CHAPTER V
QUIT INDIA: AMERICAN AMBIVALENCE
AND INDIAN DISTRUST

The British tried to take advantage of the initial utterances of Mahatma Gandhi against United States troops. The Government of India in a despatch to Sir G.S. Bajpai specifically put down the suggestion, that messages cabled by American press correspondence to this country to the above effect, might be countered by drawing attention to actual wording of previous statements, which spoke of foreign soldiers as positive danger and British presence, as incentive for Japanese attack. The Government of India was anxious that he should use all his efforts to express these inconsistencies on American opinion both officially and publicly.¹

The British Embassy in Washington pointed out, "while at present opinion here is disposed to condemn Gandhi's unreasonableness we must not disguise from ourselves, that if and when the Government of India

has to arrest Gandhi, there will be considerable danger of American opinion, being again switched back to the idea of British repression."2

The British were worried that Louis Johnson might undo British propaganda and spoil British image in the United States. In a letter to L.S. Amery, Lord Linlithgow enquired, "I should greatly welcome if Halifax could let us know whether there was any noticeable result on high level American opinion, in regard to Indian problems as a result of Johnson's return to Washington. The British made it apparent, Louis Johnson was not to be welcomed back in India. In a letter to Harry Hopkins Prime Minister Churchill wrote "We do not at all relish the prospect of Johnson's return to India. The Viceroy is also much perturbed at the prospect. We are fighting to defend this mass of helpless Indians from imminent invasion. I know you will remember my many difficulties."3

Events moved to a head, when the Working Committee of the Congress Party in its session from 6th to 14th July, 1942, under the direction of Gandhi, asked for the

immediate withdrawal of British Rule from India. Following non-acceptance by Great Britain, the Congress Party proposed to start a mass civil disobedience movement, for the vindication of its political rights and liberties."

The Congress argued, that unless India was granted immediate independence, her people would lose the will to resist aggression and in the event of invasion by Japan or any foreign power, the events of Malaya, Singapore and Burma may be repeated in the country. The Working Committee at its session of 6th July, 1942 came to some broad conclusions. "India in bondage was enfeebled for her own defence, apart from being an evil in itself. For the safety of the world, as well as for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, Militarism and Imperialism, British rule in India must end forthwith. Neither the pursuit of the policy of non-embarassment of Britain in the war (1939 September to 1940 October) nor the studied moderation of India's protest through a campaign of individual civil disobedience (1940 October to 1941 October) had stirred the conscience of Britain."^{4}

United States newspapers editorials while sympathetic towards Indian aspirations to complete self government, lamented what they widely called an "unrealistic outlook" on the part of the Congress leaders. The Congress resolution provided for the withdrawal of British Government, before an Indian Government could have been formed to take its place. The suggestion of such an inter-regnum at precisely the time that India faced the imminent threat of Japanese invasion, was regarded as unrealistic by American editors. A second theme in many of the editorials manifested a grave concern for the fate of China, if any mass movement was initiated in India. The Baltimore Sun stated "Nothing better illustrates the schism in spirit that at present divides Asia's two greatest countries than the news from India and China. With the Japanese armies already in Burma, it is hard to see how a policy of non-cooperation, or the threatened mass movement against Britain could fail to encourage the Nazi and Japanese enemies.  

5 The Statesman, July 21, 1942, p.5.  
6 Ibid.
William Hill Man National Broadcasting Commentator declared "An indifferent India would cripple the changes of Chiang Kai Shek armies to survive the attack of the Japanese." Philadelphia Inquirer stated "This is no time for debate, it is no time for passive resistance. It is the time for Gandhi to forget a feud with Great Britain and pass the word for whole hearted cooperation with the United Nations, for the defence of India." The Washington Star lamented, "To the Western mind the utterances and tactics of the Congress Party and its mentor Mr. Gandhi simply do not make sense." St. Louis Globe Democrat opined, "Perhaps it is true that without the full co-operation of all Indians, the defence of India can only be half hearted. Yet the result of such opportunism seems to invite the Japanese invasion. With Tokyo's domination Gandhi's campaign for Indian Autonomy would end in disaster."

Gandhi's attitude was denounced in a Broadcast from New York by James Gerard who had been United States Ambassador in Germany. Gerard declared "Hindus who keep their 40 million untouchables in worse than slavery, will appeal here in vain, for our interference in Mr. Gandhi's
back stabbing campaign". He accused Gandhi of preparing to hinder the British and Americans in their defence of India, against the Japanese.  

Notwithstanding the United States impatience with Indian Nationalist's for not participating in the war, it had nevertheless begun to take a greater interest in her nationalist movement. The New York Times commented on this new attitude when it wrote "India is a base to fight against Japanese and the Smith's browns and Robinson of America wants to know what is happening there." During the past 6 months India had been in the National Press and Magazines. Considerable attention was paid to the article both by and about Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Life carried one article devoted to him. Time on July 19, gave an article by Nehru. These magazines alone entered millions of American homes.

