secretly for asking them to take the responsibility of organising the movement was Kamaraj, the President of TNCC. But, he too was detained within a few days. So, the Congress workers and people were more or less left without a leader and their resentment resulted in violence in many places.

The TNCC's secret instructions and the Congress revolutionary programme circulated before the AICC meeting, the copies of the AICC resolutions distributed by Kamaraj during his secret visit etc. provided the necessary guidance to the Congressmen to carry on the movement. But, there was no one in the cadre of a

\textsuperscript{33} G.O. No. 2488, 31st August 1942, Public.
\textsuperscript{34} Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, op.cit. pp. 68-69
leader to co-ordinate the activities of all the committees. So, the people got ready for the final battle and they started it on their own responsibility.

The August Movement was started immediately after the news of the arrest of Gandhiji and other leaders reached the people. The first phase lasted for three or four days from the arrest of Gandhiji on 9th August 1942. It was marked by non-violent popular demonstrations in the form of meetings, hartals, processions and strikes all over the Tamil districts. The non-violent demonstrations were first started with protest meetings from cities down to the villages. On the same day local Congress Committee, Salem convened a meeting to protest against the arrest of Gandhiji and others.

In fact, Gandhiji had contemplated an interval between the passing of the 'Quit-India' resolution and the starting of the movement. He made it clear that his first act would be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. But the Government did not wait for it, but started a blitz upon the Congress. So, it was clear that it was not the Congress, but the government which struck the first blow.

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55 Personal Interview with Sri R.R. Dalvai on 13.11.1988
56 Ibid.
57 District Calendar of Events of the Civil Disobedience Movment, August - December, 1942, p.97.
58 P.D. Kashlik, op.cit, p.248
Since 11th August, 1942 the movement was directed against the symbols of tyrannical government as programmed in the secret circular of the TNCC. The instruments of administration – police and magistracy were hated and attacked. The system of communication and transport were the main targets of attack of the people.\textsuperscript{39} The government on its part enacted a number of ordinances like Penalties Enhancement Ordinance, the Special Court Ordinance, the wrapping Ordinance etc. to nip the movement in the bud.\textsuperscript{40} Lathi-charges, shooting and machine – gunning from the air became very common during this period.

In the midst of this, C. Rajagopalachari who was opposing the movement issued a statement on 13th August 1942, to the newspapers, criticizing this movement as hooliganism.\textsuperscript{41} He and the Communist Party of India instructed the students and workers not to join the movement. But, the workers and students took leading part in conducting the movement in the Madras Presidency in spite of their repeated appeals and instructions.\textsuperscript{42} They responded willingly to the call of the Congress. The stand of the Muslim League and Justice Party was a known fact. They also tried their maximum to undermine the movement. In Madras, it was the students who took prominent part in the movement. Due to the presence of a large number of police and the arrest of Congress leaders in the city before the

\textsuperscript{39} Personal Interview with Sri R. R. Dalavai
\textsuperscript{40} Man Mohan Kaur, Women in India’s Freedom Struggle, p.199
\textsuperscript{42} A.C. Guha, India’s Struggle Quarter of a Century, (1921-1946 Part - II, p.541.
movement could be organized, the main activity of the city centered round the educational institutions. Students of schools and colleges including the women students of Queen Mary's College observed hartals, took out processions and raised Quit-India slogans. Students of the Loyola, Pachiyappas, Presidency, Law College, Women's Christian College, Queen Mary's College and Stanley Medical College, etc. abstained from classes, took out processions, organised hartals and resorted to picketing. Students from other colleges had distributed small printed Quit-India badges and had flown Congress flags in their colleges and hostels. On 2nd October 1942, Gandhiji's 73rd Birthday, students of Madras Medical College tried to take out a procession with Gandhiji's photo and Congress flags. But, they were arrested. The Madras Students Organisation another student body, gathered strength through many strikes it organised in educational institutions, when demands of students were not conceded. A wave of student unrest swept over the Madras Presidency since the declaration of the imperialistic war. The beginning was made in the Madras Engineering college. When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested, students all over India recorded their protest in mass strikes. The Madras Government retaliated with a communique. This gave rise to a number of protest strikes, processions and meetings, followed by police searches in

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43 B.S. Baliga, "Madras in the Struggle for Independence" Madras Information, vol. xi, No.9 September 1957, p.27.
44 The District Calendar of Events, op.cit., pp.1-6.
45 The District Calendar of Events, p.2.
46 Fortnightly Report for the first half of October, 1942.
the hostel rooms of the students and suppression of their activities. A closer observation of the student strike during this period reveal how these incidents helped the students to build up a strong position in the face of unexpected strategies from the British Government. In Madurai, students threw acid bulbs at a police inspector, who was controlling an unruly crowd.

