

Partition of India 1947

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Before arrival of Mountbatten to India, there held a debate in England on March 5, 1947. Cripps, defending the Government's policy said¹:

"It was unfortunate that "just at the moment when the Muslim League was about to reconsider the situation with a view, possibly, to coming into the Constituent Assembly at Karachi, events in the Punjab boiled up ... We can only hope that tolerance and good sense will bring about some settlement ... This is just another one of those factors which make it so difficult to predict the course of events ... in India today".

Winston Churchill, the leader of the Conservative Party, attacking on the "Government of Mr. Nehru", called it a "complete disaster" and insisted that "it was a cardinal mistake to entrust the government of India to the caste Hindu". Turning to the new Viceroy, Churchill argued:²

"India is to be subjected not merely to partition, but to fragmentation, and to haphazard fragmentation. A time limit is imposed - a kind of guillotine - which will certainly prevent the full, fair and reasonable discussion of the great complicated issues that are involved. These 14 months will not be used for the melting of hearts and the union of Muslim and Hindu all over India. They will be used in preparation for civil war and they will be marked continually by disorders and disturbances such as are now going on in the great city of Lahore".

On March 8, CWC in an emergency session resolved³:

"The transfer of power, in order to be smooth, should be preceded by the recognition in practice of the Interim Government as a Dominion Government with effective control over the services and administration ... The Central Government must, necessarily function as a Cabinet with full authority and responsibility. Any other arrangement is incompatible with good government and is peculiarly dangerous".

The CWC also resolved:⁴

"There has been an orgy of murder and arson and Amritsar and Multan have been scenes of horror and devastation. These tragic events have demonstrated that there can be no settlement of the problem in the Punjab by violence and coercion, and that no arrangement based on coercion can last. Therefore, it is necessary to find a way out which involves the least amount of compulsion. This

necessitates a division of the Punjab into two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part".

It may be added that the above resolution was passed demanding the partition of Punjab in consequence of the Muslim League's bid to overthrow the coalition government of the Unionist Party's leader, Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, riots and killings in January, 1947, and resignation of Tiwana on March 3, 1947, which had caused alarm among the Hindus and Sikhs of a Muslim League Raj in Punjab. About 2,000 lives had lost in the communal riots by March, 1947.

Attlee's Declaration for Transfer of Power

In view of the Interim Government not working at all, the League boycott of the Constituent Assembly, the failure of the London Conference, antagonism and disagreement between the Congress and the League, communal orgy, arson and destruction in recurrent riots leading to a state of civil war in India and law and order deteriorating fast, Attlee, in the House of Commons on February 20, 1947, had declared⁵:

"The present state of uncertainty is fraught with danger and cannot be indefinitely prolonged. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that it is their intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June, 1948" (June 30, 1948).

He also added:

"If by June, 1948, a constitution was not framed by a fully representative Constituent Assembly, His Majesty's Government will have to consider to whom the power of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the due dates whether as a whole to some form of Central Government for British India or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments, or in some other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people".

On March 8, the Congress Working Committee, welcoming the above declaration, resolved calling for the partition of Punjab and Bengal on communal lines and inviting the Muslim League to direct negotiations.

The Congress welcomed the announcement as "wise and courageous"⁶ but Gandhi remarked that it would lead to Pakistan for those provinces or portions which may want it.⁷

As Wavell failed to implement the policies properly in order to solve the Indian tangle, the British Cabinet resolved to replace Wavell by Lord Louis Mountbatten and scheduled his arrival in India on March 22, 1947.

Jawaharlal Nehru, on March 9, while forwarding the resolution of March 8, to the Viceroy, said:⁸

"... we ... have also suggested the division of the Punjab into two parts. This principle would, of course, apply to Bengal also ... Recent events in the Punjab have demonstrated ... that it is not possible to coerce the non-Muslim minority in the Province, just as it is not possible or desirable to coerce the others. In the event of the Muslim League not accepting the Cabinet Delegation's scheme and not coming into the Constituent Assembly, the division of Bengal and Punjab becomes inevitable".

Thus, the Congress accepted Pakistan, but including only Muslim majority districts. Jinnah, addressing the Muslim journalists in Bombay on March 12, proclaimed:⁹

"... our ideology, our goal, our basic and fundamental principles ... are not only different from the Hindu organizations but are in conflict ... There is no common ground for cooperation ... There was a time when the idea of Pakistan was laughed at, but let me tell you this there is no other solution which will discredit and bring honor to our people Insha Allah (God Willing), we shall have Pakistan".

There were severe riots in Lahore, Amritsar, Multan and Rawalpindi. Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab, estimated 1,000 dead and many of its multiple injured. In Amritsar, Master Tara Singh declared that the "Civil War" had already begin¹⁰, while Baldev Singh, the Sikh Defence Member, wrote to Wavell¹¹:

"I make no secret of my conviction that Muslim League's onslaught on the Coalition Ministry had been engineered in the way it was because the League had despaired of being able to defeat it by constitutional methods".

Mountbatten almost daily consulted the Cabinet in London on the thorny problems in India and opined that "the Indian leaders themselves would sooner or later realize that the retention of the Indian Army under central control was vital both to the external security of India and to the maintenance of internal law and order¹²", and planned that "he would not allow them (the Interim Government) to use British bayonets to keep law and order, but only to protect British lives¹³".

On March 13, 1947, V. Krishna Menon in London briefed Mountbatten a Congress's suggested solution on the question of Muslim League demand. He, proposing two

"Pakistans", including the districts of East Bengal which were predominantly Moslem, and certain areas of Assam, partitioning Bengal, said¹⁴:

"I believe that partition is the price that will have to be paid for any stability in Bengal ... any solution which hands over Calcutta to Pakistan, will be unstable and impractical ... On the other hand, the League has to be given a port on the East, and the solution is that as part of the compromise settlement India should build a large-sized city and port in Chittagong, that is, provide the money for it however many millions it may cost".

On March 15, Woodrow Wyatt, suggesting the transfer of Central Government system intact to the Interim Government, said that the decision taken after four days of debate in both House of Parliament was irrevocable and the only means to force the Indian to work out their own solution for themselves and that the suggestion of the Advisory Committee on Minorities will be binding on all the sections when approved by the Assembly. Regarding the granting of the right to Provincial Legislatures to formulate their views on the wisdom of forming group constitutions, he said that the entire argument about grouping should be opened all over again. He advised that the Muslim League should be "warned that if they no longer hold their portfolios by June of next year, the power will be given to the Congress Interim Government, on which the onus would then fall of reaching a settlement with the Muslim League - whatever constitution had been produced¹⁵ by the Assembly.

Syatt further says that to emphasize the British determination of power, the Government should declare that the Army could not be handed over to anyone "but a Central Government" and further "British troops must be utterly isolated from further contact with communal disturbances" so that the Indians may learn that the problem of law and order had to be dealt with by themselves. Wyatt, regarding the partition, proposed¹⁶:

" ... the British should declare unequivocally that complete authority cannot be handed over to any Provincial Government in a province where the minority amounts to nearly half the total population. The Muslim League must be quickly disillusioned of the belief that they could capture the whole of Bengal and the Punjab through our good offices. On the same principle, which might prevent complete power from being given to Congress at the Centre because the British cannot be a party to imposing a constitution on unwilling parts of the country, the Muslim League should only get control of the areas where they are in undisputed majority".

On March 15, Attlee stated in the House of Commons¹⁷:

"India herself must choose what will be her future Constitution. What will be her position in the world. I hope that the Indian people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth ... The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples".

Attlee also made it clear that the British Government "cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority" and any attempt "to persist with old methods would lead not to a solution, but a deadlock¹⁸".

On March 18, at the time of departure of Mountbatten, the Prime Minister stated¹⁹:

" ... It is the definite objective of His Majesty's Government to obtain a unitary Government for India and the Indian States, if possible within the British Commonwealth, through the medium of a Constituent Assembly ... and you should do the utmost in your power to persuade all Parties to work together to this end ... If by October 1, you consider that there is no prospect of reaching a settlement on the basis of a unitary government ... you should report to HMG on the steps which you consider should be taken for the handing over of power on the due date ...".

On March 22, 1947, Lord Mountbatten reached New Delhi, and on the same day, met with Wavell and said, "he thought there must be some strong authority to which (he has) to hand over (power) in India, and that any solution must be based on the Indian Army²⁰". Mountbatten was directed by Attlee that the transfer of power must be in accordance with Indian defence requirement, impressing the importance of avoiding a break in the continuity of Indian army and the need of continued collaboration with the HMG in the security of the Indian Ocean.

Wavell briefed that had happened since the Mission left, and the rift inside the Interim Government. In view of the short time left for the transfer of power, Mountbatten wanted some sort of solution. About partition, Wavell wondered whether "the partition of Punjab and Bengal could take place inside the Cabinet Mission's Plan²¹". As the Indian leaders were not realizing the intensity of the problem of transfer of power, Wavell advised, in order to make the leaders realize the reality, "to have a list of awkward questions which would be put to them in all discussions²²", which Mountbatten followed to reach an early solution. Besides, he also kept in mind Attlee's directives that "there can be no question of compelling either major party to accept any plan to be offered and "there should be the fullest cooperation with the Indian leaders in all steps that are taken as to the withdrawal of British power so that the process may go forward as smoothly as possible²³".

