CHAPTER X

SUMMING UP

Historically and ideologically Indian Nationalism challenged American idealism, political wisdom and diplomatic skill. India was fighting for its independence from the same imperialistic power against whom the United States had fought for its freedom. American declaration of independence was to the Indian mind a self evident truth that all men are created equal, possessing certain inalienable rights of life, liberty and happiness. India looked towards United States for inspiration, support and sympathy. The critical American test in India occurred during the Second World War. United States failed to respond effectively, producing disenchantment and a lessening of American prestige.

Indian leaders pleaded for United States support. Nehru in an article in the Atlantic Monthly wrote, "India is far from America but more and more our thoughts go to this great democratic country which seems almost alone to keep the torch of democratic freedom alight in a world given over to imperialism and fascism, violence and aggression of the worst type."
Even Gandhiji hoped for United States support. He sent a message seeking United States support. "On the eve of embarking of what promises to be a deadly struggle I shall expect my numerous American friends to watch its career and use the influence of a great nation for the sake of oppressed humanity. This Indian struggle is more than national. It has international value and importance."

During the Second World War, when United States Government was in a position to influence Indian developments, Roosevelt declined opportunities and suggestions to advance an unequivocal policy and to press the Churchill Government effectively. The United States people, however, constantly voiced their support in favour of the Indian nationalists. Even Government officials like the Secretary of State and United States officials in India were in favour of United States taking a firmer stand with the British on the Indian issue. The Indian nationalists often found themselves altering between despair and hope of United States support.

The Japanese were trying to exploit the intensification of nationalism conscious of the hatred of the Asians against their European masters, they propagated "Asia for Asians". The Nazis assured the Indians Nationalists that Axis victory would usher in
genuine freedom. The American policy makers could not fail to conclude that allies could lose the war, if the struggling nationalists in Asian countries, believed in Japanese and German propaganda. United States was also aware that India afforded the only base for offensive action by land against the Japanese. Anti-imperialism thus, became a military necessity. The Atlantic Charter proclaiming "the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under they lived openly committed the United States to the cause of freedom, to the colonies and become the ideological focus of American concern with nationalism, Vis-a-vis imperialism in Asia. The principles enunciated in the eight point declaration would hearten enslaved nations wrote L.S.Rowe, Director General of Pan American Union to the President. The Roosevelt-Churchill pronouncement is a new Bill of Rights for small nations and mankind, said a cable to the Whitehouse from a Federal Judge in Dallas. Democratic Congressmen David T.Terry of Arkansas voiced his conviction that thanks to Roosevelt's initiative, the United States would assume its rightful role in world affairs and contribute "to the establishment of peace and some measure of good life not only in our nation but all the world over". Such sentiments were shared by millions of other Americans. Churchill however, in an address to the House of Commons on September 9, 1941
specifically excluded India and Burma from the application of Atlantic Charter. The people of United States dis-approved of Churchill statement. The New York Times stated that unless the statement was repudiated by President Roosevelt, it would be interpreted by the people of the East as another instance of hypocrisy by the British Government. American writers like Pearl Buck and Walter Lippman spoke out against British imperialism. The Indians pleaded Roosevelt, to make some public declaration denouncing Churchill's statement. An editorial in the Modern Review remarked "he either agrees with Mr. Churchill, or not-agreeing with him shrinks from displeasing him". The India League in London held the United States guilty with Britain in furthering an imperialistic war. Roosevelt however, failed to give a single public statement repudiating Churchill's stand.

The only positive response to the Indian appeal came from United States Secretary of State, Cordell Hull when in his Radio address of July 23rd of 1942, he declared, "it has been our purpose in the past and will remain our purpose in the future - to use the full measure of our influence to support attainment of freedom by all peoples who by their act show themselves worthy of it and ready for it."
Roosevelt's response to the Indian situation was a personal appeal to Churchill suggesting a way to solve the Indian problem. He suggested the setting up of a temporary Government, headed by a small representative group covering different castes, occupations, religions and geographies - this group to be recognised as a temporary Dominion Government. As an example he cited United States inception.