The students of the Annamalai University held a meeting on 9 August 1942 and passed a resolution which condemned the arrest of Congress leaders. Persuasion by the professors stopped the students from demonstrating. However on 15 August, posters exhorting the students not to fall behind the rest of the Presidency in organizing demonstrations against the action of the government, appeared on the walls of the university.

A notice issued by the Annamalai University Vice Chancellor warned the absenting students with removal of their names from the rolls. This was taken by the students who abstained from the classes saying that names might be removed from the rolls. The uncompromising attitude of the students, as well as their attempt to prolong the strike, forced the authorities to close the university for forty days. In Madras the leading Congress leaders like S. Satyamurthy and K. Kamaraj were put behind the bars. On 10th August 1942, the students of Madras

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47 District Calendar of Events of the CDM; August - December 1942, p.16.
48 The Hindu, 18th August 1942.
City colleges organised a total strike to protest against the arrest of the Congress leaders⁹.

The students in other districts also boycotted their schools and colleges, organised processions and shouted pro-Congress slogans. From 9th to 11th August 1942, the students of Coimbatore picketed schools and colleges, observed hartals and held meetings and processions in defiance of the prohibitory order of the District Magistrate. The students of the Victoria High School, Periyakulam did not attend classes on 12th August 1942 as a mark of protest against the repressive policies adopted by the British Government. On 13th August 1942, the students of schools and colleges at Salem organised demonstration which went through the street of the town shouting anti-British slogan⁴⁰.

The school boys of Nilgiris staged demonstrations and organised processions on 17th and 18th August 1942. On 27th August 1942 five Loyola College students were arrested and each student was sentenced to pay a fine of rupees hundred for indulging in political activities. At Tambaram sub-urb of the Madras City the students who tried to obstruct the trains were dispersed by lathi charge⁵¹.

⁹ Ibid, 12th August 1942.
¹⁰ The Hindu, 14th August, 1942.
⁵¹ B.S. Baliga, District Calendar of events of the Civil Disobedience Movement, August-December 1942 (Secret) p.3.
In August 1942 acid was thrown into a post box outside the Pachaiyappa's College Madras\textsuperscript{52}. The students of Madras Medical College hoisted a national flag over the building of their college hostel. The college authorities took action against the students who were responsible for this which led to a major strike. The students abstained from their classes and they were warned to remove the flags\textsuperscript{53}.

The students of Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai organised a hartal on 31st August and 1st September 1942 respectively\textsuperscript{54}. Because of the strike by the students of M.D.T. Hindu College, St. John's and St.Xavier's Colleges, the college authorities advanced the Michaelmas holidays. On 3rd September 1942, two students of the Loyola College, Madras namely K.S. Raghavan and Tatakachi were arrested under the Defence of India Rules. They were charged for throwing stones at a running train near college hostel\textsuperscript{55}. After enquiry these two students were convicted and whipped on 5th September 1942. This incident created widespread resentment among the students of Tamil province. In Madurai the students of American College boycotted the classes on 9th September 1942 to protest against the Government communiqué and the rash manner in which the students of the Loyola College were handled by the authorities\textsuperscript{56}.