Mountbatten collected an overall information about the political situation in India. The HMG had decided to withdraw from India with or without finding a solution to the

communal tangle, which could have left a perpetual strife among the communities. To avoid this problem, Mosley had suggested the withdrawal "block by block, Province by Province" so that the "Indians would be faced with the responsibility of settling their own future and making their own peace with each other²⁴". Accordingly, Wavell had sent a plan to Attlee, but Attlee's declaration appeared without considering Wavell's scheme. Moreover, there was great upheaval in almost all parts of India. The Congress Party was demanding "Quit India" and the League had proclaimed the watchword, "Divide and Quit". In such a circumstance, Mountbatten was sent to India. Mountbatten, later on November 14, 1947, while delivering the second Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lecture at Cambridge, revealed the fact that he was sent "to expedite the withdrawal" and was given the power to make his own decisions in India, and that he was given "plenipotentiary powers²⁵".

First, he had to resolve the budgetary crisis. On March 24, 1947, the Lord was sworn in. Hemet Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan, who were the greatest rivals on the question of taxing policy. He could reach an agreement and the tax was substantially reduced. To solve the second problem of bringing about a truce between the Congress and the League for peaceful transfer of power, Lord Mountbatten had already written to Gandhi and Jinnah in New Delhi. Gandhi came, but Jinnah was ill in Bombay. Mountbatten asked Nehru about his estimates of Jinnah. Nehru gave a negative assessment, which showed his hatred against Jinnah. Nehru, submitting the Congress resolution, explained at length the need for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal, and the new Viceroy assured Nehru "to approach the problem in an atmosphere of stark realism²⁶". While Nehru was talking with the Viceroy, Gandhi, in Bihar, was declaring before 50,000 men and women: "he could not give consent to the idea of partitioning Punjab and Bengal or any other province²⁷" because the partition would make the communal trouble a permanent feature.

Next came Liaquat Ali Khan to meet the Viceroy. The Viceroy charged that the League was involved in disturbances in several provinces in order to advance their demand for Pakistan and warned him that "in their own interests they should either resign or refrain from taking any active part in the Committee of Action". On the Viceroy's question, whether the League would agree to the Cabinet Mission Plan, if the Congress adherence would be forthcoming, Liaquat Ali smilingly replied:²⁸

"Since my dealings with the Congress Members of the Interim Government, I have come to realize that they are utterly impossible people to work with, since there is no spirit of compromise or fair play in them, and the majority are thinking only of ways and means by which they can do down the Muslim League and improve their own position".

Liaquat Ali also explained that in view of the extreme communal strife, there was no chance of any united effort under the Cabinet Mission Plan. Regarding the smooth transfer of power, Liaquat Ali replied:²⁹

"I consider the position now so intolerable that if your Excellency was only prepared to let the Muslim League have the Sindh Desert, I would still prefer to accept that and have a separate Muslim State in those conditions than to continue in bondage to the Congress with apparently more generous concessions".

The Viceroy, from the disgusted expression of Liaquat, realized that the Muslim League's greater Pakistan could be reduced to its appropriate size. It seems Liaquat Ali Khan was impressed by the Viceroy's personality and expressed acceptance of Pakistan even that of 'the Sindh Desert'. Had Jinnah was interviewed before Liaquat Ali Khan, the impression could have been reversed, as Jinnah might have demanded the larger Pakistan including the six provinces, and Calcutta, and Liaquat Ali had to follow suit.

Mountbatten informed the situation to the Secretary of State, who cautioned him that he had to face the toughest Jinnah "whose Pakistan Day message suggests that even in the new circumstances he does not contemplate a conciliatory move, at any rate in the first instance" and in view of the information being received about the desirability of the partition off Pakistan as partition of India, he, giving him the green signal, said:³⁰

"... it seems to me that, in spite of its grave practical difficulties and dangers, the partition of the Punjab to such degree and in such form as will satisfy the rival nationalisms in the Province is really unavoidable from the political point of view of the transfer of authority in June 1948. If, however, we were to go for partition in the Punjab, we should, I think, have to go for it also in Bengal for broadly similar reasons".

Pethick-Lawrence anticipated that if Calcutta would be given to Hindustan, perhaps the Muslim League would not accept the solution. He, therefore, suggested the Viceroy to consult the Governors of Punjab and Bengal and from the leaders with an All-India point of view.

Patel and Azad were the other very important Congress figures. Vallabhbhai Patel, on March 4, 1947, had already written:³¹

"If the League insists on Pakistan, the only alternative is the division of the Punjab and Bengal. They cannot have the Punjab as a whole or Bengal ... I do not think that the British Government will agree to division. In the end, they will see the wisdom of handing over the reins of Government to the strongest party. Even if they do not ... a strong Centre with the whole of India - except Eastern Bengal and a part of the Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan - enjoy full autonomy

under the Centre will be so powerful that the remaining portions will eventually come in".

While Sardar Patel and Nehru had agreed to the partition inevitably, Maulana Azad still hoped that there was any possibility of a united India under the Cabinet Mission Plan and requested Mountbatten to try "deflating Mr. Jinnah, partly by flattering him and partly because he really has nothing to stand on."³² Mountbatten, finding division of opinion among the Congress leaders, was mentally perplexed. He had also heard of Gandhi's Patna speech of March 13, in which he had opposed the partition. He thought that Gandhi, like Jinnah, would be a hard nut to crack, in view of the 5,000 casualties alone in Rawalpindi riots and League's 'Swordam' being continued with a vengeance against the Non-Muslims, which was an eye opener that in case the Hindus and Muslims would be put in a country in which a fighting situation had deeply strengthened and in that case the Muslims would not be less weaker to revenge, in one province, and the Hindus in a number of provinces. Jinnah had shown the League's strength and Gandhi was indulged in watering down its ill-effects. Thus, Jinnah was sacrificing the Muslims for achieving Pakistan and Gandhi was sacrificing the Hindus by not accepting the partition as early as possible to end the communal riots. The Viceroy wondered that even in such a critical situation, Gandhi and Azad still persisted for a united India.

Gandhi arrived in New Delhi on March 31, to meet Lord Mountbatten. Maulana Azad went to see him. Gandhi remarked: "Partition has now become a threat. It seems Vallabhbai and even Jawaharlal have surrendered. What will you do now? Will you stand by me or have you also changed"³³. Azad replied³⁴:

"I have been and am against partition. Never has my opposition to partition been so strong as today. I am, however, distressed to find that even Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel have accepted defeat and in your words, surrendered their arms. My only hope now is in you. If you stand against partition, we may yet save the situation. If you, however, acquiesce, I am afraid India is lost".

Gandhi said:³⁵

"What a question to ask? If the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body. So long as I am alive, I will never agree to the partition of India. Nor will I, if I can help it, allow Congress to accept it".

The opinion of the Congress leaders was changing fastly. Sardar Patel, who had, addressing a public meeting in Lucknow, once observed: "The earth may split and the heavens may fall, but India will not be divided"³⁶, had fallen in line with the partition group, but Maulana Azad felt, "instead of removing communal fears, partition would perpetuate them by creating two states based on communal hatred."³⁷ Why Azad

avored a united India reflects his far-sightedness. He visualized that the non-Muslim majority areas in Bengal and Punjab would never agree to be included in Pakistan and, if forcibly included, would revolt and, thus, in the circumstance, Pakistan would be a weak and small country. Therefore, he preferred to live in India along with the nationalist Muslims to tie the Congress tongue to charge the Muslims disloyal to the Congress Government.

Chiefs of Staff on Defence of India and Pakistan

The Prime Minister on February 20, 1947, had also said:"Although the final transfer of authority may not take place until June, 1948, preparatory measures must be put in hand in advance. It is important that the efficiency of the civil administration should be maintained and that the defence of India should be fully provided for³⁸. Considering the defence implications of the Partition scheme, the Chiefs of Staff (India), on April 1, 1947, resolved:³⁹

- "(a) We consider that if Pakistan and Hindustan are to have separate defence forces the combined total of these forces must inevitably be greater than that of Defence Forces designed to serve India as a whole, since the administrative overheads' must be duplicated and there is no flexibility.
- (b) Pakistan covers all the important land frontiers of India and the Army and Air Forces required to defend Pakistan from external aggressors are virtually the same as those required to defend India as a whole.
- (c) It will be impossible for Pakistan to maintain defence forces of the proper size ...
- (d) Hindustan could raise and maintain the forces she needs for her own purposes without difficulty, except in the case of the higher rates in the RIN.
- (e) We consider that the proposal to have separate defence forces for Pakistan and Hindustan is economically wasteful and quite impracticable, since Pakistan is in fact quite incapable of maintaining the forces required".

These were the points which echoed in Menon's mind and he had proposed its solution, which later became the foundation stone of the partition. However, Menon added the concept of Dominion Status for two sovereign countries - Hindustan and Pakistan.

Mountbatten talked with Gandhi for over ten hours in private at five separate meetings from March 31 through April 4, during which the Mahatma put forth the suggestion he had made a year ago:⁴⁰

"Mr. Jinnah ... be given the option of forming a Cabinet ... If Mr. Jinnah accepted this offer, the Congress would guarantee to cooperate freely and sincerely, so long as all the measures that Mr. Jinnah's Cabinet bring forward are in the interests of the Indian people as a whole ... sole referee of what is or is not in the interests of India as a whole will be Lord Mountbatten ... Mr. Jinnah must stipulate, on behalf of the league ... that, so far as he or they are concerned, they will do their utmost to preserve peace throughout India ... There shall be no National Guards or any other form of private army ... Within the framework hereof Mr. Jinnah will be perfectly free to present for acceptance a scheme of Pakistan, even before the transfer of power, provided, however, that he is successful in his appeal to reason and not to the force of arms which he abjures for all time for this purpose. Thus, there will be no compulsion in this matter over a Province or part thereof ... If Mr. Jinnah rejects this offer, the same offer to be made *mutatis mutandis* to Congress".