Pearl S. Buck in a write up entitled "American Unity and Asia" asked Americans "Is democracy right or wrong? If it is right let us dare make it true. Speaking to American women Pearl S. Buck said, "India has far more to do with our American war and victory then the endless

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9 Reported in the Statesman, July 31, 1942, p.4.
11 Ibid.
In an article by Pearl S. Buck published in _Harijan_, Buck pointed out "Our ignorance of how they feel is dangerous, as the ignorance of France was dangerous even to its destruction. But ours is a peculiar danger, for one tenth of our nation is coloured. Our relation to the coloured peoples and democracy does not even lie so far off as Africa or India." Louis Fischer, another noted American writer, stated that the natural reaction of the average American towards the cause of Indian independence was one of unending sympathy. From all points of view, America would like to see India get a new deal. Anne O'Hare M. C. Corinck pointed out that "It was impossible to disassociate the Indian crisis from the defence of China, to which India furnishes the last narrow passage for aid from the West. This is the aspect of the situation that makes the action of Gandhi and the All India Congress a matter of great moment to the United Nation's. It can be argued with justice that the long pending question of Indian independence should not have been left hanging in the air until the deluge broke and there was no safe answer.

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12 _The Statesman_, August 1, 1942, p. 5.


14 _The Times of India_, Bombay, August 8, 1942, p. 6.
to it... The alarm expressed in non-congress circles and the appeals in the Indian Press for American intervention indicate that the danger is real. Said the *Daily National*, "We appeal to President Roosevelt and through him to the freedom loving people of America, in the name of Democracy to intercede and effect a settlement before it is too late."\(^{15}\) Influential Radio commentator Gram Swing held the view, that the proposal for war time Indian Government contained in the Cripps Plan did not go far enough, and without offending the Muslims a compromise for the duration of the war could not have been reached.\(^{16}\)

The British tried to keep up United States opinion against the Indian Nationalists. The *Statesman* in its editorial, "The Finger of Fate" commented upon S.S.Cripps broadcast to the United States. S.S.Cripps had stated that Gandhi's threatened campaign must be prevented in the interest of the allies. This speech of Cripps made it obvious that India could no longer be British domestic issue. America and China were too deeply involved to be mere spectators.\(^{17}\)


\(^{17}\) *The Statesman*, July 30, 1942, p.4.
The British Government were happy that Gandhi's statement had turned United States public opinion against the Indian Nationalists. In a letter to Lord Linlithgow, L.S. Amery wrote "Gandhi's statement have really been too much this time for the press here and in America. I dare say I may have helped by some very frank talks to the lobby correspondents and the American Press, but I think in the main all credit should be divided between Gandhi and Nehru. Even the Daily Herald and now the official Labour Party have turned against him."  

The British gave publicity to Gandhiji's utterances against United States. The Marquess of Linlithgow in a letter to Amery wrote, "I will send you by each weekly bag copies of Gandhi's Harijan. Certain of his articles show him up in a very unfavourable light, and certain of them also are critical of the Americans. I hope, that you will be able to see that anything of this type gets full publicity in America."

The British Government now confidently warned Congress against any civil disobedience movement. "Great

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Britain will not tolerate Civil Disobedience, declared L.S. Amery in the House of Commons. His Majesty's Government though resolved to give the fullest opportunity for attainment by India of complete self government but they solemnly warned all who stood behind the policy outlined by the working committee of the Congress that the Government of India, would not flinch from their duty to take every possible step to meet the situation.  

The Chinese leader Chiang Kai Shek tried to bring about a solution to the complex Indian problem. In a message to President Roosevelt through T.V. Soong, he put forth the view, that if the United Nations other than Great Britain were to underwrite British promise to India, would it not be possible to get His Majesty's Government and Congress together for a compromise arrangement.

The Indian leaders were disappointed at the British and United States reaction to Indian demands. Pandit Nehru expressed surprise at the fact, that intelligent people there could have misunderstood the Congress.

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stand, unless of course they deliberately chose to misunderstand it. He had regretfully come to the conclusion, that not only the British Government but to some extent other Governments as well were following the British line of thought towards India. There was a great deal of criticism in America about what India wanted "We are accused he said by some newspapers of black-mailing. It is a curious charge for a people who themselves had for generations carried on a struggle for freedom. If by demanding freedom, we are called black-mailers then surely our understanding of the English language has been wrong. Whatever may happen in White Hall it is not going to stop us from working for independence. We live for it and die for it. If I may with great respect suggest to the great people of America, they have all gone wrong in regard to India, China and to the whole of Asia. You Americans have looked upon India, as appendage of Britain and Asia as the dependents of Europe and America. Some of you have thought in terms of benevolence towards these countries but always with that taint of racial superiority."²²

The Indian situation continued to be grim after Congress Working Committee demanded the withdrawal of British, so as to enable India become an ally of the United Nations and fight the aggressors. The Committee had declared it was anxious not to embarrass, in any way the defence of China, Russia "Whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defence capacity of the United Nations." but it claimed that peril grew both to India and these nations and in action and submission to foreign administration at this stage, was not only degrading India, reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but was no answer to the growing peril and was no service to the people of the United Nations.23 The resolution asserted that the "freedom of India must be a symbol of and a prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic Nations under foreign domination." It declared that Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, Netherlands, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom.24