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\item[52] Fortnightly Report, 7th September, 1942.
\item[53] The Hindu, 3rd September, 1942.
\item[54] Fortnightly Reports, 25th September, 1942.
\item[55] The Hindu, 11th September, 1942.
\item[56] The Hindu, 4th September, 1942.
\end{footnotes}
The despatch abstract papers relating to the August disturbances in colleges and schools in Madras City and the moffussil areas sent to T. Austin, the adviser to Governor, by Statham, the Director of Public Instructions, serve as an informative document. Statham, who had an eye on the presents in the attendance registers of the educational institutions, and the other on the academic peace, reported from the very beginning that there were no "serious" troubles in the colleges and schools under his jurisdiction. On the whole, college students in particular, where ever they abstained from classes, had been perfectly peaceful. Efforts through leaflets and by leaders were made to launch a general strike on 20 August in Palghat. The director of Public Instructions noted with satisfaction that the general strike was a futile attempt. Picketing in the St. Aloysius' College, Mangalore, reduced the attendance, there on 19th, 20th and 21st gust of 1942. On the 20th Government girls High School, Mangalore, worked with poor attendance, some of the girls coming in the early morning to escape the pickets and some of them coming by climbing over the wall, also to escape the picketers. There broke out a fire which burnt down most of the records, stationery, library books etc, of the office of the Deputy Inspector of schools. This untoward incident was not connected with any section of students. Likewise, the political agitation in Vizagapatnam had nothing to do with the fire which burnt down the thatched shed in the compound of the Municipal High School, Chicacole, on the 16th of the same month.

D.O., 23 August, 1942.
The government felt that strong action should be taken against the student revolt and that under no circumstances should colleges be closed down before their normal dates. The closure of the Madras Christian College on 31 August 1942, greatly annoyed the DPI who reported the incident as follows: "In spite of the repeated advice to the contrary, both in person and in writing, both by me and by the Vice-Chancellors of the Madras University, Boyd, Principal of the Madras Christian College, Tambaram, closed his college, this morning".

A demonstration of about 1,500 students of the St. Joseph's College, Trichirappalli was held in the morning of August 17. Chettur, the District Magistrate, appealed to the students to disperse peacefully and granted their request for permission to hold a meeting and to go in procession. The students went peacefully in procession and held a meeting at the Town Hall square.\textsuperscript{56}

The principals of government and aided colleges were instructed to warn their students against absenteeism without valid reasons. All the city colleges in response to the Government Communiqué warned their students and put the deadline for the resumption of their work on 7 September. The Madras Christian College authorities issued a pledge to the effect that the students would not leave or encourage others to do so. In the opinion of the authorities, it might seriously interfere with or interrupt their studies and that they would, in all circumstances,

\textsuperscript{56} The Hindu, 18 August, 1942.
respect and support discipline of the college. The city students who otherwise resolved to carry on strike for an indefinite period called off the strike somewhat tardily. Though the students of the city Medical College and Stanley Medical College decided to go back to the classes, the way in which they honoured the national flag demonstrated their intense patriotism. The principal later issued an ultimatum granting forty-eight hours for the removal of "all unauthorized exhibits such as unofficial flags." 

On 6th September, the Madras Medical College Students resolved to honour the government communique. But they vacated their hostel. Working strenuously throughout the early hours of 7th September the hostlers of the Madras Medical College removed their belongings from their rooms and dumped them on the roadside, beyond the hostel compound, to be later conveyed to certain temporary lodgings. Their counter parts in the women's hostel attached to the Stanley Medical College, too, did the same.

Two students of the Loyola College, T.R. Thathachari and K.S. Raghavan aged 16 and 17 years respectively, were sentenced by the sub-divisional magistrate, Saidapet, to receive 15 stripes each. This was for throwing stones at the train and for trespassing into the railway line between Chetpet and Kodambakkam.

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99 The Hindu, 2 September 1942.
100 Fortnightly Reports, 25 September 1942.
101 The Hindu 7 September, 1942.
railway stations, on 3 September 1942. Students of Annamalai University took the lead in this agitation. Students met in conference at various centres and passed a number of resolutions in protest.

The Government of Madras issued an order, instructing the concerned authorities on the policies to be followed, in the event of student's demonstrations and strikes connected with the 1942 movement. They were as follows:

1. Where an offence against law is committed the offender student otherwise must be dealt with under the law.

2. Whenever the police arrest students for these offences the college authorities should be informed so that they may, if so disposed, offer evidence of character etc., in the magistrate's court.