The Viceroy staggered on this proposal and asked whether Jinnah would agree to it. Gandhi replied that he was entirely sincere in his suggestion⁴¹. Surely, Jinnah might have dismissed this proposal immediately, but Gandhi's this King Solomon solution could have appealed Jinnah's ego. However, as the proposal involved the replacement of Nehru as Premier with the Quaid-i-Azam, he was shocked and told Mountbatten that the proposal was "unrealistic" as Gandhi was away for four months and was out of touch with current events at the Centre.⁴²

When the talk between Mountbatten and Gandhi was going on, Nehru met the Viceroy on April 1, 1947, and reiterated the Congress partition plan. In response to the Viceroy's apprehension of heavy bloodshed in case of implementation of partition plan, Nehru described the continued communal tension and riots, the League's dangerous activities across the borders of Bengal into Assam and Abdur Rab Nishtar's active role being played as part of the 'Direct Action' policy. He argued that "a decision which was acceptable to most Indians and communities was the only viable one at that hour⁴³. Further when Azad met Mountbatten after Gandhi, the Viceroy said: "If Congress accepted Gandhi's suggestion, partition could still be avoided", but Nehru and Sardar Patel forced Gandhi to withdraw the suggestion⁴⁴, as a result Gandhi wrote to Mountbatten on April 11, 1947, rejecting the proposed plan:⁴⁵

"I do know that, having failed to carry both the head and heart of Pandit Nehru with me, I would have wanted to carry the matter further. But Panditji was so good that he would not be satisfied until the whole plan was discussed with the few members of the Congress Working Committee who were present, I felt sorry that I could not convince them of the correctness of my plan from every point of view. Nor could they dislodge me from my position although I had not closed my mind against every argument. Thus, I have to ask you to omit me from your consideration. Congressmen, who are in the Interim Government are stalwarts,

seasoned servants of the nation and, therefore, so far as the Congress point of view is concerned, they will be complete advisers".

However, Mountbatten talked with Gandhi on the line of Nehru's arguments. Gandhi did not object to Mountbatten's cunning suggestion for transfer of power "to the areas in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the residents in those areas". And "Broadly speaking this could make a Hindu India with a Congress Government in Delhi, a truncated Pakistan and the large States like Mysore, Travancore, Kashmir, Hyderabad and groups of States, each having separate power turned over to them, owing allegiance to a Central authority for Defence, External Affairs, communications, and possibly food⁴⁶". Thus, Gandhi was also convinced to the idea of partition, but he persisted to say that whatever the decision be taken should be implemented as early as possible. In subsequent meetings, the Viceroy referred Gandhi's acceptance of partition and told Azad that the Mahatma was not against partition. Azad was shocked to see that Gandhi "began to repeat the arguments which Sardar Patel had already used⁴⁷". "For over two hours", Azad writes, "I pleaded with him but could make no impression on him."⁴⁸

On April 5, 1947, Mountbatten met Jinnah and found him "most frigid, haughty and disdainful⁴⁹". At the time of photograph in the garden between the Lord and Lady Mountbatten, Jinnah's comment, "A rose between two thorns⁵⁰" shows his mind working faster than the Viceroy. On April 6, the Viceroy invited Jinnah and his sister at dinner. Jinnah, giving a fearful account of "Muslim massacres by Congress Hindus", said that the Congress could do anything to "deprive me of Pakistan⁵¹". Jinnah also said that if India was not divided there will be an unending riots and complete breakdown of law and order. This possibility was backed by reports received from the Viceroy's Secretary⁵². Thus, the most popular and strongest argument of Jinnah was "violence" and "riots", which proved the reality of the "Two-Nation Theory" and conflict between two cultures - the two hostile and antagonistic communities. Further, Jinnah, afraid of being deprived of Pakistan, kneeled down before the Viceroy forgetting that Christianity is the sweet poison of Islamic Faith and the same blunder is being committed by Pakistan wholly relying on the US assistance, through externally good, but internally most harmful.

Mountbatten records:⁵³

"Mr. Jinnah claimed that there was only one solution - a "surgical operation" on India, otherwise India would perish together ... He gave me an account (which worries me a great deal) about his previous negotiations with Mr. Gandhi ... He emphasized, and tried to prove from this account, that on the Muslim side there was only one man to deal with, namely himself ... But the same was not true of the representatives of Congress ... there was no one man to deal with on their side. Mr. Gandhi had openly confessed that he represented nobody ... had

enormous authority with no responsibility. Nehru and Patel represented different points of view within Congress - neither could give a categorical answer on behalf of the party as a whole ... He also spoke of the emotionalism of the Congress leaders ... He accused Congress leaders of constantly shifting their front ... They would stoop to anything...". On April 6, Lord Ismay wrote: "We are still running round like squirrels in a cage and are certainly nowhere nearer a solution than when we arrived⁵⁴".

On April 7, Jinnah met again with Mountbatten, while Lord Ismay joined the discussion. The Viceroy tried "by every means" to get Jinnah accept "the Cabinet Mission Plan and enter the Constituent Assembly⁵⁵", but Jinnah remained adamant, and said:⁵⁶

"That was impossible. It was quite valueless entering the Constituent Assembly or trying to go back to the Cabinet Mission Plan since the whole basis of that plan was cooperation and mutual trust. Now a year later, the atmosphere, far from improving, had taken a serious turn for the worse and it was clear that Congress had no intention of accepting either the spirit or the letter of that plan".

Jinnah proposed the Viceroy to hand over the power as soon as possible "preferably Province by Province, and let the Provinces themselves choose how they formed into groups⁵⁷".

On April 8, Mountbatten asked Jinnah as to what he would adopt if he were in the Viceroy's place. Jinnah immediately said that he would have accepted the demand for Pakistan and the splitting of the Defence Forces. The Viceroy, trapping Jinnah in the web of his own doctrine, pointed out that "his remarks applied also to the partition of the Punjab and Bengal, and that by sheer logic if I accepted his arguments in the case of India as a whole, I had also to apply them in the case of these two Provinces⁵⁸". These words to Jinnah came like a bolt from the blue and shook him. He became extremely dismayed and distressed, but abruptly appealed to Mountbatten "not to destroy the unity of Bengal and the Punjab, which had national characteristics in common: common history, common ways of life; and where the Hindus have stronger feelings as Bengalis or Punjabis than they have as members of the Congress⁵⁹". He also said: "this demand for partitioning the Punjab and Bengal was a bluff on the part of Congress to try and frighten him off Pakistan. He was not to be frightened off so easily⁶⁰". Jinnah left Viceroy's residence at 8.00 PM quite disturbed and distraught state of mind as a horrible shadow loomed over his grand vision of Pakistan, while the Viceroy was feeling relief that he had succeeded to mend a totally unbending Jinnah. Jinnah, however, could not feel rest and on April 9, frantically appealed to the Viceroy "not to give him a moth-eaten" and "truncated" Pakistan⁶¹". The Viceroy replied:⁶²

"I simply could not visualize being so inconsistent as to agree to the partition of India without also agreeing to partition within any Provinces in which the same problem arose".

Mountbatten continued to say that only to meet his (Jinnah's) wishes, he was going to meet the tragedy of giving up his dream of a united India. Painting a rosy picture of the greatness of India, Mountbatten said:⁶³

"Four hundred million people of different races and creeds under a Central Union Government, and all the economic strength that would accrue to them from increased industrialization, would offer India a great position in world affairs as the single most progressive country in the Far East".

Mountbatten further records:⁶⁴

"I finally said that I found that the present Interim Coalition Government was every day working better and in a more cooperative spirit; and that it was a day-dream of mine to be able to put the Central Government under the Prime Ministership of Mr. Jinnah himself".

After 35 minutes, Jinnah referred that the Viceroy had said that he wanted him to be the Prime Minister, but as he had opposed the Mission Plan, the chances were no more of it. This thought, created by the Viceroy, greatly tickled his vanity. Jinnah, in view of the Gandhi's famous scheme, had kept in mind that he would be the Prime Minister. But by that time all his hopes had vanished. Mountbatten further observes:⁶⁵

"Nevertheless he gives me the impression of a man who has not thought out one single piece of the mechanics of his own great scheme, and he will have the shock of his life when he really has to come down to earth and try and make his vague idealistic proposals work on a concrete basis".

Mountbatten, expressing his opinion about Jinnah, says:⁶⁶

"He gave the impression that he was not listening. He was impossible to argue with ... He was, whatever was said, intent on his Pakistan - which could surely only result in doing the Muslims irreparable damage ... until he had met Mr. Jinnah he (Mountbatten) had not thought it impossible that a man with such a complete lack of sense of responsibility could hold the power which he did".

However, Jinnah went back thinking the gloomy picture of Pakistan which was taking shape in the Viceroy's mind, and to dispel that shadow, he began to carve other arguments. On April 10, the Viceroy declared: "Mr. Jinnah was a psychopathic case⁶⁷".

Meanwhile, the papers and people discussed various interpretations of the demand for a partition within partition, in India and outside. *Manchester Guardian* commented: "The object in view, clearly stated by many pro-Congress journals is to reduce the Muslim majority provinces to such small dimensions that the idea of Pakistan should no longer appear workable or attractive to the most ardent Muslim⁶⁸". This observation is based on exaggeration. However, it may be a truth that Jinnah's high hopes of a grand Pakistan were raised to the ground and he was feeling secluded in corner. But Jinnah was a man of great courage and wanted to be successful in some way.