During the Cripps Mission, at the last moment Roosevelt tried to salvage a settlement, when Churchill had already decided to recall Cripps. Louis Johnson, President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy to India informed the futility of his Mission, when he wrote, "Cripps is sincere, knows this matter should be solved. He and Nehru could solve it in five minutes, if Cripps had any freedom of authority. To my amazement, when satisfactory solution seemed certain, Cripps with embarrassment told me that he could not change the original draft declaration without Churchill's approval. I never lost confidence until then, London wanted a Congress refusal Why? Cripps original offer contained little more than the unkept promise of the First World War. The Indians appreciated Johnson's interest. Their hopes of gaining United States support were aroused. Nehru remarked, "Col. Louis Johnson has taken a friendly interest in our problem of today and
we are grateful to him." In another letter to Roosevelt, Nehru explained the reasons for Congress refusal of the Cripps proposals. Dr. Anup Singh of India League urged United States, China and Russia to help Great Britain and India to reopen negotiations. The Indian newspapers clamoured for United States support. The National Herald on April 24, 1942, stated, "the time has come for Roosevelt to act and we suggest that he should act decisively. He should tell the British people to be done with Churchill and Amery, as being the worst enemies of a vigorous common allied effort, and as the worst opponent of a common allied victory.

Gandhiji however, had begun to get skeptical of United States motives. Being the leader of the masses, his opinion was a reflection of the Indian opinion. Gandhiji attacked the arrival of United States troops in India. He declared "cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions. Would not they make a fighting material as any in the world. Then why foreigners?... ... It amounts in the end to American influence if not American rule added to the British". Louis Johnson tried to appease Gandhiji's fears on Americans design on India. Nehru differed with Gandhi when he pointed out that he did not think American interests in India were based on a desire to gain territory. According
to Nehru, American interest was in winning the war and since India had become a major location of a potential offensive, many Americans had come to the country. Gandhiji however, continued his tirade against the United States. In another statement, he declared, "it is difficult to wean the golden calf from the worshippers of mammons". Even Chiang Kai Shek implored Roosevelt to use his prestige and influence to insist upon a mediated settlement to which Roosevelt replied, "I think your position and mine should be to make it clear to the British Government and to Mr. Gandhi and his followers that we have not the moral rights to force ourselves upon the British or the Congress Party, but we should make it clear to both sides that you and I stand in the position of friends, who will gladly help if we are called upon by both sides." Roosevelt informed Churchill regarding Chiang Kai Shek appeal. Many American organisations such as the Progressive Farmer and American United Automobile Workers kept urging Roosevelt to take more positive steps. Even Labour Organisations in Mexico began agitation in favour of Indian independence but without success.

The subsequent British imprisonment of national congress leaders was one of the dark pages of allied history of world war II. In waging a war against fascist
tyranny, a major allied government suppressed Indian nationalism with the acquiescence of the only nation in a position to prevent such a suppression. Hence, Nehru also seemed to be getting disappointed with United States attitude. Before being arrested, Nehru told Time correspondent, Theodore White, what he might have explained in a United States broadcast. Basically said Nehru, the Indian crisis is the result of Europe and America's concept of Asia, "What has astounded me" said idealistic Nehru "is the total inability of the English speaking people to think of the new world situation in terms of realism - realism, being more than military realism." The Indian newspapers continued their appeal for United States to intercede.

However, eminent people of the United States gave their open support. N.C. Raleigh of News Observer of August 18, 1942, wrote, "Americans fighting and dying in solomon island and on the Seven Seas were not putting their life in jeopardy to continue the empire of Britain or the Netherlands or of any other European country over weaker people". F.I. Schuman in his article, entitled, "Our Danger and Our Duty" pointed out that all Americans had a solemn duty to themselves to their sons and to their comrade in arms against tyranny all over the globe." Pearl Buck urged United States to do something about India. Francis Further
deplored the prevalent state of affairs. Louis Fisher remarked, "Trouble in India means prolongation of the war. It is therefore, America's business". Kate L. Mitchell stated that the United States as the self appointed spokesman for freedom everywhere in the world had a stake in India.