3. Public meetings and processions will be governed by the instructions already issued by the District Magistrates and the Commissioner of Police.

4. Meetings in school or college premises may be allowed on the same conditions as public meetings i.e. the organisers should satisfy the head of the institution that the meeting will not be made an occasion for unrestrained attack on

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government or for the incitement of disorder. Heads of institutions may consult District Magistrates when necessary.\textsuperscript{63}

Madras District students Federation organised an 'Anti-Fascist students Camp' in a village in Rammnad District from 21st to 26th September 1942. Thirty one students attended the camp and they were given lectures on world politics. The government suspected that the students might extend their support to the no-tax campaign. The police searched their belonging but nothing was found.\textsuperscript{64}

Students celebrated Gandhi Jayanthi on 2nd October 1942 in a fitting manner. The students of Madras Medical College did not attend their classes in connection with the Gandhi Jayanthi celebration.\textsuperscript{65} They attempted to take out a procession. Twelve students were arrested in this connection but the cases were later withdrawn. The students of the Presidency College, Madras celebrated Gandhi Jayanthi and took a statue of Gandhi in procession inside the college premises. At Madurai, on the night of 23rd October 1942, acid was thrown at a police inspector when he was leaving the Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple along with a constable and a doctor. They were badly burnt by the acid.\textsuperscript{66}

\textsuperscript{63} G.O.No.S/325 A, Public Department, 25 February 1943, TNA.
\textsuperscript{64} Fortnightly Report, 5th October, 1942.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 23rd October 1942.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., 7th November 1942.
Police arrested several persons including two students one from American College and another from Madurai College in connection with acid throwing case. In order to protest against the arrest of their fellow students, all the students of American and Madura Colleges staged a strike on 2nd November 1942\(^a\). Finding it difficult to run the college peacefully, the Madura College management decided to take severe action on those students who indulged in political activities. In November 1942, two student leaders of Madura College were dismissed from the college\(^b\).

Various clauses under the Defence of India Rules and the Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Madras Children Act, the Public Security Act, the Criminal Proceedings Act, and the Nuisance Act, were made use of by the District Magistrates and Police authorities to convict the students for their political activities. Many unbiased judges condemned these measures and took the bureaucracy to task. W.O. Newsarm ICS, was an example. Following certain speeches made at a public meeting at Chittoor on 10 August 1942, five persons, three of whom were students, were convicted and sentenced to undergo imprisonment by the Divisional First Class Magistrate, Chittoor, under section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. But they were acquitted on appeal by W.O. Newsarm, the District Session Judge. In concluding the judgement, the judge

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\(^a\) The Hindu, 4th November 1942.
\(^b\) Fortnightly Report, 21st November 1942.
said: "It is plain, in my opinion that section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act does no apply to the activity of the appellants, for they cannot be said to have helped the operations of unlawful associations. On the contrary they have inconsiderately brought discredit and dismay to their parents and their teachers and done themselves incalculable harm by a public exhibition of hysterics and bravado".

The principal of the Madras Christian College observed with reference to the student unrest that "Students did not live in sealed" chambers, and the older among them at any rate could hardly be expected to show no signs of awareness when the national life was disturbed and storms were raging. A resolution was passed at the 8th annual camp of the Student Christian Movement Conference (Madras - Vellore) held at the St. Columba's High School, presided over by Malcolm S. Adiseshiah of the Economics Department of the Madras Christian College in 1942. The resolution regarded the repressive policy of the Government as barren and sympathized with those students all over India "Who with self-sacrifice and heroism were suffering for their convictions and for vindicating their country's honour".

In a letter, Janaki Moses, "Who is she?" Tambaram wrote with reference to the fast begun by Gandhiji, "Mahatmaji is in the throes of death. God worked no
miracle to save Jesus and we stand beholding the great calamity with bleeding hearts as the lovers of the kingdom of God did in days of old. We have no weapons of steel to fight with, but have we lost hope?. The life of zarene was no failure but a glorious victory and so today Mahatma Gandhi has won and through him the world will realise the practicability of living up to the teachings of Christ⁷⁸. But in another resolution adopted at the meeting of the Loyola College Debating Society in November 6, demanded the release of national leaders and the establishment of a National Government at the centre.