On April 10, Jinnah demanded 'viable' Pakistan citing example of Poland, which came into existence for practical reasons. The Viceroy said that he was bound to work on principles and expressed willingness to discuss only on the limitations of Pakistan, which would be "a State containing Sindh, half of the Punjab, and probably the North-West Frontier Province in one group, and part of Bengal in another group⁶⁹". Jinnah demanded the partition of Assam also. The Viceroy agreed to this without hesitation. Jinnah complained that without Calcutta, Pakistan would be economically very uncertain, if not completely unsound. The Viceroy agreed to Jinnah's acceptance that the "moth-eaten Pakistan", which he offered, was almost unworkable. Mountbatten asked Jinnah why he was not prepared "to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan, which gave him the whole of the Punjab, the whole of Bengal including Calcutta and the whole of Sindh, with complete autonomy ... a really worthwhile and workable Pakistan⁷⁰". The Viceroy tried to convince Jinnah that under the Mission Plan, he would gain much under a limited, weak and joint Centre at Delhi and would control defence, communication and external affairs while enjoying virtual independence in all his provinces. He concluded that "he had thrown away the substance for the shadow" and was going "to get an almost unworkable truncated Pakistan which would still be obliged to share a common organization at the Centre to arrange overall defence⁷¹". Jinnah stuck to his guns being totally distrustful of the Congress leadership and disbelieving that an autonomous Pakistan under the Cabinet Plan would actually work with such freedom as held out in theory. He also anticipated with fear that the so-called weak Centre could change itself into a strong Centre as no constitution was agreed upon to work for ever. On April 11, Ismay expressed his belief that "the dominating feature in Mr. Jinnah's mental structure was his loathing and contempt of the Hindus. He apparently thought that all Hindus were sub-human creatures with whom it was impossible for the Muslims to live⁷²". The news of Pakistan accepted reached to Jagjivan Ram, who informed the Viceroy that "the creed of Pakistan was being preached even in the mosques⁷³".

On April 11, Mountbatten told Nehru that Jinnah had demanded partition of Assam also. Nehru gave his consent forthwith as "this was a perfectly reasonable request and could easily be agreed to⁷⁴". Likewise, Liaquat Ali also agreed to it. He stated: "I would in no circumstances prevent the Provinces from being partitioned if I accepted the

principle of Pakistan⁷⁵". He also said: "If your Excellency was prepared to let the Muslim League have only the Sindh desert, I would still be prepared to accept it⁷⁶". Patel asserted that Jinnah could yet accept the Mission Plan and announce that the people of Bengal and Punjab might possibly revolt against partition of their provinces and desert the Muslim League⁷⁷. Patel felt happiness that Jinnah was in trouble. Azad was grieved that Jinnah did not accept the Cabinet Mission Plan, which after all gave him the right to secede from the rest of India at the end of ten years if they wished. However, Azad saw in the truncated Pakistan a disaster for the Mussalmans and Jinnah's "committing suicide⁷⁸". He tried his best that the Viceroy could make Jinnah to agree to the Cabinet Mission Plan. Since the Viceroy made all efforts for acceptance of the Plan by both the parties, the British could not be held responsible for the partition.

The Viceroy to implement his plan, had to first level the ground for coming the Congress and the league to a point of agreement, and that was partition of India and the partition of Bengal and the Punjab. The problem he faced was that he had to deal only with Jinnah, who was authorized by his Working Committee to reach such an agreement he deems fit. But, it was not so with the Congress. There were three most important leaders - Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. Further, there was the newly elected Congress President - Acharya Kripalani, who had no faith in the British and liked to call, possibly the United Nations, to arbitrate, which had disturbed the Viceroy, as the UN interference could have certainly delayed the transfer of power within the stipulated time, during which the country was sure to deteriorate irreparably. With this view, he had asked Kripalani on April 10, "Whether he as President, Pandit Nehru as a leader of Congress in Government, and Mr. Gandhi as the spiritual father behind Congress, would be sufficient for me to negotiate with when it came to proclaiming the Congress view". Kripalani failed to give any categorical answer.⁷⁹

The dramatic change in the League attitude and the Congress acceptance of Pakistan on April 11, led to the position that if Jinnah accepted the truncated Pakistan, so far so good, if not, it was better still. Arriving at this stage, Mountbatten decided to take decision. He was a man of quick inference and judgment. He had adopted the practice that as soon an interview with a leader finished, he used to dictate a resume of the talk and circulated its copy to each member of his staff, with whom he held conferences, sometimes twice and even thrice every day and their discussions on the events helped him to shape his opinion. Among his staff were the Governor-General's normal staff in India - three Secretaries i.e. Secretary (Personal), Secretary(Public) and Secretary (Reforms) besides his own staff brought from England consisting of Lord Ismay (his Chief of Staff), Sir Eric Mievil, Captain R.V. Brockman (as Personal Secretary), Lt. Col. V.F. Erskine Crum (as Conference Secretary) and Alan Campbell-Johnson (as Press Attaché).

Mountbatten's First Partition Scheme

In consultation with the above staff, Mountbatten devised a plan, which provided that "the members of the Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab should meet separately in two parts i.e. representatives of the predominantly Muslim areas, and representatives of the predominantly non-Muslim areas; and if both sections of each of these Assemblies voted for partition, then that province would be partitioned. Under the plan, in the event of the partition of Bengal, the predominantly Muslim district of Sylhet in Assam would have the option of joining the Muslim province⁸⁰". To place the responsibility of the partition on the shoulders of Indian people, he "envisaged the holding of an election in the North-West Frontier Province to ascertain the wishes of the people of that province". The Governor of the Frontier, Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe, presented a proposal to the Central Government that "fresh elections should be held so that the new members may decide about the future of the province⁸¹". The Chief Secretary, Lt. Col. de Laffarque, expressed his view that "a free and clean election in the province was more likely to return the Congress to power than the League, even if Section 93 was imposed⁸²". Therefore, Mountbatten gave up the idea of holding the elections, as that could result in Khudai Khidmatgar victory and he wanted to transfer power of NWFP to the Muslim League so as to create a barrier between India and the tribal passes which led to Russia by way of Afghanistan in view of Congress anti-Western and pro-Socialist policy, which was manifest from Gandhi's speeches in South Africa and, in 1927, Nehru's participation in the International Congress Against Imperialism and said that "the burden of freedom was heavier than that of the imperialist rule⁸³". Further, Nehru convened an Asian Relations Conference in Delhi in March, 1947, and pleaded Gandhi's view: "India wants to be independent of everybody who wants to own this country⁸⁴", which was very near to the policy of the Soviet Union.

When Nehru intended to visit the Frontier Province, Caroe was alarmed, as he pleaded that all tribals were anti-Congress and pro-Pakistan. The British had employed Pirs and Faqirs, who could be used to create unrest among the tribals. On April 20, 1946, Masood Malik Gulab Khan, for instance, had written a letter to Jinnah assuring armed help for the achievement of Pakistan and to send a Masood armed escort as Jinnah's bodyguard⁸⁵, but Jinnah had declined. However, when Nehru toured, he and his party were attacked⁸⁶.

On April 15 and 16, 1947, at a conference called by the Viceroy, Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab, opined that "partition of the Punjab would be disastrous⁸⁷". Sir Frederick Burrows, the Governor of Bengal, was against the partition of Bengal, because there were many Muslims against it and if Bengal "were divided, there was no doubt that East Bengal would become a rural slum⁸⁸". Mountbatten was put in a great trouble. On the one hand, the Governors were against the partition and, on the other, "The greater the insistence by Jinnah on his province-wise Pakistan, the stronger was the Congress demand that he should not be allowed to carry unwilling minorities with

him⁸⁹". On April 17, the Viceroy informed the Secretary of State that a "partition is probably inevitable⁹⁰". On April 17, Acharya Kripalani agreed to the partition of Punjab and Bengal "in a fair manner⁹¹".

On April 20, Jawaharlal Nehru declared: "The Muslim League can have Pakistan, if they wish to have it, but on the condition that they do not take away other parts of India which do not wish to join Pakistan⁹²", and on April 28, Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly, expressing doubt, said that the Union, under the May 16 Statement, may, perhaps, not comprise all provinces; hence, a constitution for part of it would have to be framed. He added:⁹³

"In that case, we can and should insist that one principle will apply to all parts of the country and no constitution will be forced upon any unwilling part of it. This may mean not only the division of India, but a division of some provinces".

On April 22, Krishna Menon warned Mountbatten against America's "object in India". Mountbatten proved more shrewd than Menon, Nehru's adviser on foreign affairs, while he said that Pakistan would soon build up "armed forces immensely superior to those of Hindustan" and "Karachi would become big naval and air base within the British Commonwealth⁹⁴". Menon, being shuddered, said that he would convince Nehru and Patel to request for "Dominion Status for India" instead of a "completely independent sovereign State⁹⁵".

Meanwhile, the Bengal Chief Minister, Suhrawardy, began to advocate "independent national status for united Bengal". He argued: "We Bengalis have a common mother tongue and common economic interests. Bengal has very little affinity with the Punjab. Bengal will be an independent state and decide by herself later whether she would link up with Pakistan⁹⁶". This movement lost influence as neither the Congress nor the League supported it. Moreover, the extremist Sikhs started an agitation for a separate State called "Khalistan", while a separate 'Pathan State' in NWFP, and self-determination for Muslims in certain areas in U.P. and Bombay were being mooted. It seems that the Muslims and the Sikhs underestimated the importance of independence and the seriousness of the problem for transfer of power and had planned to break India into pieces.

