"The essential aim of the novel is representation of the way society moves".¹

Novel as a literary form has an important role to play in a changing society where it helps in solving the problems arising out of social and political turmoil. The Indian novel like its Russian counterpart is also a potent factor in the national rebirth. Georg Lukacs finds a simple method of interpreting Tolstoy, it mainly consists first of all examining carefully the real social foundations on which the novelist's existence rested and then examining what his works represented and how he built up his literary and aesthetic form. This approach could stand a fair chance for the Indian novelists in English too: the social and political analysis and investigation of social foundation here will only be a means to understand their aesthetic form and the ideas they represent. It is undeniable that we can fruitfully draw aesthetic and literary conclusions from the correct evaluation of those social and historical foundations.

What Conrad observes in Under The Western Eye, "Where freedom is absent, politics is fate" and that imperialism destroys "the rhythm of native life"² and gives rise to 'fumes of nationalism' truly explains the Indian pre-occupation with nationalism for almost a century. Since political novel is one in which "political ideas play an important role" and "which
directly describes, interprets or analyses political phenomena, it becomes incumbent on us to study the political milieu before analysing the actual novels representing them. Hence, the relevance of the following sequel of the politics of the colonial India.

Historically speaking national upheavals like The French Revolution and its Napoleonic aftermath, the American Civil War and the consequent reorganization of the country, The Third Reich of Germany and the Russian Revolution have all provided novelists with rich material for fiction. Similarly the Indian freedom struggle, too, served as a grand reservoir for the literary activities in India. But a comparison between these historical events and the story of Indian independence is not entirely valid. Since it was neither an armed struggle nor a bloody rebellion for power albeit it did demand from all Indians a radically new approach to life. Besides the Indian freedom movement was not a single movement but a combination of many forces sometimes working together, at other time in contrary directions. The Gandhian Satyagraha was the prime mover but along with it were the Leftist and the armed revolutionaries passionately dedicated towards the same end though through different means. Further, this national upsurge spanned over a much longer period than any other national revolution in the world history. Hence, our history of freedom movement is not a simple narrative of incidents which happened on the stage of politics but an essay in understanding the rationale of the total process of nation building.
To the British historians, political India presented a picture of complete chaos where principalities and states were engaged in a perennial feud against one another. Coming as they did from the unified island culture, the English were overawed by geographical, ethnic, political and cultural diversities of India and "failed to see the deep underlying fundamental unity more profound than the one produced either by geographical isolation or by political suzerainty". Throughout his stay the Englishman, unlike the invaders of old, did not make India his home, always regarding himself as a bird of passage. To him India was a source of rich and cheap raw materials and a market for his finished goods. Naturally, Indians began to feel for the first time in their history that they were being dominated economically and politically by a people who were quite alien to them. It has been accepted by the Indian as well as British historians that the East India Company used, more than the arms, the weapon of bribery and of treachery to conquer India. Clive, the founder of British hegemony in India, has been proved by historians to be guilty of forgery bribery and double speak. Likewise Warren Hastings was accused by Edmund Burke before the British Parliament of 'high crimes and misdemeanours'.

The British policy of "increasing the revenue of our Dominion by increasing our Dominion themselves" made Lord Dalhousie declare the principle of extinguishing the native rulers by every opportunity they offered. The Indian states were annexed on one pretext or the other. Some times, because of internal feuds, many princes assisted the Company to take over
the rival state. As Malcom averred "These chiefs impelled by short sighted policy thus sacrificed their permanent independence for attainment of momentary object of hatred and ambition". That is how the principalities of Mysore, Oudh, Hyderabad, the Marathas, the Jats and the Sikhs passed under the Company's rule.

**Economic Exploitation**

The Indian villages, before the advent of Britishers, were known for their autarky as Shelvankar remarked "They were subject to various collective restrictions and entitled to various collectively managed services". The phenomenon of market was absent. The state did not exercise any fundamental influence on social, ideological, economic or administrative life of the village. The village as a whole had to pay a certain part of its produce to the state which varied from year to year and which was only in the form of feudal tribute up the ladder.

The British made permanent settlement with Zamindars who were made absolute owners of their lands subject to two things - payment of revenue on a due date, and the default being punished by the sale of land by auction. Land was made a private property. Consequently, "Zamindar's political authority and power of creating trouble disappeared but their economic power over the peasantry was enormously increased". Zamindars had to pay exorbitant land revenue and they were often disgraced by putting their estate to auction. Gradually land went into the hands of money-lenders reducing cultivators into landless
labourers and dividing the agricultural land into smaller uneconomic units.

Cotton and silk manufactures were the prominent industries in India. The eighteenth century India witnessed the beginning of exploitative tendencies of the British merchants who ruined both these industries to such an extent that weavers resorted to cutting their thumbs in order to escape from the necessity of weaving for the company. The British monopolized the trade of all the fine valuables like indigo, cloth and other articles worth shipping. Indian traders had to pay very high tax to the Government as custom duty. Thus the internal trade and industries were systematically ruined first in Bengal presidency and later in those areas which came under John Company's domination subsequently.

Sporadic Rising

The annexation of a particular Indian state into the British India did not mean the subjugation of hydra-headed feudal aristocracy which was loath to surrender their authority. The chieftains and Zamindars were not disposed to submit easily to the foreign rulers, specially when the latter tended to extinguish former's authority over their tenants; imposed financial burdens and subjected them to an alien system of legal administration. That is the reason why during the century following Plassey a series of uprisings and disturbances marked the expansion of British rule in India. Tara Chand comments, and rightly too, "Each region became after annexation a scene of
resistance and revolt in which land-holders and peasants were involved, in which disbanded soldiers and land-lords, ministers of religion and dismissed dependents participated". The most serious of the earliest rebellions was that of sanyasis who were joined by the Muslim Faquirs, aided by discontented landlords, peasants and the common people whose interest had been injured by the British administration. Another phase of local revolt was that of Tribals like Khonds, Khasis, Bhils and Kholis who were discontented by the disruption of tribal socio-economic structure by the administrative changes. The revolts of the chiefs like Raja of Vijayanagram, Keral Verma, Raja of Waynaad and frequent sepoy Mutinies like Vellore sepoy Mutiny of 1806, Bengal Army Mutiny of 1824, Ferozpur Regiment Mutiny of 1844 kept the English at tenterhooks. The first century of british rule in India was a period of mounting distress and unhappiness. India was politically humbled and morally dwarfed. Never before in history had India been reduced to inferiority so galling.

Nemesis : The Mutiny of 1857

The cup of India's misery was full by the time Oudh was annexed in 1856. Smaller states had already been swallowed by the East India Company on one pretext or the other. Peasants, craftsmen, landlords, sepoys, princes and nawabs were disgruntled by the autocratic behaviour of the company's officials. R.C. Majumdar points out "All classes of people in India were thoroughly discontented and disaffected against the British". The land revenue was nearly doubled between 1817 to 1837. The
discontent of peasantry compounded with the scant respect shown to natives whether employed in civil or military services, very low pay, loss of value of property, the British contempt of the Hindu religion, snowballed with the grievances of the sepoys, such as, withdrawal of allowance after the annexation of a province, bad behaviour and lax discipline of the European officers last but not the least the greased cartridges, which finally exploded in the revolt of 1857. The discontent was simmering for a century or so. "The events of 1857 were neither unforeseen nor unpremeditated. The character of British rule made it inevitable". Tarachand also testified "The dangerous situation which was developing in India was inherent in the nature of the Empire". While the British historians and statesmen were keen to dub the events of 1857 as sepoy's Mutiny and tended to put undue stress on the issue of greased cartridges, the Indian historians found it a political revolt ignited by the mutinous sepoys. Even the British statesman Disraeli had to admit that it was a 'national revolt'. Mac Carthy Justin, too, agrees that "It was not by any means a mere military Mutiny. It was combination of military grievances, national hatred and religious fanaticism against the English occupation of India".

The Mutiny of 1857 failed as it lacked well coordinated strategy and self propelled thrust. The people who participated in the revolt did not feel that they were part of a single nation sharing a common political existence. They were united only in the task of eliminating foreign rule, but in its place
they wanted to revive the same feudal autarky in India. They lacked a central command, uniform military strategy, coordination and effective leadership. Lastly, there was the conflict of class interest among the rank of insurgent groups. The Mutiny was suppressed with such unrestrained brutality that the British thought they had conquered India for the second time. There followed a reign of terror accompanied by wholesale massacre as is testified by Kaye, Russell and Sherer.