On 7th of October 1942, the Presidency College students went in procession within the college premises taking a bust of Gandhiji and installed it in a central place of the college premises and hoisted a Congress flag near it⁷⁹. While the students of the city colleges took the law in to their hands by indulging in such activities, the labour force added fuel to the movement.

Even from the beginning of the movement, the workers in various mills were interested in this movement. They joined hands with the Congressmen because they were not equally treated with the European workers. They were poorly paid. The government turned a deaf ear towards all their appeals. V.V. Giri, Ex-Congress minister and President of the All India Trade Union Congress, issued circulars

⁷⁸ District calendar of Events, op.cit., p.5, and fortnightly Report for the first half of October, 1942
among the workers stating that time had come for immediate sanction. Issuing the circular on 14th August, 1942, V.V. Giri, asked the workers to lay down their tools in sympathy with the political movement. But, he was arrested and detained on 17th August, 1942. In Madras College the Ganesh Aluminium workers, Premier Metal Factory and Buckingham and Carnatic Mills workers had abstained from work. Hundreds of labourers of the Madras Electric Tramway and Madras Corporation carried on labour agitation.

From 25th August, all the workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills joined the stay-in-strike which had continued even after October, 1942. These strikes had its effect on the war efforts of the Government. Though, Britain pretended that labour strikes had not affected war efforts, it had its effects mainly on the textile mills with in the country particularly on those in Madras and Ahmedabad. The strike by the workers in Buckingham and Carnatic mills, Madras, was the most significant one since they were the largest contributors in Khaki. Of the 10,000,00 yards required monthly only 4,50,000 yards came from them. They were also specialised in the production of certain classes of ducks.

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71 Fortnightly Report for the first half of August, 1942.
73 G.O.No.1130, dated on 8th April, 1942 and Press Note No.: 66, dated the 12th March 1942, and District Calendar of Events, op.cit., pp.2-3 and The Hindu, 13th March 1942.
74 B.S. Baliga, op.cit., p.27.
75 Fortnightly Report for the second half of August 1942.
which others were notable to manufacture satisfactorily\textsuperscript{76}. Thus, one of the Congress programmes, "impeding war efforts," was carried out successfully.

At the same time, the Congress workers had also carried on their activities in the City even in the face of a large military force. A number of public servants resigned their government posts and carried on the campaign with other Congress workers. Gandhiji had already instructed that, 'every man and woman who participates in the movement must function for himself...' Since the leaders were arrested and the Congress committees were banned the Congress workers had to organise the movement as far they knew. On 11th August 1942, one Jagannadhan, who had resigned his clerical post from a mercantile bank, was arrested while sticking hand written posters advocating Quit-India slogans, sabotage and strikes\textsuperscript{77}. On 14th August 1942 Warden who had resigned his post was arrested while pasting notices detailing the Congress programmes of Civil Disobedience in the various stages\textsuperscript{78}. Some of the Congressmen managed to collect hundreds of pieces of gelatin sticks in the nearby Nellore district. Workers in the mica mines were provided with gelatin pieces to enable to blast rocks. They used to sell some of what was given to them. A group of Congressmen were able to collect about

\textsuperscript{76} Secret Circular of the Supply Department, dated October, cited in A.C. Guha, op.cit., Part-II, p.363.
\textsuperscript{77} District Calendar of Events, op.cit., p.1.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
100kgs of those pieces. A portion of it was sent to Bombay and other places. They were also distributed in Tamil Province79.

Picketing of toddy shops, the first programme given in the secret Congress circular, was conducted in some places and toddy shops were set on fire80. Military sheds numbering 3,000 at Gummidipoondi near Madras City were also burnt. On 21st August 1942, a meeting was held near Wimco Factory at Tiruvottiyur, Madras81.

On 23rd August, 1942 a procession was taken out by some Congress volunteers in the Choolai area in Madras, inspite of the presence of military. They were arrested. So, the people became unruly and entered the four Warden’s posts and damaged the equipment’s82. Quit-India slogans were written in important places like Chief Presidency Magistrate Court, Egmore. Copies of manuscript, cyclostyled leaflets, notebooks requesting government servants to resign and details of the Congress programme were also distributed secretly83. But, they were seized.