In 1943, William Phillips was sent to India as President Roosevelt's Personal Representative. He attempted to bring about a change in American policy seeking Roosevelt intercession to prevent Gandhi's possible death, urging Roosevelt mediation and guarantee of a political settlement. Phillips gained no support from Washington. On reaching the United States, Phillips in his conversation with Roosevelt emphasized the fact that as India was bound to be an important base for their future operations, against Burma and Japan, it would be very important that they have around them a sympathetic India rather than an indifferent and possibly a hostile India. Phillips argued that "it is not right for the British to say that it is none of your business when we alone presumably will have the major part to play in the future struggle with Japan. The United States public and press continued to speak vociferously on the Indian issue. The New York Herald Tribune wrote "the British policy here at present is the same as it was thirty years ago.".
According to the New York Times, intense interest in Indian problems was becoming evident by the Americans asking British lecturers "What About India"? Patricia Russel, supporting United States writers, stated in the Manchester Guardian, "what does Mr. Churchill mean when he speaks of the British Empire at the liquidation of which he declines to preside. To those of us who are engaged in attempting to allay American suspicion of English intention and the war, the last pronouncement of Mr. Churchill has caused profound dismay. The Indian papers, The Hindustan Times, The Times of India, The Bombay Chronicle, The Statesman, The Tribune, all continued their appeal for a direct intervention but to no effect. Roosevelt feared that intervention risked an open rupture between the allies. Sumner Welles defending the State Department policy declared that the "people of India have been most solemnly assured, that as soon as the necessity of war permits, they will be given an opportunity to choose freely the form of government they desire ... but to make active intervention in the Indian situation as a test of liberalism, he confessed was beyond his comprehension." Given Britain's dependence on the United States, it was likely that American insistence that power be transferred to India's leaders would have
produced only a temporary rift between the allies. Phillips, Merrell, Louis Johnson and at times Berle and Welles argued that intervention was worth the risk.

In 1944, when India was hit by the Bengal famine, the people of United States strongly criticized the British Government but Roosevelt refused to sanction any supplies to India. When Drew Pearson published a letter of William Phillips, deploiring the situation in India, the United States Senators demanded that the President make a full report on conditions in India. The United States papers took up the issue. India League of America urged for further revelations concerning William Phillips' position in India and demanded that even previous personal, representative of the President Louis Johnson's report on India be also made public. The United States Government instead of appeasing the people of America and India sent its regrets to the British Government for the unauthorised publication of Phillips' letter.

By acquiescing in British imperial policy the United States influenced developments in India and Asia. The suppression of the National Congress facilitated the rise of the Muslim League. As it became stronger, the prospects of partition also increased - and by 1947 became a reality. A United States broadcast on India
declared as long as the Hindu Congress Party shows intolerant antipathy towards the Muslim and the minorities, India was bound to remain divided and subjugated. The Indians tried to tell United States that they ought to study the Indian question before coming to any conclusion. But as the war came to a close, United States interest in India had begun to dwindle. For about five years after the end of the war, United States gave first priority to the developments in Europe and did not concern itself much with the affairs of Asia. No forceful statements were issued by the United States Government concerning development in India. President Truman defining United States Foreign Policy reiterated, "we hope for a peaceful settlement of the differences which have arisen between the colonial people and colonial sovereign in all areas."

United States now simply put forth its hope that India would remain united. The Hindus and Muslims were unable to reconcile their differences, while the British decided to quit. The United States accepted the idea of Pakistan without much ado. They declared "Future constitutional pattern is a matter to be determined by Indian people themselves and whatever that pattern may be, United States Government looked forward to continuance of friendliest relations with India of all communities and creeds. We hope to have friendly relations with new Pakistan state when it is established". Thus, during the
Second World War Indians had found that the United States Government had been unable to render decisive support to the Indian cause. For Indians it meant that the United States had not lived up to its professed ideals of liberalism.