The British won because of the loyal sepoys and civilians who helped them to gain the lost ground. The English educated class in India did not join the revolt and were positively looked upon as enemies by the sepoys. Though the events of 1857 could be cited as glaring examples of perfect accord between the Hindus and the Muslims, the then contemporary Englishmen regarded it mainly the handiwork of the Muslims. As the British Crown took over from the John Company, English element in the Indian army was strengthened. Indian Council was created in England comprising of the retired British officials possessing Indian experience. Direct telegraphic link between India and Britain was established. Suez canal shortened the distance between the ruler and his territory. The English in general called for the use of iron hand of Britain in suppressing the revolt. The Friend of India wrote "The only way to rule them was to abandon the paternal methods of the company and rule them hence forward with a rod of iron". Thus, a feeling of deadly hatred was shared for a long time by official and non-official Englishmen. With the proclamation of Queen Victoria, the English abandoned
their policy of exterminating Indian states; instead they made treaties of alliance and friendship with them so that in the event of their being in trouble the princes would come to their rescue. \textsuperscript{16} The British learned two essential lessons from the catastrophe. They envolved the dual policy of conciliation and friendship on the one hand and a process of gradual weakening of the opposition on the other. Besides, they took care that those they recruited into their army did not get infected by the political ambitions. They adopted the policy of neutrality in social matters for fear of incurring resentment of the masses. But unfortunately little was done by the Government to heal the wounds and assuage the feelings of the people. Rather, Lytton's administration applied salt to the Indian wounds. The success of the tiny British forces in quelling such a widespread revolt generated a sense of invincibility and stability of the British Dominion in India.

On the Indian side, people realized, though in a hard way, the futility of armed resistance against the British rule. As Julius Caesar dead was more powerful than alive, the Mutiny of 1857, whatever might have been its original character, soon became a symbol of challenge to the mighty British Empire in India, and was invested with full glory of the first national war of Independence against the British.

\textbf{English education and new awakening}

In 1835 Lord William Bentick introduced English education in India. The pioneers of English education were Grant, Carey,
Willberforce and David Hare. Even Bankim Chandra in *Anand Math* makes santans hail the coming of European civilization and regeneration of the Hindu culture in the light of this new stimuli. Rammohan Roy prepared the way for Bentick and Macaulay. Macaulay's famous Minutes set the aim of education as creation of a class of Indians "who would be Indian in blood and colour but English in taste and opinion, in moral and in intellect." They felt that the educated Indians will appreciate the Western knowledge and will have a sentiment of friendliness and gratitude towards those who bestowed the gift of modern knowledge upon them. Charles Trevelyan felt that the effect of English education would be to enrich the Indian languages and to hasten the cultural unity of India, and make Indians enthusiastic supporters of the British rule. There was, however, another group of Western Indologists led by redoubtable William Jones who felt that the British should do nothing to alienate and deracinate the people who come in contact with the British masters, for it would be destroying the old society put by history under their charge; and the class of Westernized Oriental gentleman may prove subversive to British contact. How premonitory were these doubts is amply confirmed by the fears of Lord Curzon, "There exists a powerful school of opinion which does not hide its conviction that the experiment (of English education in India) was a mistake... they think it has given birth to a tone of mind, to a type of character that is ill regulated and averse from discipline, discontented and in some cases actually disloyal." Ellenborough told Dwarkanath Tagore
"you know if these gentlemen, who wish to educate the natives of India, were to succeed to the utmost extent of their desire, we should not remain in this country three months". There was open confrontation between Lord Curzon and the educated India, specially the Hindus who embraced new education with remarkable gusto.

The inherent weakness of the new education was felt by the Indians too. It created an impassable chasm between the English educated class and the vernacular masses. At least in the first two generations there was a noticeable tendency to create a class of men, no doubt with complete knowledge of English, but uncertain of their values, barren in their thoughts and unadapted to their surroundings. While correctly discarding old norms which only imposed fetters on the free creative initiative of the individuals, the educated Indian failed to substitute in their place rational norms and criteria of good conduct. He mistook freedom for license to drink or to indulge in unhealthy modes of sex life. The chasm was continually widening regarding family norms involving joint households, segregation of men and women, child marriage, sati, widow remarriage and other social anathemas like untouchability, foreign travel, free mixing between castes, sects, sex and races. He branded the people as 'barbarous' and they called him 'Anglicized'. Besides, in the initial stages, English education did not awaken the national pride, rather, they glorified the British rule in India, deprecated India's past, sought identification with the colonial masters with the zeal and fanaticism of new acolyte. The Neo-Hindus were a new sect of
Brahmos - half caste of soul rather than half caste of bodies (the Eurasians). However, we have to agree with K.M. Pannikar "The system of higher education in English provided Indians with a class imbued with a social purpose foreign to Hindu thought." While the British administration did precious little if anything to emancipate the spirit, to extinguish the prejudices, to eradicate the ravages of ignorant customs, pernicious superstitions or to encourage and stimulate thought, the new learning did all this on a nationwide scale. The schools and colleges taught youngmen the idea of liberty while the Government did everything to suppress it. Moreover, this uniform system of education through out India through a single language produced a like mindedness that gave educated India a common idiom for political thinking. Gradually the English education made them realise how the English have cramped them under their autocratic rule. Most of the educated Indians, whatever their caliber, could secure only clerical jobs, hence they nursed grievance against the colonial dispensation. It was this disillusionment common among the English educated Indians that was responsible for giving birth to the Indian freedom movement. The Hindu middle class had become acclimatized to the European thought in a way that few had anticipated. They could share directly the great movements of enlightenment in Europe. The Hindu society was considered to be in the process of disintegration and the English thought it would disappear so that the population of India would be saved for Christ. Alas, for the missionaries, such a dream was shattered.
Contrary to the expectation, the progress of English education brought numerous reforms in Hinduism. Various social and religious reform movements like Derozio's society, Brahmo Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, Theosophical Society were started to improve the lot of suppressed sections of Indians. Wahabi movement was started to set ablaze the pristine glory of Islam and put the house of Muslims in order. Prarthna Samaj and Arya Samaj were started by Ranade and Swami Dayanand to do away with the evils of the Hindu society. Thus the new education was the key which opened the great treasures of rationalist democratic thought of modern West to the Indians. Hence it was not a mere accident that all the nationalist leaders came from amongst the English educated class of the Indian society. As Lord Chelmsford, on 4 October 1918, informed the king "We have an educated class here ninety five percent of whom are inimical to us, and I venture to assure that every student in every university is growing with a hatred for us." Consequently, dampers were applied to the progress of education when it was found that it promoted ideas of democracy and independence. The educated Indians were treated with contempt, were called "microscopic minority which represented nobody but themselves."

Indian Press

Once introduced, the English language in spite of the dampers, created new roles for the Indian middle class. Howsoever otherwise the British tried, English education helped
the political unification of India and also led to the evolution of modern institutions. Indian Press was one major agent. Many English newspapers like The Bombay Times, The Patriot, The Pioneer, The Indian Mirror, Amrit Bazar Patrika, and The Tribune came into existence along with Urdu, Hindi and Bengali newspapers. They had become such powerful source of social propaganda and national awakening that Metcalfe before 1857 and Ripon after 1857 regarded the Indian press as a nuisance. In 1857 Lord Canning sought to control the newspapers in India by the Press Act. In 1878 Lytton passed Vernacular Press Act which started a series of protests and on Ripon's advice the Act was repealed on 19 January 1882. The English Press in India strongly assisted in mobilizing public opinions, convening provincial and national conferences, organizing political movements and fighting out public controversies. For the British it was an agency which made them acquainted with the undercurrents, grievances and aspirations of the people of India. It would not be far off the mark to say that the Indian press was responsible to a large extent for creating national consciousness.

Indian Railways:

Introduction of railways played an important role in the unification of India and the consequent rise in assertion of Indianess. The penetration of India by the industrial products of the West was possible only through railways which caused the ruination of indigenous industries and broke the autarky of the Indian villages. Through its spread administrative unity could
be achieved, uniform laws could be introduced throughout India and troops mobilized. Ironically, the Indian railways, an instrument designed to maintain military hold of the Empire on the sub-continent, provided in time material means for organizing political movements to overthrow the Empire.

The Spirit of Nationalism and Freedom Struggle:

The debacle of 1857 forced the Nationalists to change their strategy. The conquerors consolidated their position, took interest in education, introduced efficient administration. In spite of the investment of British capital in India, a feeling of distrust and deadly hatred was shared for a long time by official and non-official Englishmen in India which can be amply testified by the comments of British papers and men like Cobden, Charles Wood and Cuthbert Hall. The Imperialism of the nineteenth century was a system of Government where rulers were not responsible to the ruled and derived their authority from the sources outside the country. While the great French Revolution had already extinguished the divine right of kings and emperors in Europe, it seems that for colonies the great John Bull carried the cross of white men's burden with great gusto still.