24Ibid., p. 344.
The United States newspapers became concerned, over the determined attitude adopted by the Congress Party. The Christian Science Monitor stated "Americans have shown great emotional attachment to India's struggle for nationhood. There is likely to be an important reason behind any change in this attitude .... The American people feel in the attitude of the Congress Party unwillingness to trust friends, even though these include nations who have long championed India's cause. There is no doubt the presence of Americans, Russians and Chinese at the peace table plus the presence of British people on their own, will guarantee India's freedom in the event of a United Nations victory. That neither Gandhi nor Nehru are willing to put faith in this great fact is at once a rebuff to Indian friends the world over, and a source of danger to their common interest." The New York Herald Tribune criticizing Congress declaration stated "The Congress is using dire threat of a Japanese invasion as the lever, with which to extract immediate independence." The Washington Post declared that Gandhi "is prepared to sacrifice India's independence, the United Nations and the Congress Party itself in order to

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25 Reported in The Times of India, Bombay, August 5, 1942, p. 5.
try out his doctrine of non-violence." The paper pointed out "India's only hope of achieving independence is through the United Nations victory. Britain would be remiss in her obligations to the people of India, the United Nations and herself if she bowed her knees to the Congress Party."  26

An appeal to members of the All India Congress Party to put aside their efforts for India's independence, at this time and to give whole hearted support to the warring United Nations was made public on August 6th, 1942 by a Committee headed by Herbert Agar editor of the *Louiseville Courier Journal*. 27 A liberal section of the Americas, held a rally at the town hall under the auspices of the post World War Council, in support of the Congress declaration. The audience cheered repeated references to Gandhi as "a great liberty loving democrat". A message from Pearl S. Buck read "it is hightime that we in the United States understood the reasons for the present situation in India, in order that we may help to bring the full power of India, to aid in the cause of democracy."

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26 Reported in the *Times of India*, Bombay, August 8, 1942, p.7.
Chei Hsueh Fan President of the Chinese Association of Labour asserted that, "to ask Indians to fight for the Allies without freedom was like expecting a slave, whose hands are tied to guard his master from the hazards of slavery." Distinguished Chinese writer Lin Yutang warned the Allies against defective strategy in India. The British Secretary of State for India, L.S. Amery, Lin Yutang said showed no appreciation of the military necessity of giving the Indians something to fight for in this war. Amery he said, discussed the whole Indian situation as complacently and imperturbably as if England and the United States without the support of the Asiatics, could fight Japan in Asia. Lin Yutang further pointed out, "both India and Ireland dislike and fear the Nazis, yet with both the war is not yet a popular war. The only difference is that Eire is still smarting after she has regained her freedom, whereas India is smarting because she has not got it. India's demand for freedom had been side-stepped by Chamberlain and Churchill as trivial inconsequential issue. This was inspite of the fact that Churchill knew, 

that India possessed the leadership and unity, and party organisation as vital as China's that would change the entire picture of India's war efforts once she was granted freedom. 29

Chiang Kai Shek cabled the President asking his help to solve the Indian problem. The President's reply handed over to the Chinese Ambassador on August 15, 1942, said, "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 on by both sides. At the same time we should intimate to both sides that because both of them and China, the United States and all the other United Nations are in a struggle for existence, the assistance of India is vital to the common cause including the cause of the people of India themselves." 30 The President remarked, that he had delivered the same opinion at a meeting of the Pacific War Council.

independence and their policy with regard to India was clearly established. But at the moment in the opinion of the President of United States the successful winning of the war was superior to every other consideration. He felt, that no steps ought to be taken by him, which would impair the position of the Government of India and its consequent ability, to maintain defence, against probable, impending Japanese invasion.  

The Indian situation took a turn for the worse, when the British Government, arrested the Congress leaders, on the eve of the launching of the Quit India. The Congress leaders, got a copy of the Congress resolution delivered, to the Commission of the Chinese Republic, and the American Commissioner.  

Gandhiji handed to a United States Correspondent, a letter to the American friends, urging them to intercede for Indian independence. "You have made common cause with Great Britain" he declared "You cannot therefore, disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India." He contended that "false propaganda had poisoned American ears ... we can show our real grit and valour only when it becomes our right to

33 Foreign Relation Papers, August 12, 1942, p. 717.
34 The Tribune, August 13, 1942, p.1.
Some Americans began to urge President Roosevelt to take more positive action, Stephen Early, President and Editor of *The Progressive Farmer* sent a telegram to President Roosevelt, "I most earnestly urge your aid in ensuring British acceptance of the plan for making India an ally of United Nations by granting it immediate freedom. It will be most dangerous blow to future Americans morale, if our soldiers and citizens should come to feel, that the present war has been prolonged for years by a too stubborn British Imperialism... I do insist that British stubborness, in their relations with other nations has often brought them disaster ... and what is more may now bring prolonged disaster to America as Britain's ally, unless we demand that Britain seeks the fast fleeting opportunity to work out a compromise, before a misguided stubborness, makes a free gift of India to Japan. We support the demands of the Indian people for a Provisional Government, representative of all sections of the Indian people, as a vital requisite for the total rallying of the entire Indian people for the People's War against the Axis."  