Serious communal outbreaks, incidents of stabbing and arson continued in Punjab disturbing conditions in Delhi. In the NWFP, the Muslim League was agitating against the Congress ministry. As Mountbatten intervened, the League prisoners were ordered to be released, but, backed by Jinnah, the League leaders in detention refused to accept their freedom. Though Mountbatten visited the province towards the end of April and calm down the agitation, but soon the Muslim League continued the civil disobedience. The Viceroy felt that if power would not be transferred soon, there would be no authority to whom power could be transferred.

Meanwhile, on April 23, Jinnah, pleading that Punjab and Bengal should not be partitioned, said, first, that it would be "a most dangerous proposition and bound to lead to trouble as it was not based on wisdom and foresight, but born of bitterness and spitefulness. It would lose terrible forces and was suicidal⁹⁷". Mountbatten records, "Without hesitation", Jinnah replied, "I should be delighted. What is the use of Bengal without Calcutta? They had much better remain united and independent⁹⁸". Secondly, in Western Bengal the Caste Hindus were only 37% of the total population, and, in case of partition, the 63% Schedule Caste Hindus would be ruined being cut off from those in Eastern Bengal. Thirdly, the "Congress wanted to seize power by a *coup d'état*. This could only be prevented by a quick decision to split the Army. The longer the Army was kept unified, the more was the position endangered. A few days before, the General Secretary of the Congress Party had stated publicly that he (Jinnah) and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan would be the first to be taken- prisoner⁹⁹". Mountbatten dismissed these arguments and Lord Ismay assured that the coup cannot be succeed but it would be possible as a result of a long drawn-out civil war. Mountbatten ceased to hear any arguments or proposals from either side, and decided to take decision.

Before final decision, Mountbatten consulted with Nehru and other Congressmen, who supported the partition of Bengal and Punjab. The Viceroy informed Patel that Jinnah had requested him not to press him to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan. Patel replied: "All right, don't ask him". The Viceroy said that history would blame him if he would not accept Jinnah's request. Patel assured the Viceroy that "history had already exonerated the British, since their statement of 20th February.¹⁰⁰ Jinnah, on the other side, refusing the proposal of unity and arguing to remain within the British Commonwealth, said to the Viceroy:¹⁰¹

"In fact the leaders of Congress are so dishonest, so crooked, and so obsessed with the idea of smashing the Muslim League, that there are no lengths to which they will go to do so; and the only way of giving Pakistan a chance is to make it an 'independent nation of the British Commonwealth, with its own army, and the right to argue cases at any Central Council on this basis".

On April 26, the Viceroy informed Jinnah about Suhrawardy's hope that "he might be able to keep a united Bengal on condition that it joined neither Pakistan nor Hindustan". Jinnah replied instantly:¹⁰²

"I should be delighted. What is the use of Bengal without Calcutta; they had much better remain united and independent; I am sure that they would be on friendly terms with us".

Liaquat Ali also informed Sir Eric Mieveille:¹⁰³

"that he was in no way worried about Bengal as he was convinced in his own mind that the province would never divide. He thought it would remain a separate state, joining neither Hindustan nor Pakistan"

Further, Jinnah tried his utmost, inducing the Sikh leaders - the Maharaja of Patiala and Baldev Singh - that they join Pakistan, while Nehru and Patel offered more as a result Baldev Singh continued to retain control over the Defence Ministry in Nehru's Cabinet. Liaquat Ali said that "Sikhistan might join up with Pakistan, and that the Muslim League would offer them very generous terms¹⁰⁴". However, Jinnah tried to avert the sub-division of Bengal and Punjab and extricate Pakistan's Northwestern provinces from the Indian Union, thus uniting the Punjab and Bengal to make Pakistan a larger country.

On April 28, *The Statesman* wrote:¹⁰⁵

"Partition of India now seems settled. The details have not been worked out, but the Viceroy who has had free conversations with leaders of political parties is expected to incorporate the results in a report next week. In all probability, Lord Ismay, Adviser to the Viceroy, will fly to London to submit His Excellency's findings to the Cabinet".

On April 30, Eric Mievill showed Jinnah a draft of a statement, which was too traumatic for Jinnah to accept. Suggesting a plebiscite absolutely necessary, Jinnah insisted that the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in Bengal and Assam should also be represented in the Legislative Assemblies. He said the whole plan otherwise "would lead to terrible complications - to confusion - bitter confusion - and bloodshed¹⁰⁶". He said that minority communities should be allowed to "move to their homelands if they wished to do so i.e. Hindus to Hindustan and Muslims to Pakistan". He also presented two proposals: (1) "the existing Constituent Assembly should be dissolved at once" as it was the creation of the Cabinet Mission Plan, which was not accepted by either party" and (2) "the power should be transferred to the provinces as they existed at that time" so that they could either "group together or remain separate as they wished¹⁰⁷".

Mountbatten's Revised Plan

The state of tension and suspicion had very much troubled the Viceroy, who, on May 1, 1947, wrote to London:¹⁰⁸

"The more I look at the problem in India the more I realize that all this partition business is sheer madness and is going to reduce the economic efficiency of the whole country immeasurably".

On April 10, Mountbatten, in consultation with his staff had devised a plan. He revised this plan and secretly sent it to London with Lord Ismay and George Abell on May 2,

when Lord Pethick-Lawrence was succeeded by Lord Listowel. Though the plan was kept absolutely secret, but it was published in *The Hindu* on May 2, and *The Hindustan Times* on May 3. The Viceroy was astonished and angry as such a leakage was serious. Jinnah complained to the Viceroy against this leakage as the plan was against the Muslim interests and that was the reason why the League papers were silent about it. However, Mountbatten reasoned that "since Patel had had disagreed with the proposal to dissolve the Congress Ministry in N.W.F.P., or to hold fresh election prior to the transfer of power as a part of the partition plan", the Sardar was "most probably responsible for this leakage¹⁰⁹". *The Hindustan Times* on May 3, commented:¹¹⁰

"For the first time, since Lord Mountbatten assumed Viceroyalty, the feeling that he may not be playing fair has come among some Congressmen and Sikh leaders. The reason for this is the Viceroy's reported attitude towards the Frontier Ministry and his plan to divide the Punjab into 12 non-Muslim and 17 Muslim districts thereby dealing a blow to Sikh interests".

However, the main features of the Mountbatten Plan were as follows¹¹¹:-

1. Both the Congress and the League consider division of India inevitable.
2. The division will involve district-wise partition of the Punjab and Bengal, and the appointment of a boundary commission.
3. Before division is carried out Members of the Legislative Assemblies of the districts concerned should be given the opportunity to decide whether they would prefer to remain in the Indian Union or have a separate State for their areas.
4. If the M.I.As. decide in favor of partition than they Will be asked to elect new representatives to a Constituent Assembly or Constituent Assemblies for their joint or separate areas on the basis of one representative for each million. The present Constituent Assembly for the Indian Union will remain intact. Only the members representing the partitioned areas will cease to be its members.
5. If partition is to take place, the N.W.F.P., should have fresh elections to decide whether its people would desire to remain in the Indian Union or join Pakistan or become an independent territory".

As the plan was published, it was a matter of wide discussion in the country. Mountbatten observing the reactions of the CWC to the proposals, reported to the Secretary of State on May 3, 1947, as follows:¹¹²

1. The Congress would have favored a strong united India but considers that the division of the country is the best solution in the circumstances. But the division should be absolute and complete since that alone will give the majority of the people of India the opportunity of building up a powerful State with a strong centre.
2. There must be partition of the Punjab and Bengal giving chance to the non-Muslim areas to join the Indian Union.
3. The method of violence used in the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and Assam to settle political issues must be put an end to. The Congress will resist to the utmost any attempt to force issues by methods of intimidation and violence.
4. The Congress has no objection to a separate Constituent Assembly or Assemblies being summoned for those areas that choose to stand out of the Indian Union but hopes that such areas will have the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they would remain independent or form union with other parts.

and

5. There is no occasion for any change in the Frontier. The last election was fought on the issue of Pakistan and the verdict having been given by the electorate the present M.L.As of the Frontier Assembly are competent to decide the future of the province".

The Viceroy in his communication had urged that HMG's approval should be communicated to him by May 10, and wanted to call a meeting of party leaders on May 17, to ascertain their reactions against his proposals, which was the first stage towards the transfer of power. The Congress left arguing but the press did not.

Challenging Jinnah's claim to Assam, The Tribune wrote:¹¹³

"Mr. Jinnah is in the habit of flying in the face of facts and figures and making preposterous demands with Hitlerian confidence and fervor. In Assam there are only 32,08,325 Muslims as against 69,96,408 Hindus and others. But in dictatorial accents he asserts that that province has a predominantly Muslim population and is a homeland of Mussalmans where the League should be allowed to reign supreme ... We are not at all surprised to find that while he says that the Muslims being one-fourth of the Indian population should get one-fourth of the Indian land, he has by including Assam, Bengal, Sindh, Baluchistan, the Frontier

Province and the Punjab in his list of Pakistan units planned to grab 40 percent of Indian territory".

On May 5, Gwyer and Mountbatten agreed that the Cabinet Mission Plan had become completely out of date. Pannikar congratulating the Viceroy said¹¹⁴:

"... he positively welcomed Pakistan, since it would enable a really strong Centre to be formed at Delhi, which the inclusion of Muslim majority Provinces would have rendered impossible".