The legend is that Indian nationalism arose because of the educated class, "But the fact is it arose from social conditions of imperialism and its system of exploitation and from the social economic forces generated within the Indian society under the condition of that exploitation". The national movement as an all India movement (though with a narrow social base) came into
existence in the second half of the nineteenth century. Various associations were organized in Presidency capitals to safeguard the interest of Zamindars and land-holders. Zamindari Association later known as Land Holder's Society was established in 1837 by Dwarkanath Tagore. It rendered valuable service in habituating the people to express their views, fighting constitutionally and getting their grievances redressed even by the Government. It worked in cooperation with British India Society established in 1839 to create public interest among Englishmen in England. In 1843 Bengal British India Society was founded. Both were amalgamated and remodelled as British India Association. The Association restricted entry for the Indians only. In 1848 Madras Native Association and Literary and Scientific society were established to bring Parsis, Gujaratis and Marathas together. In 1852 Bombay Association was formed at the instance of Jagannath Sarkar Seth. The year 1851 may be regarded as the beginning of the era of conscious political movements in India, since the organizations established simultaneously were all politically motivated. Their object was to have better system of Government under the new charter. Their weapons for fighting were only resolutions and petitions. Their activities were confined to cities alone and to a handful of city people, they did little to look after the interest of the masses. In 1875 Indian League was established by Shishir Kumar Ghosh which included the masses also. A year later Surendra Nath Banerjee founded Indian Association which sought to represent the views of the educated middle class and to inspire them to take
interest in public affairs. The Association launched a national movement against the reduction of the age limit for I.C.S. from 21 to 19 for Indians. Surendra Nath Banerjee visited different provinces of India and organized demonstrations to protest against the order. With the success in regard to the age of I.C.S. Indian Association became a popular organization. It fought against the Vernacular Press Act 1878, and succeeded to get some sections of the Bill modified. Such successes even if partial, encouraged the Indian Association to send memorandum, approved by various public meetings, to the British Parliament. Two events, the contempt of court case against Surendra Nath Banerjee and Ilbert Bill agitation helped the Indian Association in creating greater political consciousness in India. Bombay and Poona took maximum part in the uproar over Ilbert Bill. Though the agitation failed to achieve its aim, it strengthened the middle class Indians' sense of oneness. Surendra Nath Banerjee's case evoked more intense response from the students and general public. Demonstrations were held on large scale in Calcutta, Lahore, Agra, Fyzabad and Poona. Bombay Presidency Association was formed in 1888 at the instance of K.N. Telang, Pheroz Shah Mehta and Badruddin Tyabji. In Poona Sarvjanik Sabha was established in 1867, and in 1884 Mahajan Sabha was established in Madras. A spirit of freedom pervaded the atmosphere and resentment was brewing which was noted by A.O. Hume in many of his epistles to the Viceroy. He founded the Indian National Congress in 1885 with the blessings of the Government to act as a safety valve for the revolutionary discontent. This was testified by the comments of Lajpat Rai, W.C. Banerjee and Lord
Ripon. The history of later half of the nineteenth century was one of discontent and disillusionment. It was, as seen in the days of non-cooperation movement of Gandhi, more of 'Appeal, Vakeel, & Daleel". The nationalist sentiments in a large measure owed its rapid growth to two factors - deteriorating economic condition of the masses and the dissatisfaction of the middle class. Dadabhai Naoroji organized with the help of Gokhale, I. Wacha, Surendra Nath Banerjee and Subramanya Iyer a 'platform campaign' through out the United kingdom to bring to the notice of the British public the wrongs done to India. Recurring famines in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and holding of Darbar to mark the assumption of the title of the Empress of India by the Queen of England with massive waste of public funds at a time when India was reeling under famine and starvation compounded the Indian grievance against foreign rule. By the time the All India Congress met for its third session at Madras all earlier Associations merged into it. Till 1905 self-Government within the Empire was the goal of the Congress. All they wanted was widening of the basis of the Government and giving people their proper and legitimate share of it. In 1906 Dadabhai Naoroji, at the Congress session of Calcutta, gave a call for Swaraj and made fervent appeal to the people of India to act unitedly. According to him, their main object was "to demand for the rights of British subjects, as British subject." At this stage of nationalism the Congress policies were directed and determined by a number of eminent leaders whose patriotism and spirit of sacrifice remained beacon
light for future generations. Most eminent among them were Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozshah Mehta, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Anand Charlu, Badruddin Tyabji, M.M. Malviya and G.K. Gokhale. But the goal they placed before their countrymen was not the glamorous unattainable independence. They sought good Government and a modified type of self-Government. The early Congressmen were quite aware of the fact that they did not represent the masses but they desired to act as interpreters of their grievances, Pherozshah Mehta accepted "the Congress was indeed not the voice of the masses, but it was the duty of their educated compatriots to interpret their grievances and offer suggestions to their redress." Since they were aware of the fact that they were in no position to challenge the British rule, they looked at it as their ally. The early nationalists, according to the historian Bipin Chandra, were to help the process of unifying the Indian people into a nation and to introduce "modern politics based on the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people and the notion that politics is not the preserve of the ruling class only". In abstract they saw the need for active participation of the masses but they nursed apprehension bordering on distrust in the masses' capacity. Though the early moderates were not very wrong in seeing the immensity of the task of politicising, mobilizing and activizing the masses yet, instead of undertaking the task, they tended to be too overwhelmed even to try it. But the young Extremist leaders like Tilak, B.C. Pal, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo, had infinite faith in the power of the masses and in their capacity to bear the strain of a prolonged political struggle against imperialism. They expected to bridge the chasm between
the masses and the educated. B.C. Pal said in his famous Madras lecture in 1907. "Our faces have turned now to the starving and the naked and the patient long suffering three hundred millions of our people". The repressive policies adopted by the government to scuttle the rising national sentiments heightened the feeling of resentment among the educated youths. Preachings of Swami Dayanand, Vivekanand and a large number of Hindu reformers, poets and writers formed the emotional basis of a more energetic nationalism. Bankim Chandra's patriotic song Vande Matram of Anand Math became the battle cry of the young patriots. In Maharashtra Tilak used Ganpati festival and Shivaji festival to lend the garb of religion to politics. Throughout the country youth was inspired by the idea of service and sacrifice at the altar of freedom for the motherland. This gave a new turn to the struggle for freedom and eclipsed the Moderates (Congress) considerably. To Tilak, Swaraj was fulfilment of his national life. The Extremists looked down at the methods of the Moderates as mendicancy. Aurobindo was critical of the earlier Congress leaders and called them one-eyed if not blind. He explained the Extremist strategy in Bande Matram as 'boycott.' 'Lal Bal Pal' provided leadership to the nationalists in the stormy period of the partition of Bengal. Their weapons were swadeshi, boycott and national education to win freedom. But at this stage even the nationalist leaders like Tilak did not visualize India's status outside the Empire. Their demand was the abdication of the right of England to determine the policy of the Indian Government, including the supreme authority to exact
and enforce laws as they pleased, to tax them at will and squander the state's revenue arbitrarily. Unfortunately the Extremists failed to evolve an adequate technique of political action. They remained at the ideological and critical level. This failure led to the rise of revolutionary terrorism which came to the surface in Bengal and elsewhere with Maniktola Garden case. Various societies like Anushilan Samiti, and Abhinav Bharat were organized by Barin Ghosh and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. These societies collected arms, manufactured bombs, collected funds for their activities by committing dacoities in bank and Government Treasuries. Hardayal started Ghadar Party in 1913 in California, United States, which was violently anti-British.

Partition of Bengal

By the beginning of the twentieth century the British realised that they could no longer dominate India by simply playing the princes and big landlords against the slowly awakening people. So they shrewdly played up the Muslim identity in 1906 to prop their imperialist designs. The prevailing mood was marked by new political awakening. There was economic boycott of British goods on the one hand and revolutionary terrorism on the other. In order to break this rising spirit of the nationalists in Bengal, partition of Bengal was effected by Lord Curzon who had firm conviction that "Bengal united is power and Bengal divided will pull several ways." The two objects of the partition of Bengal were to break the growing solidarity of the political community in Bengal and to demonstrate the strength
of the British that they could hold public opinion in contempt. In 1904 at Dacca Lord Curzon appealed to the communal jealousies and pride of the Muslims by promising favour from the Government and by holding out alluring prospects of their economic prosperity. He felt that "Calcutta was the centre from which the Congress party was manipulating throughout the whole of Bengal and the whole of India. Its best wirepullers and most frothy orators dominate public opinion in Calcutta..."\(^{36}\), so "the partition of Bengal was effected not because the Hindus or the Muslims demanded, nor because the administrative problems could not be solved otherwise, but because the British were alarmed at the growth of national solidarity in India and were anxious to thwart it."\(^{37}\) Men like Aurobindo, Tilak and Tagore were expressing their dissatisfaction, even the British press and some of the planners of the partition of Bengal too wrote indignant articles in retrospect accepting their mistake in partitioning Bengal.

Of the three distinct phases of anti partition agitation, the first was in 1904 when the Congress made emphatic protest against the proposal. A memorandum was sent to the Secretary of State on 6 July 1905, and a resolution to boycott the British goods was adopted with the publication of the Government's decision to partition Bengal. A tearing agitation followed in which the whole of Bengal participated. India had turned a new leaf of active and aggressive agitation which spread to U.P., Punjab, Maharashtra and other parts of India. The prominent leaders of this agitation were Tagore, S.N. Banerjee, Satish
Chandra Mukherjee, B.C. Pal, Anand Mohan Ghosh, Moti Lal Ghosh, R.C. Dutt and of course Tilak who did great service to the struggle through his paper *Kesari*. For the first time in the British Indian history the whole nation was united for a common cause, a reign of terror was established which was corroborated by the *Manchester Guardian*.