The American United Automobile Workers passed a resolution, affirming, "claim

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31 Roosevelt Papers, File No. 10, August 11, 1942, p. 185.
of Indian people to their independence is a just and
democratic one, fully in accord with liberating and
democratic aim of this war, ... it is the wisest course
to come to a mutual satisfactory agreement with Indian

Even the labour organisations in Mexico began
agitation in favour of Indian independence. The Mexican
Ambassador conveyed to the United States the views of
Mexican Labour Organisations. The Labour Organisations
had urged President Avila Camacho to request the President
of United States to join with the Soviet Government in
offering mediation between the Indian National Congress
and the British Government, with a view to prevent great
loss of life in India and with a view to further, Indian
independence. The Under Secretary S. Welles assured the
Mexican Ambassador that the President had been giving
utmost, thought and consideration, to the question of India
for a long time. S. Welles further pointed out, that the
Mexican Government, well knew that United States Government
had officially and publicly, stated on many occasions, that
it favoured the independence of all people, who deserved
fight. Nehru spoke of the British defeatist attitude, urging that "valiant fighters" replaced the "creaking, squeaking and shaking machinery of the Government of India."\(^{35}\)

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. It is political, psychological, economic realism - their concept of us is that of a mass people, fallen low, backward people who must be lifted out of the depths by good works. I think about it and it seems to me that there is something essential lacking in European civilization, which eats into it, and brings about a war every twenty years. For the average Asiatic in this war, the prestige of Europe has suffered tremendously. The fall of France, showed up the rottenness of Western Imperialism, and the burden which it.

\(^{35}\) *Time the Weekly News Magazine*, August 17, 1942, pp. 25-27.
imposed on the people of the west ... much later came the fall of Burma and Malaya. This was a direct lesson to the British, that their Empire was going to pieces. But it had little or no effect. Nehru believed that India could not be defended, unless India's people were armed with guns, and inspired by the definite knowledge, that they fought for their own freedom. Beyond that he saw at least an "Asiatic Federation of Nations" with the millions of Chinese to replace the broken rule, of the white man in the far east. Nehru dreamed and believed that India "freed from the grave" and without the absolute safety of a cage, would take her place in a world order or world federation welcoming the white man's science and knowhow, friendly to Soviet Russia, a partner with the Anglo-American federation in bringing peace and order to the world.36

Before being jailed Pandit Nehru had said, it is curious that people who talk in terms of their own freedom, (The Americans, should level the charge of blackmail against those who are fighting for their freedom). The Indian view, brought to the United States by Louis Fisher, after a weeks

conversation with Gandhi, was that the British were "sneering" Gandhi and wooing United States public support of an oppressive, undemocratic and inefficient Indian Colonial policy. Amidst a wealth of verbiage, and argument, Fisher found a sound point in the view, that free India would fight invading Japanese and inversely, if India's long smouldering hatred of the British is fanned, the Indian's may be apathetic to the New Masters. Although Gandhi might have been flirting with the Japanese, either out of unworldly wisdom, or as a counterfoil to the British, the final draft of the Quit India resolution was pro-ally.\textsuperscript{37}

There were however, appeals by Indian newspapers for the United States President to intercede. The Evening National stated, "We appeal to President Roosevelt and through him, to the freedom loving people of America, in the name of democracy to intercede and effect a settlement before it is too late."\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{37}Time the Weekly News Magazine, August 17, 1942, pp.25-27.

\textsuperscript{38}Time the Weekly News Magazine, August 10, 1942, p. 25.
A letter was addressed to President Roosevelt from Delhi by K. Chamanlal and others, requesting the United States not to support Britain on the Indian issue. "We cannot believe that your government subscribes to this policy. We know your friendliness, and sympathy for India, as demonstrated many times in the past. We realise your grave responsibilities, in other parts of the world, do not permit you to actively intervene in the Indian deadlock. However, we wonder if you realise that most Indian people, now believe, that the United States of America is completely identifying itself with the imperialist policy of Britain... if America is to keep the good will of the Indian people, it is necessary for you to disassociate yourself from the British policy which is heading this country towards disaster." 39

The news of the Indian Congress leaders, turning hostile, towards United States was conveyed by the U.S. Officer Incharge of American Mission at New Delhi, George R. Merrell to the Secretary of State. "There are disturbing evidences of a tendency on the part of Congress supporters, to identify American forces and attitude, in

39 The Roosevelt Papers, File No. 12, August 12, 1942, Nehru Museum Library, Delhi, pp. 43-44.
India, with the British ... There have already been minor incidents involving American troops. This tendency endangers your moral leadership in Asia." The American military forces in India were ordered to exercise scrupulous care, to avoid the slightest participation in India's internal political problems.

The Japanese tried to take advantage, of the chaotic conditions in India, when Tokyo Radio Broadcasted the advice of the Tokyo Newspapers to the natives of India to rise against "their British Oppressors".

General Chiang Kai Shek was greatly disturbed, by the turn of events. Roosevelt seemed the only hope. He again wrote to President Roosevelt after the arrest of Gandhi and Nehru. "I fear that if matters are allowed to deteriorate, the influence of the Axis Powers, would be considerably strengthened, and the avowed object of the allies in waging this war, would no longer be taken seriously by the world and the professed principles of United Nations would lose much of their spiritual significance.