Gandhi met Jinnah at the latter's residence on May 6, and even after a three-hour talk could not alter Jinnah's decision.¹¹⁵ On May 8, he wrote to the Viceroy to refrain from implementing any plan of dividing India. Rajendra Prasad wrote:¹¹⁶

"Mahatmaji feared that the results of that acceptance (of Partition) would be disastrous ... But when he realized that those who were entrusted with the responsibility of administration found that it was not possible to carry on and that there must either be partition or open war with the League, he decided to keep quiet and not to oppose partition in any way".

Simla Plan

On May 7, Mountbatten flew up to Simla with V.P. Menon and Mieville, taking Nehru and his daughter, Indira, as house guests, having made the Nehrus real friends with Mountbattens. On May 10, the Viceroy received approval of the plan sent through Ismay and Abell on May 2. The approval contained some important modifications, that is, to break up India into several units, which put the Viceroy into a terrible dilemma. The Viceroy showed it to Nehru the same night. Nehru was frightened. On the next morning, Nehru charged vehemently:¹¹⁷

"In the new proposals the whole approach has been changed completely and is at total variance with our own approach in the course of recent talks. The proposals start with the rejection of an Indian Union as the successor to power and invite the claims of large numbers of succession States who are permitted to unite if they so wish in two or more States".

Nehru concluded:

"It appears to me that the inevitable and obvious consequences of the proposals and the approach in them are: (a) to invite the Balkanization of India; (b) to provoke certain civil conflict and to add to violence and disorder; (c) to a further breakdown of the Central authority which alone can prevent the chaos that is growing; (d) to demoralize the army, the police, and the central services".

Nehru also denounced the British designs to converting some of the major princely States into independent kingdoms. In view of the deprivation of essential character and power of the existing Constituent Assembly, which included all elements except League, Nehru inferred an outright favor to the League and warned that it would be 'disastrous'¹¹⁸ amounting to a new and complete deadlock.

Patel's demand that all power should immediately be transferred to the Central Government for maintaining peace and order, in view of London 'approval', had no force. Nehru hoped that Jinnah would also not accept the approval. Contrarily, Jinnah announced: "The Muslim League will never agree to such a monstrous proposal as the one put forward by Mr. Patel, to restore peace, which is only a dream of his"¹¹⁹. Jinnah, raising the question of the fate of Muslims and non-Caste Hindus in the Hindu majority provinces, suggested a partition of most Indian provinces, though he knew that it would lead to their fragmentation and it could not be morally supported, but by saying so he wanted to prevent partition of the Muslim majority provinces, which, he believed, would be absolutely destructive and 'dangerous for the present but more so in the future.

However, referring the Congress and the League statements, the Viceroy hurriedly sent a telegram to the Secretary of State on May 11, saying: "You can imagine the bombshell this has been"¹²⁰, and suggested "redrafting of the plan", which Attlee in confusion upheld and asked Mountbatten to fly home immediately.

V.P. Menon's Proposal

Meanwhile, V.P. Menon, in Simla, said to the Viceroy that "the Congress would accept Dominion Status in return for a very early transfer of power". Menon, on May 1, had already conveyed to Mountbatten through Mieville that "Patel might be ready to accept an offer of Dominion Status for the time being"¹²¹. Putting Patel's condition for accepting Dominion Status, Menon said to the Viceroy that the power should be transferred in two months.¹²² Pyarelal writes that in the second half of April, 1947, it was put to Patel that "if the Congress could accept Dominion Status as an *ad interim* arrangement, it would be possible to anticipate the date of the British withdrawal. It would further take away from the Muslim League its bargaining power with the British"¹²³. This arrangement was, on May 1, was reported by the Secretary of the Viceroy also¹²⁴. Jinnah, on April 12, 1947, had already expressed his willingness to the Viceroy that he would accept to remain in the Commonwealth, while the Congress was persisting to have a sovereign independent Republic, which meant leaving the Commonwealth. But now the Viceroy, whose aim was to bring the Indian Union also into the Commonwealth, jumped at Menon's proposal. He wrote to V.P. Menon:¹²⁵

"... you were the first person I met who entirely agreed with the idea of Dominion Status, and you found the solution, which I had not thought of, of making it acceptable by a very early transfer of power. History must always rate

that decision very high, and I owe it to your advice, advice given in the teeth of considerable opposition from other advisers".

On May 7, at the Mountbatten's staff meeting, V.P. Menon confirmed Patel's and Nehru's approach. On May 8, Patel and Nehru reached there. Krishna Menon said: "Nehru is attracted to the concept, if only because it may give Mountbatten opportunity to bring his influence to bear on the more recalcitrant Princes¹²⁶". On May 10, Mountbatten held a meeting attended by Nehru, Mervil and V.P. Menon. They decided that "the Muslim majority areas should be separated from India and that the transfer of power should be to two central Governments, India and Pakistan, on the basis of Dominion Status, each having its own Governor-General¹²⁷". Nehru stressed that the transfer should be as soon as possible. The Viceroy expressed doubt that "there would for some time to come be no authorities in Pakistan to whom power could be transferred". Menon assured to solve this problem. Mountbatten, however, was anxious to say: "As far as Pakistan is concerned we are putting up a tent. We can do no more¹²⁸". They agreed that the Indian Union would succeed the British India and "Pakistan would be in the position of territories that had seceded from the parent country and would start with enormous handicaps, without an organized administration, without armed forces, without records, without equipment or military stores. It is difficult to imagine conditions more calculated to bring about a breakdown in Pakistan.¹²⁹

On May 10, the Viceroy showed a plan to Nehru, who angrily seemed to throw it but soon collected himself. Later, in a meeting on May 16, they discussed all aspects of a good plan and lastly agreed to Menon's plan of Dominion Status. Menon was called the same day and was asked to draw a draft, "Heads of Agreement", which he completed within four hours ending at 6.00 P.M., the main features of which are, as stated by V.P. Menon himself, are as follows:¹³⁰

- "(a) That the leaders agree to the procedure laid down for ascertaining the wishes of the people whether there should be a division of India or not;
- (b) That in the event of the decision being taken that there should only be one central authority in India, power should be transferred to the existing Constituent Assembly on a Dominion Status basis;
- (c) That in the event of a decision that there should be two sovereign States in India, the central Government of each State should take over power in responsibility to their respective Constituent Assemblies, again on a Dominion Status basis;
- (d) That the transfer of power in either case should be on the basis of the Government of India Act of 1935, modified to conform to the Dominion Status position;

- (e) That the Governor-General should be common to both the Dominions and that the present Governor-General should be reappointed;
- (f) That a Commission should be appointed for the demarcation of boundaries in the event of a decision in favor of partition;
- (g) That the Governors of the provinces should be appointed on the recommendation of the respective central Governments;
- (h) In the event of two Dominions coming into being, the Armed Forces in India should be divided between them. The units would be allocated according to the territorial basis of recruitment and would be under the control of the respective Governments. In the case of mixed units, the separation and redistribution should be entrusted to a Committee consisting of Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck and the Chiefs of the General Staff of the two Dominions, under the supervision of a Council consisting of the Governor-General and the two Defence Ministers. This Council would automatically cease to exist as soon as the process of division was completed".

Menon took the draft 'Agreement' to Nehru, Patel and Baldev Singh and Sir Eric Mieville to Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan. Then, the Viceroy consulted with Nehru and Patel, on behalf of the Congress; Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan on behalf of the Muslim League; and Baldev Singh on behalf of the Sikhs. The Viceroy desired their acceptance in writing. Nehru readily signed, but Jinnah and Liaquat Ali refused, though seemed to accept the Agreement in principle. On May 15, the Viceroy, showing the proposed plan, asked Liaquat Ali Khan whether the Muslim League would finally accept the partition of Punjab and Bengal. Liaquat Ali replied: "We shall never agree to it, but you may make us bow to the inevitable¹³¹". Jinnah's reaction was more negative. He said¹³²:

"The Muslim League cannot agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab. It cannot be justified historically, economically, geographically, politically or morally. These provinces have built up their respective lives for nearly a century ... and the only ground which is put forward for the partition is that the areas where the Hindus and Sikhs are in a majority should be separated from the rest of the provinces ... the results will be disastrous for the life of these two provinces and all the communities concerned ... if you take this decision - which in my opinion will be a fateful one - Calcutta should not to be torn away from the Eastern Bengal ... if worst comes to worst, Calcutta should be made a free port".

Jinnah described¹³³ also the derivation of the word, 'Pakistan' P for Punjab; A for Afghan (i.e. Pathan or NWF), K for Kashmir, the letter 'I' is not represented with any

letter in writing Pakistan in Urdu; to say that 'I' does not exist in Urdu is to express no knowledge of Urdu script; S for Sindh and 'Tan' means 'place'. If red in combining the letters, 'Pak'-i-'stan', it means 'Pure land'. However, with this meaning, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan insisted that the name of the new country in the plan should be stated as 'Pakistan'.

Thus, Jinnah had accepted the plan verbally. Mountbatten flew to London on May 18, 1947. On May 18, Mountbatten informed Attlee and his Cabinet colleagues; "It had become clear that the Muslim League would resort to arms if Pakistan in some form were not conceded¹³⁴".

Demand for a Corridor

When Reuters interviewed, on May 20, Jinnah demanded an 800-mile long "corridor" to link West and East Pakistan, promising a "really beneficial" relationship between Pakistan and Britain, and offering "Hindustan" a "friendly and reciprocal alliance¹³⁵" and wired the Cabinet that "before Bengal and the Punjab were partitioned, a referendum should be held in each province to determine will of its people in this vital regard¹³⁶". The Viceroy went against it and said that it "would merely result in delay¹³⁷", to which the Cabinet agreed.