In the second phase Morley, the Secretary of State, recognized that partition had gone wholly against the wishes of the people. Lord Minto adopted the policy of repression and concession. The loyalists among the Congress were conciliated by favours and the seditionists were repressed by force. In the Indian Newspapers leaders like Tilak, Gokhale, B.C. Pal protested against the policy of coercion and violence.

In the last phase the propagandist activities were accelerated and all classes in India joined the movement. Law courts had been specially suspended for three months, which resulted in victimization of the Hindus who in turn became more determined to fight against the partition of Bengal. But in 1907 a split occurred at the Surat session of the Congress; moderates like Pherozshah Mehta, S.N. Banerjee and M.M. Malviya cooperated with the Government, the Extremists had to face the determined attack of the Government. Many Extremists, like Tilak, were deported and a number of repressive Acts came into existence.

To counterpoise the rising national spirit separate electorate was introduced through Morley – Minto reforms. Unfortunately the nationalism of India did not prove equal to the
forces of nepotism and communal hatred which were let loose by imperialism. Dissatisfaction with the reforms was manifested violently, but the defiant attitude of those who were condemned to death, imprisonment and exile blunted the edge of the weapon upon which the Government relied. The tide of agitation which surged through the Indian society during the years 1905-1909 had engulfed the old political landmarks. The educated and the professionals formed one of its sections, the industrialists and the business class joined them in their own interest. Pandits, Ulemas, working class, peasants and artisans also began to be drawn to the national struggle. Even the revocation of partition on 12 December 1911 did not mollify the ruffled feelings as was expected.

Indian Freedom Struggle and the First World War

Since the Congress gave unconditional support to the British during the First World War, the English were over-whelmed as could be seen from the speeches of the Secretary of State. After the war the Indians came to realise what an asset their country was to the Empire. As the Indian sepoys were fighting shoulder to shoulder with the British soldiers, the myth of invincibility of British arms was exploded. The Montford scheme published on 8 July 1918 belied Indian hopes. To their disillusionment they realised that after this war, England went back on her promises. In 1916 with the efforts of Annie Besant, Tilak and his supporters who had broken away from the Congress in
1907, re-entered the Congress, and 'Lucknow Pact' was signed by the Hindus and the Muslims in an atmosphere of cordiality. Before the end of 1917 Mahatma Gandhi successfully led the tenants of Champaran (Bihar) Khaira (Gujarat), industrial labour in Ahmedabad and in 1918 he presented added proofs of the efficacy of his new weapon the satyagraha.

**Annus Mirabilis**

As a new legislation popularly known as Rowlatt Act was enacted on 18 March, 1919, a nationwide call for strike was fixed on 6 April, 1919. In order to suppress the agitation indescribable atrocities were committed in Punjab at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar on 13 April 1919, and also in other parts of India. Since the Government did not seem to be inclined to bring the wrong-doers to book, Gandhi was forced to call for Non-Cooperation Movement. R.C. Majumdar calls the year 1919 'Annus Mirabilis' as it gave the Indian freedom movement a new turn, an impetus towards aggressive nationalism. Punjab atrocities and their sequel made a rebel of once loyal Mahatma Gandhi. The year 1921 gave India a highly organized party. The Congress, which was so far only a talking forum, was converted by the Mahatma into a revolutionary organization by giving it a new constitution and a nationwide basis. The tricolor flag was adopted, uniform slogans were repeated everywhere, Hindi was adopted as the lingua franca for the whole India.
The Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920

Following the turn of events after the 1st World War, Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation Movement on 1 August 1920, to get redress for Punjab grievances, for remedying Khilafat wrongs and of course, for the attainment of swaraj. The whole country was thoroughly stirred, prominent Indians like Moti Lal Nehru, C.R. Das, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajgopalachari left their profitable legal profession to join the movement. Thousands of students came out of colleges, many national institutions were established. Till 1921 July not much impression was made on the rulers. But, the Prince of Wale's visit stirred a new heat in the agitators, they decided to boycott the visit. As a result thirty five thousand arrests were made between December 1921 to January 1922. On 5 February 1922 Chawri Chaura incident occurred killing twenty two constables. This caused great agony to Gandhi who called off the Civil Disobedience Movement without even consulting the Khilafat Conference, and one of the most important programmes the non-payment of tax remained untried. Though the suspension of the movement was a triumph for a national organization, leaders like C.R. Das, Moti Lal Nehru, J.L. Nehru, who were in jail, were very indignant. Their anger and frustration found voice in Nehru's Autobiography.\(^43\)

Most heartening phenomenon of this movement was fraternization of the Hindus and the Muslims. But with the disintegration of Khilafat movement atavistic tendencies asserted themselves, old feeling of rivalry, jealousy and fear soured and
poisoned the relations of the two communities. Serious rioting occurred all over the country. The ugliest incident was Moplah rising in which almost two lakhs Hindus were either killed or driven out of their homes. Hindu Mahasabha a product of these years gained popularity. M.M. Malviya, Lajpat Rai, Shradhanand and Jaykar adopted twin programme of 'Shudhi' (conversion) and 'sangthan' (organization). Both these alarmed the Muslims who in their turn took to 'Tabligh' and 'Tanzim' as counter movements. Consequently, large scale looting and killing took place, the worst of these was in Kohat in N.W.F.P. on 9-10 September in 1924. The Mahatma went on twenty-one day fast to bring the warring communities to senses. The Terrorist's activities also revived. Bhagat Singh and his associate gave evidence of their daring terrorism which ultimately led to their execution.

The Mahatma avoided the split in the Congress by accepting the programme of Council entry put forward by the Swarajists like C.R. Das, Motil Lal Nehru at the Patna session of the Congress in 1924. The Swarajists had phenomenal success in the elections. Their experiment was carried on for nearly five years with varying success; and the debating fire-works displayed in the Council kept up public interest at a high pitch. On the other hand Oudh was seething with agrarian troubles because of tenancy system. Fyzabad and Rae Bareilly were worst affected by looting of bazars and destroying of crops. Punjab, Gujarat and Madras also saw the same type of turmoil.
Muslim Consciousness and Freedom Struggle

Like Ram Mohan Roy, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan recognized the importance of communal harmony and the mixed character of Indian culture.\textsuperscript{44} The advent of the British caused gradual demise of the Muslim aristocratic classes, the tornado of 1857 completed their ruination. The men who had taken prominent part in the revolt had to pay dearly for the defeat of their cause. The Muslims were kept out of the army which seriously affected the economic position of upper class Muslims who had hitherto been traditional imperial war-lords. As the English replaced the Persian language for administrative and other purposes, the Muslim intelligentsia was adversely affected. The Muslims out of anger refrained from joining new educational institutions. This resulted not only in cultural backwardness of the Muslims but also their exclusion from the administrative posts and from legal and medical professions, thus delaying the rise of the Muslim middle class by at least a generation or two. Further, the permanent settlement of land revenue accentuated the conflict between the land holders and his tenants. In provinces like Bengal where majority of land holders were Hindus and most of the tenants were Muslims, the conflict acquired communal over-tones. So was true of the money-lenders and their debtors in Punjab. The intermediate class was adversely affected by the passing of the Indian trade into the hands of the East India Company. The artisan class was exposed to dual attack - one from the vicious policy of the tariff, second from the competition of the factory-made goods, resulting in the impoverishment of the Muslim
artisans. Thus, all Muslims suffered an extended blight of this common calamity of the British Raj. Consequently, the Muslim mind was in a peculiar state of ferment, for a long time disfavoured and ill-treated by the Government they developed the mentality of the persecuted, felt isolated and misunderstood. Yet, they dreamed of the glory of their imperial past. They were obsessed with the jealousies of their Hindu compatriots who had made greater progress in education, services, and affluence in professions. They were conjuring fantasies of doom in a nightmarish Kafiristan. The British exploited these fears to the utmost.