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At all costs, the United Nations should demonstrate to the world by their action, the sincerity of their pro­fessed principles, of ensuring freedom and justice for men of all races. I earnestly appeal to you, as the inspired author of the Atlantic Charter to take effective measures." 43

Roosevelt did not wish to intervene, or do anything that might hamper the war effort, became obvious, from his letter to Chiang Kai Shek, "it is scarcely necessary to reiterate, the deep interest of this Government, both under its long standing policy and specially under the provisions of the Atlantic Charter, in independence for those who aspire for independence. The Government of United States, has thus, been of the opinion, that it would exert its influence and efforts more effectively, in this matter by refraining from offering, active mediation, to both sides in the controversy, which seems to be a combination of many facts and factors. You and I realise, that irrespective of the merits of the case, in action what slows up the war efforts in India,results not in theoretical assistance but in actual assistance to the armed forces of Japan." 44 President Roosevelt said that

they had sought in every consistent way, to promote an adjustment, which would tide over the war period, in order that they may bring a victory, against barbarism. They needed India's help in this and he wished Gandhi would see more clearly, the need for immediate help and also that he could understand that the very worst that would happen to the people of India, would by the victory by the Axis powers.  

The British Government made every endeavour, to keep United States opinion more favourably inclined, towards its India policy. L.S.Amery, Secretary of State tried to minimise the trouble in India. United States was kept constantly informed, of Britain's every step taken in India. Even when measures were taken against the Congress, Clement Attlee in a secret message to President Roosevelt had mentioned the fact, "it is the intention of the Government of India, as soon as the All India Congress Committee pass, or endorse a resolution, containing the threat of mass civil disobedience, promptly to order the detention of the leaders, that of Gandhi and members of

\[45\text{Ibid.}\]
\[46\text{The New York Times, August 10, 1942, p.1.}\]
the Working Committee under the Defence of India Rules, and it is possible the more prominent of them will be deported from India ... His Majesty's Government feel confident that you will share their view, that no other choice is open to them, then to restrain with whatever means may be necessary, the activities of politicians, who are bent on pursuing a course, which His Majesty's Government sincerely believe, would not only hamper and frustrate the war effort of the United Nations, but would shatter indefinitely, peace and orderly political advancement in India itself.\footnote{Mansergh, N. and Lumby, E.W.R., The Transfer of Power, Vol.II, August 7, 1942, p. 608; Roosevelt Papers, File No.12, August 7, 1942, N.M.M.L. Delhi, pp.17-18.}

L.S. Amery Secretary of State in a broadcast from London on August 9, 1942 spoke against the Congress movement. "No worse stab, in the back could be devised, to all the gallant men, Indian or British, American or Chinese now engaged on Indian soil, in the task of defending India herself, and of preparing from India as their base to strike the enemy, It would mean the betrayal of China and Russia. It would mean the enslavement of India herself, to the Japanese. That is what in their reckless and irresponsible desire for party dominance, the congress leaders are prepared to bring about.
In the face of such a challenge and of such a menace, there could be only one answer, that was for the Government of India, to take firm action.\textsuperscript{48}

Prime Minister Churchill requested President Roosevelt, that while delivering a message, upon the anniversary of the Atlantic Charter, he should give thought, on its applicability to Asia and Africa. Churchill declared, "grave embarrassment would be caused to the defence of India at the present time with such a statement,\textsuperscript{49} as the office of War Information had been forecasting.

President Roosevelt declined to comment publicly on the Indian situation. However, Secretary of State Cordell Hull when asked by President Roosevelt on his views on the Indian situation remarked, "you and other officials of the Government, during past months, earnestly laid before Prime Minister Churchill and other British officials, the unequivocal attitude of yourself, in favour of an adjustment, on a basis that could and should be mutually agreed upon, in the relations, between the Home Government of

\textsuperscript{48}Roosevelt Papers, File No.10, August 9, 1942, N.M.M.L., Delhi, p. 32.

Great Britain and political leaders headed by Mr. Gandhi himself" ... Referring also to his conversations with Halifax and the efforts made by Col. Louis Johnson, Cordell Hull remarked, "our attitude had not been one of partisanship towards either contender, and in these circumstances there was scarcely more to add, in relation, to the Attlee message."  

President Roosevelt received an appeal for assistance from Gandhi, to which the President's reply was to the effect, that the "United States Government had consistently striven for and supported policies of fair dealing and fair play and of all related principles looking towards creation of harmonious relations between nations... the letter concluded with the hope, that "our common interest in democracy and righteousness, will enable your countrymen and mine, to make common cause against a common enemy." The letter could not be delivered as Gandhi had been arrested by the British authorities.

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50 Hull, Cordell, Memoirs of Cordell Hull, p. 1489.
51 Foreign Relation Papers, August 1, 1942, p. 703.
The United States Senate was favourably inclined towards the Indians. The Senate recorded with approval, news on India as published in the N.C. Raleigh News and Observer of August 18, 1942. It recorded, that the "the Atlantic Charter had breathed the spirit of democracy and independence ... There was no doubt that the utterences, of the President, the Secretary of State, Vice-President and Under Secretary of State Welles, for an end of Imperial Rule, represented the convictions of all Americans except the few who wished privilege for themselves at home and therefore, had sympathy for the colonial policy abroad." The Americans fighting and dying in solomon islands, and on the seven seas were not putting their life in jeopardy to continue the empire of Britain or the Netherlands, or any other European country long exploiting weaker people. These people in India, in Africa and in all other parts of the world, now governed from abroad ... had as much right to order their own way of life as had the people of Britain and the United States... Congress agreed in August 1946 that the Phillipines should fully possess their independence, that was the hour when Churchill should have made, a like assurance to the