Journalists were also involved in the movement as the AICC demanded in its Quit-India resolution. It reads: "A word to journalists, you may declare that

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79 Personal Interview with Sri Pada Sankars
80 B.S. Baliga, "Madras In the Struggle for Independence" op.cit., p.27.
81 Personal Interview with Sri Pada Sankar
82 District Calendar of Events, op.cit., p.2.
83 Ibid., p.4.
you will give up writing under the present restriction and take up the pen only when India has won her freedom. Accordingly, the English dailies, Indian Express and Free Press, The Tamil Dailies, Bharatha Devi, Dhinam and Congress Navayugam, the Tamil Weeklies, Hindustan and Tamil ceased their publication in August itself. While ceasing its publication the Dinamani paper stated that it was better not to exist than to exist without freedom and that it had no wish to be a mere dummy. In Tirunelveli, the movement initially started as students strike and later developed into violent activities by the people. On 12th August 1942, there were hartals in Koilpatti, Sankaran koil and other places. On 17th August 1942 one Krishnaswami Chetti, a Congressman, picketed at the gates of the Sankaran Koil Board School and later went about the bazaar calling on public servants to resign. The Quit-India Movement remained active in Madras only for a few months, roughly from August to December 1942; there-after it gradually died down. The political atmosphere in the whole country, however, continued to remain dark and sullen, what with the detention of the Congress leaders in jail and the unhelpful attitude shown by the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow and Lord Wavell, and M.A. Jinnah, the implacable leader of the Muslim League. The Viceroy insisted on the solution of the communal and minority problems as a

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14 Congress Varnika, op.cit., p.62.
16 Ibid.
17 District Calendar of Events, op.cit., p.103.
preliminary to the consideration of the grant of any reforms, while M.A. Jinnah insisted on Pakistan. Gandhiji having been released in May 1944 tried his best to solve the tangle, but in vain. From 1945, however, the sky began to clear. The formation of the Labour Government in Britain, the end of the Japanese War, Lord Wavell’s visit to England for consultation with the Labour Government, the arrival of the first Parliamentary Delegation and then of the Cabinet Mission to hammer out a new Constitution for India, all these, led to a succession of political changes. Then the ban on the Congress was lifted. The Congress leaders were released and they resolved to accept the reforms offered in good faith by the British. This speedily led to the holding of general election and the formation of the Interim Government at the centre (consisting of leaders drawn from major political parties) and the Congress Government in Madras".

During this whole period, from 1939 to 1946, when the Congress Party was fighting for freedom, the other parties in this State co-operated with the British Government and tried to strengthen their own position. E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, now the recognised leader of the Justice Party, offered "unconditional support of Tamilians in the prosecution of the war as a counter blast to the Congress attitude."

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"K. Rajyyan, History of Tamilnadu ; Post to present Raina Publication Kamaramkalam - 19 95, pp.330-32
Ibid."
The elections held in March 1946, brought an astounding success to the Congress. The Congress Party obtained an overwhelming majority, securing 164 seats out of the 215 seats in the Madras Legislative Assembly and 32 seats out of the 52 seats in the Legislative Council. T. Prakasam was now chosen as the leader of the Parliamentary Party and he formed his Ministry in April 1946. His Ministry, however, had no easy task before it. For, the whole country was then passing through severe ordeals. The times were out of joint. In the economic sphere, the after effects of war, high prices, hoarding and black marketing, were causing unusually hard times for the poor.

All that time, at the All-India level momentous events were in the making. The prolonged parleys between the Congress leaders on the one hand and M.A. Jinnah and the British Government on the other, at last led to the convening of the Constituent Assembly, the decision of the British to withdraw from India, the arrival of the new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, the partition of India into India and Pakistan and finally, the Declaration of Independence on 15th August 1947.

The dawn of freedom was greeted in Madras with great rejoicing. Everywhere there was jubilation that the cherished goal had at last been reached, and satisfaction that the British were departing as friends leaving no bitterness behind. The Independence Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm alike in the City of Madras and also in the districts.

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