The Hindu Muslim reform movements while tending to consolidate the two communities also stressed their exclusiveness, which rationalised their current differences. This finally led to their thinking in terms of Hindu nationalism and Muslim nationalism. As noted earlier, Lord Minto prompted muslim separation by founding a separate forum for the Muslims—the Muslim League in Dacca in 1906. The rise of this communal feeling was initially because the Muslim needed mass support of their community in their competitive struggle with Hindu rivals for greater slice of jobs, industry and trade. They misconceived this struggle between the sections of the same classes as communal. Lord Lytton and Curzon spoke of a Council of notables as a suitable counterpoise to 'the claims of baboos whose organization was the Congress'. How the British instigated communalism can be witnessed by Theodore Beck's address to the London Muslim Association in 1895 when he impressed upon them the
impossibility of the Hindu Muslim unity. He warned them that the
democratic system will make them slaves of the Hindu majority and
cautions them not to commit the mistake of 1857 by joining the
sediteous national Congress. Consequently, the initial friendly
feelings towards the Hindus, even of Sir Syed Ahmad's were
changed. He advised the Muslims not to join the Congress. W.S.
Blunt goaded the Aligarh students to assert themselves. Besides the old aristocratic Muslims were not quite reconciled to
the idea of living as equals with the Hindus. Hindi Urdu
controversy exacerbated the professional differences. Frequent
riots accentuated tension between the two communities. The
British strategy of political counterpoise between various
communities to maintain its supremacy was carried out by Minto
the Conservative and Morley the Liberal, through the device of
communal electorate and the partition of Bengal. A wedge was
driven first and then progressively widened between the two
communities not only by the establishment of communal electorate
but by giving specially privileged representation to the Muslims
as against the sediteous Baboos. The League leaders were
naturally opposed to the demand for political independence raised
by the Congress for they thought that if the Muslims joined in
any such demand the British would not support their claim for
special treatment in elective bodies and services. Jinnah joined
the League in 1913 and Gokhale hailed him as the ambassador of
Hindu Muslim unity. Badruddin Tyabji advised the Muslims to make
common cause with their countrymen. Gandhi achieved communal
unity when he started Non-Cooperation Movement to support the
cause of Khilafat. But gradually the Muslim League came to hold the view that no guarantee of rights would be really enforceable in a united Indian state where the Hindus would be in a majority, and the only solution for them was partition of India.

Though the Congress had been a secular organization, Bapu (Gandhi) gave it a Hindu tone by interpreting swaraj as Ram Raja, a mythical memory which could not enthuse the Muslims. Besides, the Congress leaders failed to allay the genuine fears of the Muslims. The death of C.R. Das and Mahatma Gandhi's withdrawal from active politics worsened the conditions. Swami Shaddhanand was murdered by a young Muslim. There was no relieving of tension till the end of 1927 though both the communities realized that religion was only the cover and not the core of the matter. Jinnah worked hard to bridge the gulf but he failed to achieve the desired aim because the Government gave encouragement to separatist tendencies by extending favours to the anti Congress Muslim leaders and by fanning their fears by vicious propaganda. In such conditions Maulana Azad's voice of sanity remained a cry in wilderness.

The provincial elections of 1937 found the Congress and the Muslims League in full confrontation. During the period of 1937 to 1945 there was a mass growth in the following of the Muslim League because the political firmament of the past decade formed a political consciousness in the masses. Jinnah had been propped up as the leader of the League. The concept of unitary nationhood was weakened and in its place two nation theory was canvassed. Jinnah took advantage of every difference between the
Congress and the Government. The Shimla Conference broke down on the question of communal representation only. The Cabinet Mission Plan was accepted by both the Congress and the League, but the League withdrew its acceptance following an unfortunate statement made by Nehru. The opposition between the Congress and the League continued growing till the country was cut into two bleeding pieces by the British chicanery.

**Gandhian Era: Split in the Congress**

The grand structure of Hindu Muslim unity lay shattered with the sudden calling off of the Non-Cooperation Movement. C.R. Das was convinced that Bapu had erred grievously by calling off the struggle at a time when the whole nation was aflame with enthusiasm. With Gandhi's withdrawal from active politics by 1924 the Swarajists like Motilal Nehru, Vitthalbhai Patel, R, Iyengar, M.M. Malviya, B.C. Pal and C.R. Das carried the flag of freedom struggle in the Assembly. Their spectacular success in rejecting one resolution after the other kept the public interest alive. In 1926 Motilal Nehru walked out of Assembly followed by all the Swarajist members. A split in the Congress forced them to separate themselves from the Responsivists like M.R. Jaykar and Kelker.

Thus Swarajists, turned away from Gandhian policies and divorced from the mass movement, were reduced to pleading for terms. The British re-established their supremacy through the Currency Bill act in 1927. 1923 saw another revolt against the Gandhism—Labour Movement. Jawahar Lal Nehru and Subhash Bose,
the principal leaders of youth developed leftward tendencies. On March 31, 1929 most of the trade union leaders were arrested and brought to Meerut for a trial in connection with the all India Communist Conspiracy case. The year also saw an awakening among the youths all over the country who started on their own a movement called 'Arms Act Satyagraha'.

Simon Commission

By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century the Indian public had become so accustomed to the idea of self determination that they no longer regarded the British Parliament as the sole arbiter of India's destiny. Hence the resentment against the all white Simon Commission which came to investigate and determine the principle of constitution for India. The Congress issued a statement proclaiming the boycott of the Commission on 14 November 1927. An unprecedented solidarity was seen among all parties in India. Wherever the Commission went it was greeted with black flags and slogans 'Simon Go Back'. The whole Government machinery was put into action to break the boycott. The nationalist leaders were brutally beaten up and put behind the bars. With the universal boycott of the Commission even the blind could not fail to perceive that whatever may be disagreement among the groups and communities, there was overwhelming agreement among them on the question of withdrawal of British power.
The Simon Commission report was unacceptable to the Congress, the Muslim League and even to the Viceroy. Hence, the First Round Table Conference was fixed on 12 November, 1930, but it failed to assuage the ruffled spirit of India.

On the other hand, to determine the principle of constitution for India, Motilal Nehru prepared an admirable report known as 'Nehru Report' which was published in August 1928. Jinnah put forward fourteen points to safeguard the rights and interest of the Muslims in any future constitution. An all party convention was held on 22 December, 1928 at Calcutta to discuss principal recommendations of the Nehru Report. Jinnah's fourteen points were put to vote and lost. Even Gandhi, an apostle of the Hindu Muslim unity, failed to notice the apprehensions of the Muslims. Consequently, Jinnah who had been a powerful and consistent advocate of the Hindu Muslim Unity, was left high and dry. He was deeply resentful and parted ways with the Congress.

All these years the Mahatma devoted himself to Khadi campaign. The Swaraj Party remained at the helm of the Nationalists so long as the Mahatma did not emerge from his voluntary retirement, but when he did in 1929, Motilal Nehru surrendered even without a show of fight. Right then, the armed revolutionaries were doing their utmost to snatch freedom by armed struggle. The land-marks of their struggle were the assassination of Saunders, the inspector of Police at Lahore and the execution of Bhagat Singh and his associates by the British
Governments. At this juncture, Subhash Bose felt that "the tactics of the Mahatma during the next twelve months were indeed superb; as he took the wind out of the sail of the Extremists by himself advocating independence at the next Congress session at Lahore in 1929."  

Civil Disobedience Movement: Salt Satyagraha

Gandhi started Civil Disobedience movement as salt satyagraha in March, 1930. The Mahatma started Dandi March with seventy two selected inmates of his ashram, but very soon the whole nation was marching with him. The Salt Satyagraha drew attention of the world, and though the Muslim League kept aloof a large number of leaders in the struggle were Muslims - Ghaffar Khan, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Maulana Azad, M.A. Ansari, K.A. Abbas and Badruddin Tyabji. Subhash Bose compared the Dandi March to the great march of Napoleon or Mussolini. Most of the important leaders were arrested all over India. Demonstration and firing followed the arrest of Badshah Khan in Peshawar. Men of Gharwal Rifles disobeyed the order to shoot and were court martialled. Peshawar was in the hands of the rebels for ten days, i.e., 25 March to 4 April 1930. Nearly one lakh satyagrahis were imprisoned. The worst incident occurred at Dharsana salt works. Three hundred and fifty people were injured, which was recounted picturesquely by Louis Fischer, an American journalist. Gandhi was arrested on 4 May 1930. The Press Act was revived, as a result 67 newspapers and 55 presses were closed. The Government's reaction was fierce. Ordinance was piled upon Ordinance while the Congress Working Committee
speeded up the boycott activities. Boycott of foreign cloth, British Banking, Insurance, shipping and at some places no-tax campaign was started. Appeals were made to Army and Police to treat the non-cooperators as their brothers. Import of foreign goods was reduced to one fourth.

Initially the Government considered the Dandi March, a mad venture on the part of a visionary, relied upon the policy of repression of agitators and the support of the pro-government elements - the moderates, the Muslim Leaguers and the propertied class to divide the nationalist forces. Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy tried to salvage the Government's position by getting the Mahatma sign a pact better known as 'Gandhi-Irwin Pact' on 5 March 1931.

In December 1930 Iqbal presided over the Muslim League Session at Allahabad and put forward the scheme of separate Muslim state; which gave a new turn to India's struggle for freedom.