52 United States of America, Congressional Record, 77th Congress, Appendix to the Congressional Record, September 14, 1942, p. A.3267.
people of India. The failure to do so, was responsible for the most deplorable situation, that had developed in India since Pearl Harbour. The half way measures suggested without assurance of independence from the King, the Parliament and the Prime Minister did not satisfy the people of India who had long had independence as their heart's desire.\textsuperscript{53}

An article in the Washington Post, consisting of a letter to the editor from Fredrick L. Schuman, entitled India: Our Danger and Our Duty, was widely publicised in the United States. It appeared in the Time Weekly news magazine and was with the unanimous consent of the Senate, printed in the Congressional Record. F.L. Schuman condemned the British decision, to outlaw the Indian National Congress, at a time when no overt act of disobedience had taken place and Gandhi was preparing an appeal to the Viceroy and the United Nations for further negotiations, was regarded by many as unjustified. L.S. Amery had defended the decision as necessary to save India and the allied cause from a grave disaster, threatened by the wicked folly of the Mahatma and his colleagues. Yet even those who accepted this view, according to Schuman knew in their hearts that there

\textsuperscript{53}Ibid.
could be no greater disaster to the cause of freedom than what had happened in India, and no folly more rapid than the folly which sought to save India, from her enemies to a policy of terrorization endorsed by her friends. F. L. Schuman continued that all Americans had a solemn duty to themselves, to their sons, and to their comrades in arms against tyranny all over the globe and to demand that this road to ruin be abandoned at once, regardless of responsibility for past mistakes. A sullen and beaten India, would go the way of Malaya, Java and Burma, where many of the natives in sharp contrast to the Philippines had nothing to choose, between British cause and that of the foe. Such a India, will never be saved by British or American troops. To loose India tomorrow, by American default today, will be to doom China to subjugation, to deliver all the Middle East to the Axis, and to force the army of Russia behind the Urals regardless of any second front. The sequel for Britain can only be invasion. The sequel for America can only be an endless and all but hopeless war against opponents, who will rule the world. "The strategic consequences will flow

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inexhorbraly from the moral blindness of those who believe that the armed coercion of subject people however, misled they may be is compatible with a world wide fight for freedom... The time to act is now. A year ago, a group of Americans had privately urged upon Lord Halifax and Department of State, mediation between Britain and the Principal Indian political groups. Even they had confirmed the impossibility of successful negotiations limited to Briti­shers and the Indians. "We have tried our best said Sir Cripps, we have failed... never mind whose fault it is... this is America's opportunity, for only America enjoys the confidence of all. Let Americans everywhere ask their President to join with the leaders of China and Russia in proposing arbitration of the Indian conflict ... To shirk these opportunities is to invite defeat. To seize upon it will be to pave the way to victory by showing all mankind that the United Nations can translate freedom into creative action and can plan by democratic means, for the free world of the future. India has become the acid test of our fitness to survive.55

Pearl Buck the noted American writer reviewing the situation urged United States to do something about India. She stated, "I make the following statement because of my

55 Ibid.
concern about the inevitable danger to the allied cause, due to the British action today in India, the refusal of the Viceroy to confer with Gandhi, the arrest of the Congress leaders and shooting down of Indian people revealed a spirit contrary to the principles of democracy. It is not too late for mediation by China, Russia and the United Nations. Both England and India say they are agreed on freedom. The disagreement apparently is administrative. Sir Thomas Norman expressed the sentiments of the Socialist Party and post world war council when he expressed hope that American mediation would assist in solving the Indian problem.\footnote{Roosevelt Papers, File No.10, August 11, 1942, N.M.M.L., Delhi, p. 271.} Francis Gunther noted American writer deplored the prevalent state of affairs "the Major event of World War I was the Russian Revolution... The major event of World War II is the Indian revolution ... what are we, the United Nations doing about the Indian revolution? We are doing everything possible to hamstring, to frustrate, to spike, to cripple, to undermine and ultimately to destroy it. What earthly good will that do?"\footnote{Time the Weekly News Magazine, October 5, 1942, p. 30.} While Bertrand Russell in a radio debate suggested the setting up of a
Four Man Commission comprising of United States, Britain, Soviet Union and China to negotiate with the various Indian Parties.  

Louis Fischer in an article in *The Nation* remarked "Linlithgow had ordered Gandhi's arrest, I think all of us will have to pay for this. Trouble in India means prolongation of the war. It is therefore, America's business ... We must be very clear that Gandhi's Civil Disobedience, is not merely a matter of whether the police is stronger than the Indian nationalist's. It raises the whole question, of what we are fighting for ... Gandhi has confronted us with the problem of our moral position in the war." Kate L. Mitchell in her "India Without Fable" brought out the fact that the United States as the self appointed spokesman for freedom everywhere in the world, had a stake in India."  