Krishna Menon flew on May 21, to London to inform Mountbatten that Nehru and Patel were "ready to accept" Dominion Status if it were offered to India in 1947. Nehru wrote to Mountbatten from India House in the message¹³⁸:

"If Mr. Jinnah wants a total separation, and that straight away, and if we agree to it for the sake of peace and dismember our country, we want to be rid of him, so far as the affairs of what is left to us of our country are concerned. I feel sure you will appreciate this, and also that it is not a matter of detail, but is fundamental". In view of Jinnah's claim, the Congress had begun fear that they would lose the Eastern Punjab and Sikh support as well as Western Bengal and Calcutta and also more of the princely states especially Hyderabad and Bhopal. At last, tired of arguing, Nehru conceded Pakistan on the theory that by "cutting off the head we will get rid of the headache¹³⁹".

When Mountbatten reached London, the Independence of India Bill was to be discussed by the British Parliament. Attlee feared that the opposition of Churchill and his Conservative Party could delay the finalization of the Bill in a prolonged and acrimonious Commons debate. Therefore, Mountbatten went to seek Churchill in bed. Churchill advised: "To begin with you must threaten. Take away all British officers. Give them military units without British officers. Make it clear to them how impossible it would be to run Pakistan without British help". This was a Churchill's "personal message" to Jinnah. "This is a matter of life and death for Pakistan, if you do not accept this offer with both hands¹⁴⁰". However, Churchill assured support of the Opposition.

In India, at the same time, Jinnah had created differences among the members of the Interim Government on the question of partition of Punjab and Bengal and Corridor, and the Congress was opposing more violently than the inclusion of Calcutta in East Pakistan. *Dawn*, the League's spokesman, on May 22, wrote: " We shall fight against partition of Pakistan, splitting of Provinces detrimental to interests of all, corridor to link east and west Muslim areas essential". *The Hindustan Times*, taking side of the Congress, retorted on May 23: "If existence of Pakistan is dependent on the corridor, it will never come into being".

Jinnah and Nehru were being kept informed of the deliberations going on in London. The Viceroy's opposition to "referendum" invoked Jinnah to assert that the Muslim League "would never agree to any change in the position, functions or powers of the present Interim Government either by convention or otherwise, and that the Interim Government must be dissolved as soon as the two Constituent Assemblies were formed, and all power immediately transferred to them". Demanding justice to the 100 million Muslims, Jinnah charged that "in spite of his very strong objections, the partition of Bengal and the Punjab was being contemplated at London¹⁴¹". Nehru strongly reacted and said: "It is clear, however, from what Mr. Jinnah says that he does not accept the very basis of the proposals with regard to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab ... He has also added a demand for a corridor from the North-West to the North-East. In view of the attitude taken up by Mr. Jinnah, we cannot give a one-sided agreement to any proposal which does not lead to a full settlement¹⁴²". Nehru further argued that if he did not accept the partition of the two provinces, he must agree to a united India under the Cabinet Mission Plan. Further, he rejected the League's claim that it had right to deny 'powers to the Interim Government' under the Dominion Status, since "Dominion Status necessarily carried this right; otherwise it is not Dominion Status¹⁴³". He wrote to the Attlee Government:¹⁴⁴

... during the past few years it has been our repeated experience that Mr. Jinnah does not commit himself to anything and does not like coming to a settlement. He accepts what he gets and goes on asking for more. We have arrived at a stage when this kind of thing will do good to nobody, and we are not prepared to have one-sided commitments in future".

However, Mountbatten's staff in Delhi informed him that there was not much substance in Jinnah's outbursts, which he aimed to create for himself a strong position to negotiate the details. The staff also reported that Jinnah was "unlikely to throw away the chance of getting a limited Pakistan in an attempt to get the whole¹⁴⁵". Rajendra Prasad and Sankar Rao Deo criticized the demand for 'corridor'. The *Dawn* propounded:¹⁴⁶

"The demand for a corridor is not a new one. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah has many times in the past raised that point which is so vital in the context of Pakistan. If

Pakistan is to be real, solid and strong the creation of a corridor linking up its eastern and northern areas is an indispensable adjunct. Be that as it may, we have no doubt, however, that if Muslims can win Pakistan - as indeed they have already won it - they can just as well build a corridor somewhere for the linking up of the two segments of Pakistan".

Nehru replied:¹⁴⁷

"I regret, I cannot enter into public controversy with Mr. Jinnah at this stage when vital matters are under consideration and final decisions are going to be taken ... The demand for a corridor is fantastic and absurd. We stand for a Union of India with the right to particular areas to opt out. We envisage no compulsion. If there is no proper settlement on this basis without further claims being advanced, then we shall proceed with making and implementing the constitution for the Union of India".

From May 25, Gandhi began to preach his thesis of a united India declaring, if necessary, to impose the Mission Plan by force.

Mountbatten returned to India on May 31, 1947. On the same day he issued a circular to all Provincial Governors briefing them their last phase of duties: "The posts of Governors will continue ... but they may have to be replaced if there is a demand for a change ... If the Punjab and Bengal are partitioned there will have to be new Governors for the two new Provinces¹⁴⁸". The Governors of Bengal and Punjab were asked to ascertain the wishes of their legislatures regarding partition. The Governor of NWFP was directed to prepare for a referendum. Then he drafted his personal message to the people of India. This shows his firm determination to manage transfer of power as early as possible as he thought that the parties might repeat their arguments and also there was very real risk of escalating violence and bloodshed.

On May 18, Gandhi had asserted¹⁴⁹:

"If we confront madness by sanity, their madness will go, the Pakistan demand will go, or the whole of India will become Pakistan - if Pakistan means what its name implies, the land of pure".

On June 1, 1947, Gandhi in a state of great mental anguish said¹⁵⁰:

"Today I find myself all alone. Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to return if Partition is agreed upon ... They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention or British rule Let it not be said that Gandhi was party of India's vivisection ...".

On Monday, the June 2, 1947, the Viceroy held a conference of seven. The Indian leaders went to the Viceroy's house in New Delhi: Liaquat (ML) and Nishtar (Pakhtoon) accompanying Jinnah; Patel and J.B. Kripalani (Congress President for the year) with Nehru; and Baldev Singh representing the Sikhs. The Viceroy expressed distress over the impending partition of the Punjab, which was inevitable, because "if attempts were made to work for the national partition on any principle other than division between the majority Muslim and majority non-Muslim areas¹⁵¹", its consequences were to be very frightful. He assured that the Boundary Commission would take the Sikh interests into consideration.

The suggestion for holding a referendum over the future of Calcutta was considered meaningless, because in the Calcutta riots, the Scheduled Castes had taken sides with the Hindus. Therefore, it was sure that the Scheduled Castes would support the Hindu candidate.¹⁵²

The Viceroy announced that Independence of India Bill would be passed, transfer of power would be implemented, and Dominion Status would be implemented very soon, as the British had committed to help India obtain power as early as possible.

The leaders were then given the draft of the Partition Plan¹⁵³ for study and getting approved from their Working Committees. Nehru said: "there could never be complete approval of the plan from Congress, but, on the balance, they accepted it¹⁵⁴". Nehru and Sardar Patel committed themselves to the plan, step by step, without consulting the Congress President and they had taken the responsibility upon themselves because of the peculiarity and urgency of the situation.

Sardar Patel was the greatest supporter of partition "out of irritation and injured vanity", because he was frustrated by Liaquat Ali Khan as Finance Minister, who vetoed his proposals at every step. He was convinced "that the new State of Pakistan was not viable and could not last ... Pakistan would collapse in a short time and the provinces which had seceded from India would have to face untold difficulty and hardship¹⁵⁵".

The Sikh leaders did not conceal their anger against the partition of Punjab. Master Tara Singh exhorted his followers "to go out and smite the Amalekites", distributed inflammatory leaflets and instructed the Sikhs to prepare themselves for action. They planned to attack trains, dynamite head-works, ambush refugees, drive Muslims from their homes and to assassinate Jinnah in Karachi on August 14. Jenkins saw, a few miles away from Amritsar, three hundred Sikhs drilling with rifles and tommy-guns. Their targets were "dummies of Muslim men, women and children¹⁵⁶".

Jinnah refused to sign consent as the Muslim League was a democratic organization and, hence, he pleaded: "he and his Working Committee would have to go before their

masters, the people, for a final decision¹⁵⁷". It was Jinnah's vain argument because the ML Working Committee had already authorized him to take decision himself whatsoever he would like suitable. Mountbatten characterized him a dictatorial in the garb of a true democrat. However, the Viceroy impressed upon him that there should not be 'No' from the League¹⁵⁸. Jinnah, however, from his own side was right to take decision of the ML Working Committee on such an important matter thus, he did not like to be wholly responsible for the partition Jinnah visited the Viceroy, as promised, at 11.00 P.M. and about the acceptance of the plan, he used the word, 'hopeful' and said that he has called an urgent meeting of the AIML Council next Monday. The Viceroy realized that so much delay would be absolutely fatal to his aim at that stage. Mountbatten reports: "I finally asked him whether he felt I would be justified in advising the Prime Minister to go ahead and make the announcement, to which he replied very firmly, "Yes¹⁵⁹". Actually, he was using the tactic of delaying the matter.