The British Prime Minister announced the Communal Award on 16 April, 1932. Gandhi started his fast to protest against the Award which resulted in an agreement known as 'Poona Pact'. Gandhiji decided to call off mass struggle and retain individual Civil disobedience. Dissension in the Congress resulted in a split. A section of the Congressmen led by M.M. Malviya and M.S. Aney formed the Congress Nationalist party in 1934. Government of India Act 1935 was passed which contemplated India as a federation of British Indian provinces and the Indian states, and
though it was opposed at the Congress session held at Faizpur in 1936, elections were held and the Congress won with thumping majority. Consequently, in July Congress Ministries were formed in Madras, C.P., U.P., Bihar, Orissa and N.W.F.P. They continued working till October 1937. Maulana Azad in his book India Wins Freedom observed:

The Congress Ministries were in office - a little less than two years, but in that short period they did admirable work, settled several issues. The administration in such provinces became directly nationalistic in character, and the prestige of the Congress went up by leaps and bounds.

The people in general had the feeling that the Congress was coming to power. To counteract, the Government started inflating the ego of Jinnah so that the country may be divided if not its people. Though a vast majority of Muslims wanted a free and united India, the British propaganda throughout the world gave impression that the Muslims wanted India to be divided. The English knew it was false but they hoped that by repeating a falsehood time and again they would be able to make the world believe it.

II World War and the Indian Freedom Struggle

The out-break of the World War in 1939 aggravated the Indian situation as the Congress ministeries resigned in protest on India being dragged into the vortex of war without consulting its people. Though Bose was elected president of the Congress for the second time, Gandhian wing in the Congress put up so much of
opposition that he resigned on 29 April 1939 and organised a Forward Bloc. Feeling the pulse of time, the Mahatma in October 1940 declared that he had decided to commence resistance to the Government's War efforts. But Subhash Bose felt that the Mahatma did not put his heart in the consequent struggle.56

With the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942 the British were eager to have good-will of the Indians. In March the Cripps Mission arrived in India to secure by negotiations with the Indian Political leaders. "A sufficient body of agreement upon its policies"57. But the Indian cooperation could not be won on empty promises.58

The Quit India Movement

The Congress working committee met at Wardha and adopted "Quit India" resolution on 6 July 1942. Gandhiji in 'Harijan' interpreted it as 'open rebellion'.59 On August nine, all important leaders were arrested. Gandhiji gave his last message to the nation 'We get our freedom or die'. In fact, the Congress was taken by surprise. They neither anticipated the arrest nor made any preparations for such an eventuality.60 Serious riots erupted all over India resulting in much loss of life and property. Tarachand observes:

...to its (Government's) surprise, the movement of 1942 had nothing in common with the previous Civil Disobedience campaign. So in great alarm it just struck wildly almost panic stricken.61
The Quit India movement dispelled the British illusion that their Empire was morally justified and that majority of the Indians were loyal and desired continuation of their rule.

In December 1943 Jinnah gave the slogan 'Divide and Quit'. Though it was vehemently rejected in all quarters, including the British, Maulana Azad felt that "Gandhiji's approach to Jinnah on this occasion was a great political blunder". It gave him added importance (Gandhi gave currency to the title Qaid-e-Azam) which Jinnah exploited to the full. The wavering followers of Jinnah, seeing Gandhi running after him, developed a new respect for him which gave momentum to his two nation theory. As most of the Congress leaders were in prison, Jinnah got an opportunity to consolidate the League's position; and he warmed up his propaganda against the Congress. By 1943 Jinnah was almost a dictator, the masses followed him, the educated class, specially the students, adored him, the propertied class supported him and the men of power were afraid of him. On the other hand, the Government was all out to belittle the Congress and defame the Mahatma. Even the Labour leader Attlee told the House of Commons "I object to the dictatorship of a reputed saint quite as much as the dictatorship of a notorious sinner".

The Battle cry for Pakistan

Leonard Mosley in his book Last Days of the British Raj, maintains that the Congress considered the battle cry for Pakistan as 'synthetic and artificial' and that "It has been raised by Jinnah simply out of greed for power and a desire to
revenge himself on the Congress. The Congress felt that the British considered it a reality because it was politically convenient. The Pakistan resolution was passed in 1940. Even the best of Muslims could say that Jinnah did not mean it and was using it only as a bargaining weapon. Maulana Azad was deadly against it. Jinnah rejected C.R. Formula saying that it offered "A shadow, a husk and a maimed, mutilated and a moth-eaten Pakistan". He refused to see any reason in the arguments of the Mahatma and obstinately stuck to his demand without knowing its full implication.

The Simla Conference called by Lord Wavell failed on the question of communal representation. Durgadas wrote in The Hindustan Times an article 'Conspiracy between the British Diehard and Jinnah', where he tells that he was told by a top British that "The main reason why Jinnah did not agree to C.R. formula or Wavell's plan at Simla, was that he wanted to be the sole beneficiary of the offer."

The Interim Government

The Congress won elections to the Central Assembly with overwhelming majority and was invited to form the Government. 2nd September 1945, the day the Congress assumed office, was declared as a day of mourning by the Muslim League. Later, after much bargaining the League joined the Interim Government. A coalition ministry was formed at the centre in which the League held the finance portfolio under Liaquat Ali who did not miss a single opportunity to harass his Hindu colleagues and Hindu
industrialists and businessmen. The working of the Government became more and more difficult, well neigh impossible as the days passed. Nehru and Lumby both recorded the obstructive tendencies of the League.

The Cabinet Mission

After the Second World War it became essential for the weakening British imperialism, for its economic requirements and for its strategic plans, to find a basis of settlement in India. For the first time Labour Party was returned to power, who were officially committed to the Indian Independence. The popular upsurge within India marked by the Mutiny of the Indian Navy in 1946 which revealed the disintegration of the British authority; the Railway strike and the mass movement in its support and the heroic stand of Bombay Port and Dock workers were the express reasons for sending the Cabinet Mission to India. Attlee announced the Cabinet Mission on 23 March 1946, which stirred the Muslim League to start a propaganda for Pakistan with fresh zeal as could be seen from the fire spitting speeches of Jinnah and Firozkhan Noon.

The Mission arrived in India on 5 June, Sardar Patel said 'the freedom of India is near at hand'. Despite dissensions the Congress and the League accepted the Cabinet Mission proposals conditioned by their own interpretation of almost all controversial issues. Nehru, the newly elected president of the Congress made certain unfortunate observations which made the
League withdraw its acceptance on 27 July 1946, and August 16, 1946, was declared as 'Direct action Day'. A new slogan got currency 'Lar Ke Lenge Pakistan' which resulted in the infamous Calcutta killing. Maulana Azad in his recently published papers avers that a chance of securing a peaceful transfer of power to the united India was missed by the accident of a few political mishaps and personal mistakes in the summer of 1946; particularly the schizophrenic policy of the Congress and the unwise utterance of Pandit Nehru which reopened the whole question of political communal settlement and resulted in one of the greatest tragedies of history i.e., partition of India.

On 20 February 1947 Prime Minister Attlee announced that necessary steps would be taken "to effect transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948. It gave a fresh impetuous to the Muslim demand for Pakistan which is corroborated by Hodson & Tarachand. The political developments in Punjab infuriated the Muslim Leaguers, they spread lawlessness and rioting all over Punjab and N.W.F.P. The Congress could sense a collusion between the Muslim League leaders, the British and Muslim official in fanning the communal frenzy.

Mountbatten and the Indian Problem

At the time of Mountbatten's arrival in India the political atmosphere was electric. "The administration was infected with communalism, the economy was deteriorating, the Indian states were in a state of suspense, the Interim Government was divided
into two factions... determined not to cooperate with each other. To solve the deadlock between the Hindus and the Muslims, Gandhiji suggested that Jinnah should be entrusted with the responsibility of the Government. But, in an atmosphere reeking with communalism the Congress Working Committee failed to approve the proposal. Consequently, Gandhiji withdrew from the negotiation. Mountbatten and his advisors Lord Ismey and Abel soon realised that:

What they were doing was not so much as handing India her freedom but washing their hands off her, and once the mood of disillusionment was upon them they would listen to no voices which counselled calm reflection and deliberation.

That is the reason why Mountbatten antedated the transfer of power to 15 August 1947. After consulting Indian leaders and reviewing the situation daily with his staff Mountbatten came to the conclusion that partition of India was inevitable. Nehru accepted the partition not because he was won over by the charms of Mountbatten but because of the arguments of V.P. Menon and the irritating attitude of his League colleagues in the Government. Mountbatten overcame Jinnah's objections by bluntly telling him that it might 'jeopardise the creation of Pakistan itself'. The draft plan prepared by the 'Dickie Birds' evoked criticism from Gandhi, Jinnah and Nehru as well. V.P. Menon prepared a fresh plan in a matter of four hours which got approval of Nehru and others and in turn sealed the fate of Pakistan.
The acceptance of Mountbatten's plan by the Congress and the League closed the bitter controversy about the unity of India. Freedom was at the doorstep but the long-cherished dream of India's unity lay shattered. The Mahatma felt defeated. Still he lent his support to the resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee and saved the face of his dearest lieutenants - Nehru and Patel. Azad Observes "Greatest supporter of partition was Sardar Patel... he threw his weight in favour of partition out of irritation and injured vanity".