Noted Chinese writers like Lin Yutang supported American writers on the Indian movement when he wrote "we

58 The Times of India, Bombay, October 14, 1942, p.5.
60 Mitchell, Kate L., "India Without Fable", Time, the Weekly News Magazine, October 12, 1942, p. 103.
must break through the pall of abuse, misrepresentation and calumnny against India, that is being spread in America. Intelligent citizens know that India's case has never been represented to the Americans, except through the eyes of British censors at Calcutta and New Delhi ... It is a law of human nature, that we must abuse those whom we injure. 

The United States people felt that in case of United States Government's continued apathy, the Axis propaganda might sway the Indian masses. An article from the Washington Post of August 1942 entitled "Propaganda to India" by Seldom Menefee was printed in the Senate Congressional Record. S. Menefee declared whatever the merits of the Indian Civil Disobedience Campaign and the British policy, in putting it down Tokyo radio took the lead in calling upon the Indians to rise against their British oppressors. Berlin also made political capital out of the situation. Hitler's paper Volkischer said on August 10, 1942, "Now Great Britain and the United States of America have shown in the case of a nation of 40,000,000 what their promise of democracy are worth." The Axis frequently attacked the United States in their broadcast to India. Berlin

told Indians, "America is trying to establish an empire on the ruins of the British Empire. America is a vulture waiting for corpses". A compromise could be possible with China's help. Congress President Azad had stated before his arrest that Congress is "most certainly willing to negotiate for temporary political arrangements for the duration of the war, if America, China and Russia are prepared to guarantee India's independence after the war". If no compromise was reached the British would undoubtedly be able to suppress the present revolt, but the Indian people would be sullen and resentful and might then actually welcome, a Japanese invasion. Senator Thomas from Utah a member of the Committee on Military Affairs speaking on the Indian situation remarked, "It is time for the United Nations, who say they are fighting for the right to settle some of these international or Inter-United Nations question, on the basis of ethics and moral rights ... He asserted that the United States could aid in bringing about peace by extending freedom unqualified, unlimited freedom to the 370,000,000 people of India and thereby making these people a part of the great programme and crusade for freedom and independence being engaged in throughout the entire world. 62

Solution of the Indian question began to be seen by United States Senators as military necessity. Senator Jeannette Rankin of Montana as an extension of his remarks asked for an article by Robert P. Martin from the Washington Times to be put on record. R.P. Martin had stated that successful defence of India, or the reopening of the Burma route for supplies to China, where they could be used to the best advantage against the Japanese, depended upon solution of the Indian Political question. That was the opinion of virtually every allied military leader questioned in India and China. One of the officers said, "China needs supplies, the United States needs Chinese bases from which to strike the Japanese. We need an active, cooperative - India - a strong producing base with manpower suffused for attack and fighting for the United Nations not against Britain. To speak of India as "restless" was an understatement. Hundreds were arrested daily for demonstrations.

Public demand for United States to take an active part to solve the Indian deadlock grew. The American round

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table organisation headed by Guy Amery Shipler pleaded
to F.D.Roosevelt to bring about conciliation, between
the British and the Indians. Communist Party of the
United States in a message to the Communist Party of
India declared, "Just as all people of occupied Europe,
had not the slightest reason to doubt that the cause of
their freedom was inseparable from that of the heroes of
Stalingrad and of China, so also Americans had the obli-
gation to do all in their power, through the influence of
their country to help to remove, all obstacles to India's
taking her place as a full member in the United Nations".64

Indian leaders themselves appealed to the people
of United States not to get swayed by British propaganda.
Gandhiji in his letter to the Indian League of America
said, "I know that interested propaganda, has filled your
ears and eyes, with distorted visions of the congress
position. I have been painted as hypocrite and enemy of
Britain under disguise. My demonstrable spirit of acco-
mmodation has been described, as my inconsistency proving
me to be an utterly unreliable man.65 You have made common

64Time, the Weekly News Magazine, October 5, 1942, p.30.
65Gandhi, M.K., "To American Friends", Harijan, Vol.9,
August 9, 1942, p. 264.
cause with Great Britain. You cannot therefore, disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India. It will do grievous wrong to the allied cause, if you do not shift the truth from the chaff while there is yet time ... Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding unconditional recognition of India's independence. It is being said, "But this is not the time. We say, this is the psychological moment for that recognition. For then, and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression." 66

B.B. Bajpai from the India League for freedom working in the United States wrote to Senator Reynolds, "I am aware of your other obligations and pressure of time, but hope you will give this matter of India's freedom now your attention, to forestall grave dangers and humiliations to the United Nations. We cannot afford to let imperialistic blindness, misguide and endanger American people too long, neither can we remain complacent over the plight of freedom seeking people of Asia. Japanese are already seeking to play the role of Lafayette by offering help in India's fight for freedom." 67

66 Ibid.

J.J. Singh, President of the India League of America endorsed the proposal from Mahatma Gandhi that President Roosevelt should intervene in the dispute between India and Britain. India League of America invited Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to visit the United States to give an objective and authentic picture of the Indian situation.

At this juncture Winston Churchill informed the House of Commons that the situation in India "Gives no occasion for undue despondency or alarm." Churchill's chiseled words rubbed salt into the sores of India. "Mischievous half truths streamed the Indian Press." The primary criticism was that it took matters back to the embittered days succeeding the failure of Cripps Mission. A special committee of the Hindu Mahasabha proposed that Prime Minister Churchill and representatives of the United States, Soviet Russia and China visit India to "See things for themselves."