By 20 February the Muslim League intensified its activities in Punjab. As the Governor of Punjab took over the administration fires of violence burst forth and raged furiously in Lahore, Amritsar, Multan and Rawalpindi. As while the Rome burnt Nero fiddled, observed Tarachand, Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab either lost nerves or deliberately left the communal antagonists to fight it out. Nehru too observed this laxity on the part of the British officials. Maulana Azad was deadly against the partition as it was "accepted on the basis that in both India and Pakistan the minorities would be looked upon as hostages in order to safeguard the security of the minority in the other state" and he unsuccessfully appealed to Mountbatten not to hurry with the plan of partition. With the shadow of impending partition, individual cases of stabbing and arson cascaded on a frightening scale. Tempers of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike were frayed. Delhi was apprised of the gravity
of situation in Punjab; each time from weariness, for lack of foresight or from aversion to have another clash with Jinnah, Mountbatten chose to look the other way.

Though the partition was announced in May 1947, no plans for dividing the Indian army were made till June 1947. A people desperate to know their fate were deliberately kept in ignorance as to which country they belonged until two days after Independence. The Radcliff Award spelling out the partition satisfied none. The Hindu press described it as self-contradictory, anomalous, arbitrary and unjust to the Hindus of Punjab and Bengal. The Muslim press declared that Pakistan had been cheated and that the Award was an act of shameful partiality. Nevertheless, the Award was accepted. As the partition was effected and Jinnah left for Karachi, the Muslims in India, at long last realized that they had, through their own foolish actions, created anger and resentment among the Hindus with whom they had to live in India.

Tarachand feels that General Auchinleck's reluctance and Mountbatten's and Jenkin's failure to read correctly the signs of the coming disaster resulted in the neglect of any planning to meet the situation. In May 1947, Gen. Tuker, G.O.C. Eastern Command placed before Lord Ismey the proposal for the formation of a force consisting of the British and Gurkha battalions to keep peace but he was ignored. A British Civil servant Penderel Moon, who was in the employ of Bhawalpur State (Now in Pakistan) cried 'Cassandra Like' before the British authorities in Delhi for some immediate steps to check violence which threatened to
plunge the whole of north India in a Civil War. But, nothing seemed to jolt the authorities out of their complacency.

Punjab was plunged into a shameful tragedy marked by the bestialities and horrors on a scale unprecedented in history. The terror-striken people took to roads, railways or whatever means of transport was available to them to flee and save their lives. But they were met by murderers and hooligans who were out to loot and kill. In Bengal, as Mountbatten told, there was one man boundary force - the Mahatma who saved Bengal. The Mahatma did the miracle what 50,000 soldiers with guns could not do in Punjab.

The Problem of Princely States

There were five hundred and sixty two states in India which occupied 2/5 of the area of India and contained 25% of its population. The people of these states were also affected by the freedom struggle in British India and they were setting up organizations like Praja Mandals to agitate for democratic institutions. But as the freedom dawned, these Princes and Nawabs became painfully aware of the fact that their treaties with the British Crown were nothing more than a scrap of paper once the British paramountcy lapsed. After much tussle and heart-breaks most of the princes signed the Instrument of Accession to India or Pakistan, but there were defaulters like Junagarh, Kashmir, who were made to accede to India.
Foot Notes and References


   (i) This can be fruitfully compared to the perceptive observation of Karl Marx about Asiatic mode of production "no capital accumulation was possible in the Indian peasant economy".
   (ii) "Key to the whole East" wrote Engels to Karl Marx in June 1953, "is absence of private property in land". Both are quoted by R.P. Dutt, India Today, (Calcutta: Manisha Granthalaya Ltd, 1979), p.85.


9. Ibid. p.2.


12. Ibid. p.629.


(i) "Neill gave written instructions to major Renaud to attack and destroy all place enroute close to the road occupied by the enemy".

(ii) W.H. Russell, My Indian Mutiny Diary (London: Cassell & Co, 1957), p.368 recorded "The executions of the natives were indiscriminate to the last degree. All the villages in Renaud's column were burnt when he halted".

(iii) J.W. Sherer in Daily Life During The Indian Mutiny: Personal Experiences described similar scene along the line of Havelock's column.

15. The Friend of India, 8 September, 1858.

16. Lord Lytton in Royal Tittle Act 1876 declared "The Crown of England should hence forth be identified with the hopes and aspirations, the sympathies and interest of a powerful native aristocracy".


22. Ibid. p. 499.

Can be compared to the prophetic words of Sir Henry Maine, Vice Chancellor Calcutta University, who cautioned the new graduates at the convocation that they might have to face the opposition even from the British insularity and lack of understanding of their role in Indian life.


"I have seen youngmen (Young Government officials in India) who have sprung from London suburbs, treating in public aged Indians, noblemen in a manner which a gentleman would not have adopted towards his valet".
(i) Tara Chand, History of Freedom Movement, II, p.188. cited Cobden "The conquerors and the conquered can never live together with confidence and comfort".

(II) Ibid. p.188.

"Charles Cuthbert Hall told Bar Association Club House, New York, January 1908, "I have seen Indians of the highest intelligence, character and esteemed personal friends of mine treated in India with positive discourtesy by Englishmen".

(iii) Ibid. p.190

H.J.S. Cotton pointed out in 1908.

"We now see a state of things in which Indian community exists alone on one side while both official and non-officials are united on the other... the tallest of Indian was not safe from affront to his self respect and honours by meanest of Englishmen".

(iv) Ibid. p.216.

Gokhle's evidence before Welbe Commission echo the same sentiments: "We must live all days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority and the tallest of us must bend in order that the exigencies of the existing system may be satisfied... Our administrative and military talent must gradually disappearwning to shere disuse; till at last our lot as hewers of wood, drawers of water in our own country is streotyped".


"You are driving a coach that however grand it looks, is utterly top heavy, that the slightest jolt, a simple stone under a wheel will probably upset it". He again warned Viceroy Northbrooke "We have between us and destruction nothing but baynots" and that "Fate of Empire is trembling in balanace".

(i) Lord Dufferin suggested that formation of a political organization which would indicate the Government the defects of administration and mode of their removal, and that it should perform the same function in India as Her majesty's opposition did in England.

W.C. Bonnerjee's views were supported by Wedderburn and led Lajpat Rai believe that "Lord Dufferin and Hume engineered to create an innocuous political organization to serve as a safety valve for the escape of mounting dangers that beset the Empire".

(ii) Lord Ripon described to Colvin, the Lt. Governor of North Western Provinces, the Congress as "A safety valve for the escape of great growing forces generated by our own actions was urgently needed".

(iii) A.O. Hume wanted to take the steam out of Surendra Nath Banerjee's ship by starting a parallel organization.


(i) "The British with their scientific scapel cut the very heart, yet Lo! there is no wound to be seen and soon the plaster of high talk of civilization, progress and what not covers up the wound."

(ii) Naoroji, in a paper read before East India Association London, told "But now as the country is being continually bled its vitality and vigour must get low."

(iii) In his speech at the London India society on 1 June 1904, he suggested "There is only one remedy to the present dishonourable hypocritical and destructive system, a system that would break up the Empire if not saved by peaceful resolutions. The remedy is self-Government under British paramountcy".

(iv) In his paper before the select committee in 1878 'Poverty of India' he claimed "Owing to the unnatural policy of British rule, of ignoring Indian interest and making it dredge for the benefit of England, the whole rule moves in a wrong unnatural suicidal groves".

property at all, and as a consequence no security for life... I therefore venture to submit... to millions of Indians life is simply half feeding or starvation or famine & disease".


(i) "To England we look for sympathy in the struggle. From England must come crowning mandate which will enfranchise our people. England is our political guide and moral preceptor in the exalted sphere of political duty".

(ii) In a speech at Oxford he called England "The mother of free nations, the home of representative institutions". He was confident that an appeal made to the British people would meet "with a response of sympathy and readiness to grant it".

(iii) In 1905 Gokhale declared from the Congress presidential chair "The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interest of Indiansthemselves; that in the course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to that existing in the self-governing colonies of the Empire".


"Moderation implies the condition of never vainly aspiring after the impossible or after too remote ideals, but striving each day to take next step in order of national growth that lies nearest to our hand in the spirit of compromise and fairness".


34. Aurobindo, Bande Matram, October 1, 1906, "The first principle of passive resistance which the new school has placed in the fore-front of their programme, is to make administration under present conditions impossible by an
organized refusal to do anything which shall help either
British commerce in the exploitation of the country or
British officialdom in the administration of it".

35. Curzon Papers, Curzon to Bodrick, 1905.
36. Ibid.
time has come to demand swaraj or self Government, the
system must mend or end".
39. The Manchester Guardian, 10 January, 1906. "It is doubtful
if Russians can afford a parallel to this petty fogging
tyranny".
40. Gopal Krishan Gokhale, Speeches and Writing, (Ahmedabad:
Navjeevan, 1906), II, speech on 5 May 1906. "Not only
the officials on the spot be punished but Fuller be
removed from his post".