An article in the Indian Review deploring Churchill's speech commented, "Those of us who have been anxious for a peaceful settlement of the

68 The Tribune, October 11, 1942, p. 1.
69 The Tribune, December 1, 1942, p. 7.
70 Time the Weekly News Magazine, September 21, 1942, p. 28.
71 Roosevelt Papers, File No. 10, September 11, 1942, N.M.M.L, Delhi, p. 196.
deadlock with a view to create conditions favourable to the wholehearted and effective war effort, deplore that he should have spoken at all. For in tone and substance it is the most mischievous and disappointing speech Mr. Churchill has ever made."^72

The British Government worried about United States reactions, kept itself constantly informed. Viscount Halifax wrote to Anthony Eden summarising United States reaction of Churchill's speech. "General trend of responsible opinion recognised that it was necessary for Government of India first of all to restore and maintain order and that there could be no question of setting up a provisional government, without the consent of the parties. But this did not mean that His Majesty's Government could sit back and do nothing except restore order. The Prime Minister's statement was widely interpreted as meaning that there was no intention of taking any further steps, even when civil disobedience had been curbed, to try and bring about the establishment of provisional government during the war."^73

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^72 Indian Review, Vol. 43, October 1942, pp.508-512.

Two articles written by well known columnists Earnest Lindley appearing in *Washington Post*, seemed to bear the sign of official inspiration when he stated that his principle point was that the American Government would be remiss, in its duty to its own people, as well as to the allied cause, if it did not assert its influence on behalf of the treatment of the Indian people which would best serve to win the war ... Indian problem was no longer solely British property or headache. The debate had already had the effect of stimulating the critics and the sentimentalists in the United States. Cuttings from the *Sunday Times News Chronicle* and *Daily Herald* were worth studying. The State Department he felt as a result would continue to be hesitant about giving unqualified support for their policy, and it could be assumed that Chiang Kai Shek and the Chinese press would continue to press for negotiations for the Congress Party.\(^7\)

Alec Houghton Joyce, Adviser on publicity at the India Office pointed out that the Americans seemed to be unwilling to see their troops used in India to maintain

British power unsupported by popular goodwill. There was a call in the United States for positive action to implement if not, go beyond paragraph (E) of the Cripps declaration and to substitute a provisional "national" executive of Indians. By the end of September 1942, the Indian situation was once again up for review in the United States, in light of the mounting demand for settlement of the differences that were undermining the allies moral as well as their material position. A correspondent from Today's Observer remarked that it was necessary to record the Prime Minister's statement of the Indian situation of September 10, 1942. It did not make a favourable impression in the United States. It was interpreted as unnecessary and arbitrary. From the American standpoint this interpretation was confirmed by subsequent events.

The Washington correspondent of the "News Chronicle" wrote, "The Churchill and Amery statement on India have made a bad impression on some sections of opinion in the United States. Official British policy does not seem to many Americans, to be consistent with the sense of the


Atlantic Charter and the great objectives of the war.  
The New York correspondent of the Daily Herald remarked, "Since they have had time to ponder Mr. Churchill's words, many excellent friends of Britain, in the United States have begun to lose faith in the British initiative and British character."  

A new plea to President Roosevelt to attempt a conciliation between the British and Indians, was made by a new national organisation called "The American Round Table" headed by Guy Emery, editor of the protestant publication Churchman.  

A mass meeting organised by the American Committee for increasing Indian participation, was held in Washington. Louis Fischer addressing the meeting, emphasized the importance of settlement of the Indian problem, to the Allies, both then and after the war. While Senator Ball of Minnesota declared, "The problem of India is a problem of peace after the war, which should be solved immediately in order to win the war."  

78 The Tribune, October 30, 1942, p.1.  
In a full page advertisement published in the New York Times, prominent American's stressed to President Roosevelt and Chiang Kai Shek that they use their good offices, to ask the British Government and the National Congress of India and other leaders to open a conference, to find a way which would speedly bring India, into the ranks of the allies. 80 The General President of the Textile Workers Union of America sent a message to the Labour Movement of India, "Be assured that the American labour believes in the emancipation and independence of India as a great nation worthy to take her place among the nations of the world. We are confident that the people of India will eventually win for themselves that freedom and democracy, which we in America are now striving to perfect". 81

Robert Reynolds of North Carolina inserted in the Senate record an editorial from the Washington Post regarding the situation in India. "India's fears should have been removed before the British began to suppress the Civil Disobedience Movement and arrest the ring leaders, for

80. The Times of India, Bombay, September 30, 1942, p.5.
the simple reason, if the Indian people felt that they
would not be protected, they would likewise feel that
the British had no right to insist upon retaining the
responsibilities for defence and foreign affairs. A
constructive approach to the new problems of India,
created by the Civil Disturbances, required something
more than British and United Nations assurances, of all
our protection. Such a settlement required recognition
by the British that mediation might be helpful in taking
the poison out of the present atmosphere.\textsuperscript{82}

As a result of such diverse pressures, the
United States Government made another attempt to bring
about a solution of the complex Indian problem, when
President Roosevelt sent his personal envoy William Phillips
to India.

\textsuperscript{82}Congressional Record, 77th Congress, Vol. 88, Part 10,
November 12, 1942, p. A.3952.