(ii) Amrit Bazar Patrika, 19 April, 1906. "The rulers of
Eastern Bengal have lighted a flame of discontent
in the country which will not be allayed by brute
force".

(iii) B.C. Pal, Bandematram, 1 October, 1906, 'The old
faith of the people in the British Government as a
saviour of this country is almost dead'.

68, 26, November, 1914. "...It is clear that the Indian
claim to be not a mere dependent but a partner in the
Empire".

42. Surendra Nath Banerjee, A Nation in Making, (Madras: Oxford
conflagration throughout India".
1936), p.81.

(i) "We in prison learnt to our amazement and
consternation that Gandhiji has stopped the
aggressive aspect of our struggle... We were angry
when we learned of this stoppage to our struggle at
a time when we seemed to be consolidating our
position and advancing on all fronts".
"C.R. Das was beside himself with anger and sorrow the way Mahatma was repeatedly bungling".


"Now both of us lived in the air of India, drink the holy water of Ganga and Jamuna. We both feed upon the products of Indian soil, we are together in life and death. Living in India both of us have changed our blood, the colour of our bodies have become the same we have developed a new language of Urdu... we are a nation... and the progress and welfare of the country and of both of us depend on our unity... while our mutual disagreement obstinacy and opposition and ill feelings are sure to destroy us".

He further compared the Hindus and the Muslims as 'two eyes of a beautiful bride whose face would be disfigured if either one or the other is injured'.

(ii) At Gurudaspur on 27 January 1884 he observed: 'We (the Hindus and the Muslims) should try to become one heart and soul and act in unison. United we can support one another, if not, the effect of one against the other tend to destruction and downfall of both'.


"If the Mohamadans only know their power they would not be neglected or ill treated by the Government as they now are. In England we are perpetually scared of the idea of Mohamadan rising in India".


"It is nothing less than pulling back 62 million of people (Muslims) from joining the rank of seditious opposition (Congress)".

"The communal question has no reference to religious issues they refer to spoils, percentages, seats and favours."

Abdul Kalam Azad, Presidential address: Agra, (Meerut: Mustaq Ahmad, 1921), p.14

"The seven crores of Muslims of India should so combine with their twenty crores of Hindu brothers of India, that two together should form one nation."


"I am one of those who consider the present chapter of communal bitterness as a transient phase of Indian life. I firmly hold that they will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny", and "In any case nine crores of Muslims constitute a factor which no body can ignore whatever the circumstances, they are strong enough to safeguard their own destiny."

49. M.A. Jinnah told those Muslims who

(i) Welcomed the commission "You have been fooled and you want to be fooled again, but I refuse to be fooled" and 'Simon Commission is the butchery of our souls.'

(ii) M.M. Malviya Held 'If people voted in favour of the Commission national honour would be at stake'.

(iii) Sir Tejbahadur Sapru considered "The exclusion of Indians as a deliberate insult to the people of India".


51. Tara Chand, History of Freedom Movement, III, p.310. cited Jinnah 'Between us (Muslims) and them there is an unbridgeable gulf now'.

52. Subhash Bose, The Indian struggle, p.159.

53. Ibid. p.182.

"The March of Dandi was an event of historical importance which will rank on the same level with Napoleon's march to Paris on his return from Elba or Mussolini's march to Rome when he wanted to seize power."
54. R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, p.540 cited

K.F. Nariman 'How can we induce Gandhiji to rid himself of his most incorrigible habit...his perpetual blundering of religion and politics'. He opined that the remedy lay in securing for Gandhiji, in place of Motilal Nehru, 'A plain speaking out spoken giant and not lip sealed mumies who always shake their head like spring dolls perpendicularly or horizontally, according as the Mahatma pulls the strings straight or side ways'.


58. (i) M.K. Gandhi described it 'A Post dated cheque'.

(ii) Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p.53. quoted Nehru "War has given India an opportunity for achieving her freedom, we must not lose it by depending upon a mere promise".

59. (i) Ibid.

Nehru called for "Independence here and now".


(i) M.K. Gandhi, 14 August 1942 wrote to the Viceroy "The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I had inaugurated mass action".

(ii) Ibid.

On 23 September, 1942, Gandhiji wrote again disowning the responsibility of the disorder and unrest, confused and conflicting directives of individual groups,

"I feel the Government and not the Congress are responsible for destruction that had taken place".

61. (iii) R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, (Calcutta: Manisha Granthalaya LTD, 1979), p.573. quoted G.B. Pant who declared on behalf of the Congress on 21 September 1945 'No movement had been officially started by A.I.C.C. or Gandhiji".
62. (i) Ibid. p. 513. Lord Wavell declared "You cannot alter Geography... India is a natural unit".  


V.D. Savarkar asserted "The Indian provinces were not the private property of Gandhiji or Rajaji that they could make a gift of them to any one they liked".

(iii) Subhash Bose, The Indian Struggle, p.320.  

"The plan for Pakistan was an unpractical preposition".


64. Sitaramaiyya, The History of Indian National Congress (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1948), II, p.498.


"Such a division of territories into pure and impure is unislamic".

(ii) Ibid. p.152.


68. (i) Penderel Moon, Divide and Quit, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), p.21. "Mr. Jinnah will never come to an agreement during the war. His intransigence suits us, if he maintains this attitude and keep's his hands off Punjab, he will deserve some support at the end of war".


"Jinnah was the chief beneficiary of Wavell's discomfiture... He had lowered the prestige of the Congress and succeeded in forcing the Congress to recognize parity with the Muslim League".

69. Tarachand, IV, p.399.

(i) Sardar Patel Home Member complained 'Not a chaprasi could be appointed in any department without the sanction of his (Liakat Ali's) department. In fact they were in a position to sabotage every move we took".
Voices Ragopalahari's feelings 'Liakat Ali was concerned to harass industrialists and businessmen than to serve the interest of the country'.


(i) The League block had entered the Government with the avowed object of holding the Congress in check, lest anything should be done which might prejudice the settlement of the long term issues".

(ii) Ibid. p.123.

'Nehru accused the League for taking help from the British Government and opposing the national struggle, and the British trying to make League into the King's party".


(i) Jinnah at a convention of Muslim Legislators set the tone '... There can be no compromise on the issue of Pakistan as a totally sovereign state... we will fight for it, and if necessary die for it, but take we must or we perish".

(ii) Ibid. p.34. Feroz Khan Noon incited, "... If the British force on us an Akland (United) Government the destruction and havoc which Muslims will cause will put to shame the deeds of Halaku Chengiz Khan".

72. (i) Menon, p.383. Cited Nehru's Press Conference. "We are not bound by a single thing except that we have decided for the moment to go to the constitutional Assembly and the Congress regarded itself free to change or modify the Cabinet mission plan as it thought best".


(i) 'The statement of 20th February 1947 in the context of Indian politics, was thus an open licence for Pakistan in some form or the other'.

(ii) Indian Annual Register, 1947, I, p.100. London Times "The Muslim separation is deriving encouragement from the language of the white paper".

75. Ibid. p.112 (C).

(i) As early as 1946 at the Lucknow session of the Congress Nehru asserted 'There is a mental alliance between the League and the senior British Officials'.

(ii) Moon, Divide and Quit, p.79.

Of several British officers the story was told, that appealed to by panic stricken Hindus for help and protection, they referred the petitioners to Gandhi, Nehru and Patel."

76. Indian Annual Register, Vol. 1. p.112 (F)

(i) 'There were British bureaucrats in every department of the state who were found to be mortgaging India's interest in the course of their routine duty'.

(ii) Pyarelal, Mahatma Gandhi: Last Phase, (Ahmedabad: Navjeevan Publishing House, 1958), II, pp.152-53. Cited Patel 'The way we have been proceeding would lead to disaster. We would not then have one Pakistan but several. There would have been Pakistan cell in every office'.


(i) Patel commented 'I agreed to partition as a last resort when we had reached a stage when we would have lost all'.

(ii) V.P. Menon, Transfer of Power, p.359. cited Nehru "The Muslim League can have Pakistan if they wish to have it, but on condition that they do not take away other parts of India which do not wish to join them".

79. (i) Pyarelal, Last Phase, IIpp.173-74. Gandhiji said "Anarchy was better than partition enforced with the bayonets of British army. Chaos and Civil war were not too great a price to pay for averting the division of India".
(ii) Ibid. p.210. "My life's work seems to be over. I hope God will spare me further humiliation".

(iii) Ibid.215. "I can see nothing but evil in the partition plan".


81. Tara Chand, History of Freedom Movement IV, p.520. Cited Nehru, "Where there were Congress ministries disturbances were brought under control where the British exercised authority there was chaos".


84. Tara Chand, History, IV, p.529.

"The Weilders of power should have been so unnerved as to allow unarmed and indisciplined mob to completely defy the order, wreck their evil design on the largest possible scale."