The Viceroy, immediately after the conference on June 2, communicated the approval of the plan by all parties to London. It may be worthwhile to mention that the Viceroy in his draft of the partition plan sent to London had hinted that "the great decisions regarding India's future had Gandhi's implicit approval, and were in harmony with his noble principles of the supremacy of popular will and non-coercion of others¹⁶⁰". The Secretary of State scented trouble in case Gandhi disapproved the plan. Therefore, Attlee cabled to Mountbatten¹⁶¹:

"Quite apart from technical difficulties I feel that it would be preferable not to make two insertions you propose. We do not feel sure that Gandhi would unreservedly accept either proposition and experience in past suggests that it is dangerous to attribute opinions to him. It seems Gandhi is at logger-heads with Working Committee at the moment and it may be that anything you achieve will be result of Working Committee rejecting Gandhi's opinions. If that is position your reference to him may give Gandhi a platform for some public reply which will embarrass Congress leaders and may even harden stability of any settlement. I have consulted Prime Minister who concurs. Please let me know whether you agree".

In view of the above direction from home, Mountbatten decided to omit Gandhi's name from his announcement.

However, soon after the conference, Mountbatten saw Gandhi, who was preaching in his prayer meetings against the idea of partition. The Viceroy "pointed out those features in the plan which conformed to Gandhi's ideas" and in the end "he was able to persuade Gandhi that the plan was best in the circumstances¹⁶²". June 2, 1947, was Gandhi's 'Day of Silence'; hence, he in a friendly note assured the Viceroy of his support. On the same day, the CWC decided to accept the plan. Kripalani, the Congress President, wrote a long letter to the Viceroy. He stated: "This is dependent on the

acceptance of the proposals by the Muslim League and a clear understanding that no further claims will be put forward¹⁶³".

On June 3, 1947, Mountbatten, making futile efforts to make Jinnah accept the plan, said to him:¹⁶⁴

"If that is your attitude, then the leaders of the Congress Party and Sikhs will refuse final acceptance at the meeting in the morning; chaos will follow, and you will lose your Pakistan, probably for good".

Mountbatten also told him, "Mr. Jinnah, I do not intend to let you wreck all the work that has gone into this settlement¹⁶⁵". Jinnah replied: "What must be, must be". Then, the Viceroy persisted to say:¹⁶⁶

"Since you will not accept for the Moslem League, I will speak for them myself ... I have only one condition, and that is that when I say at the meeting in the morning, 'Mr. Jinnah has given me assurances which I have accepted and which satisfy me', you will in no circumstances contradict that, and that when I look towards you, you will nod ...".

Jinnah replied favorably to the proposition. The conversation infers that "neither the Muslim League nor Jinnah accepted the decision of partition better known as the "Plan of 3rd June¹⁶⁷". Thus, whether the Viceroy grabbed this initiative or the Muslim League gave this authority to him is still an untold story.

Baldev Singh, accepting the plan for partition of Punjab, stressed that "care should be taken to meet their demands when framing the terms of reference for the Boundary Commission¹⁶⁸".

Acceptance of the Partition Plan by the Indian Leaders

On June 3, 1947 (morning), the Viceroy held a conference with the leaders and said that he had received written assurances from the Congress and the Sikhs, and a verbal assurance from the Muslim League. He turned towards Jinnah, who nodded in assent and, thus, concluded that all the parties have agreed to the partition plan¹⁶⁹. Mountbatten observed that "the plan represented as near 100% agreement as it was possible to get, and that in his judgment, what was being done was in the best interest of the people of India¹⁷⁰". As best way to implement the partition, the Viceroy requested the leaders to transcend all feelings of past hostility and appealed to them to request their followers to refrain from speeches of recrimination to avoid violent reactions.

Regarding acceptance of the partition plan by Gandhi, Patel opined that "once the decision was taken, Mr. Gandhi would accept it loyalty¹⁷¹". The Viceroy also hoped that since the decision were taken, Gandhi would re-emphasize the need for non-violence.

Liaquat Ali charged that Gandhi's recent statement that "the people should not look to the Viceroy and the leaders for a decision" instead they should "do as they felt"¹⁷², suggested the people to protest if they felt that India should not be divided. Patel replied that "no such inference could be drawn from Gandhi's utterances"¹⁷³. Jinnah thought that Gandhi's such statements would make an impression go round that the people should not agree to the decisions taken by the present conference. Therefore, he advised that although Gandhi's intentions might be the best, but "in fact the language which he had adopted recently had insinuated that Muslim League were going to get Pakistan by force"¹⁷⁴. The Viceroy did not allow further discussion on Gandhi's acceptance of the partition plan, but he expressed hope that Patel and Nehru would influence the Mahatma to accept the inevitable. In the course of discussion, Jinnah "reiterated his personal support to him (Viceroy) and promised to do his best to get the plan accepted by his followers"¹⁷⁵. The Viceroy made it clear that the Partition Act should be implemented not later than August 15, 1947. He felt that the leaders were thinking only about the implementation of partition plan and not about the problems ahead. He observed:¹⁷⁶

"It was clear from the reactions at the meeting that none of the leaders present had even begun to think of the complications with which we are all going to be faced. Perhaps this is lucky, since it will enable us to hold the initiative in Viceroy's House during the coming difficult period".

Churchill's Statement

Immediately after the morning conference, Mountbatten communicated to the Secretary of State the assurances given by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh about the acceptance of the partition plan and, in consequence, Attlee announced the plan in the House of Commons on June 3 (day), which came to be known "the June 3rd Plan". Speaking on behalf of the Opposition, Churchill said that the two conditions *i.e.* "agreement between the Indian parties, and a period of Dominion Status in which India or any part of it might freely decide whether to remain in the British Commonwealth or not "would be fulfilled by the proposal. He assured that the Opposition "would not oppose any Bill to confer Dominion Status on the various parts of India on the basis of HMG's Statement"¹⁷⁷.

Mountbatten's Announcement

On June 3 (Evening), Mountbatten broadcast over the All-India Radio. Highlighting the cause of partition, he said:¹⁷⁸

"To my great regret it has been impossible to obtain agreement either on the Cabinet Mission Plan, or on any plan that would preserve the unity of India. But there can be no question of coercing any large areas in which one community has a majority to live against their will under a Government in which another community has a majority. And the only alternative to coercion is partition".

Mountbatten further said that the League demanded partition of the country while the Congress demanded, in the event of partition of India, partition of certain Provinces also. These arguments were unassailable because neither of the parties were willing to leave a substantial area in which their community had a majority. Expressing his grief on account of the partition, he said: "I am, of course, just as much opposed to the partition of Provinces as I am to the partition of India herself¹⁷⁹". However, he said, that the people of India should decide the question of partition themselves.

Regarding the procedure enabling the Indians to decide themselves as to whether they want the British to hand over power to one or two Governments was set out in the Statement. He made it clear that though the people of Punjab, Bengal and part of Assam would lay down the boundaries between the Muslim majority areas and the remaining areas, but ultimate decision would be taken by a Boundary Commission. Considering the Sikh position, Mountbatten said¹⁸⁰:

"This valiant community forms about one-eighth of the population of the Punjab, but they are so distributed that any partition of this Province will inevitably divide them. All of us who have the good of the Sikh community at heart are very sorry to think that the partition of the Punjab, which they themselves desire, cannot avoid splitting them to a greater or lesser extent. The exact degree of the split will be left to the Boundary Commission on which they will of course be represented".

The Viceroy further announced that HMG's Government had decided to "transfer power immediately to one or two Governments of British India, each having Dominion Status" and that the HM Government had already taken in hand the drafting of the necessary legislation, which would be introduced in the Parliament during the current session. He further said that HM Government had no intention to impose the legislation "either on India as a whole, or on the two States if there were partition, to decide in the future their relationship to each other and to other member States of the British Commonwealth¹⁸¹". The Viceroy's speech as followed by His Majesty's Government's Statement confirming the Plan.¹⁸²

Indian Leaders Broadcast

After the Viceroy, Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh broadcast their speech. Nehru, referring the Viceroy's announcement, said¹⁸³:

"It envisages, on the one hand, the possibility of these areas seceding from India; on the other, it promises a big advance towards complete independence. Such a big change must have the full concurrence of the people before effect can be given to it, for it must always be remembered that the future of India can only be

decided by the people of India, and not by any outside authority, however friendly".

About the acceptance of the Plan, Nehru said that the proposal would soon be placed before representative assemblies of the people for consideration and they had accepted the plan and recommend the people to accept.

After Nehru, Jinnah in the broadcast said that "we must galvanize and concentrate all our energies to see that the transfer of power is effected in a peaceful and orderly manner. I most earnestly appeal to every community and particularly to Muslim India to maintain peace and order¹⁸⁴". Jinnah without giving clear acceptance of the Plan, said:¹⁸⁵

"the Plan does not meet in some important respects our point of view; and we cannot say or feel that we are satisfied or that we agree with some of the matters dealt with by the Plan. It is for us now to consider whether the Plan as presented to us by His Majesty's Government should be accepted by us as a compromise or a settlement".

Regarding acceptance of the Plan by the AIML, Jinnah said that he had called the AIML Council to meet on Monday, 9th of June, and was hopeful of the acceptance of the Plan by the Council. Commending the Viceroy, he said that Mountbatten "was actuated by a high sense of fairness and impartiality" and the people should help his mission of transferring power in a peaceful and orderly manner. He further said that according to paragraph 11 of the Statement, a referendum would be made to the electorates of the then Legislative Assembly in the NWFP and they would choose which of the two alternatives in paragraph 4 they would like to adopt, that is, whether they would join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly or the Hindustan Constituent Assembly. He requested the "provincial Muslim League of the Frontier to withdraw the movement of peaceful civil disobedience which they had perforce to resort to" and expressed confidence that the people of the Frontier would vote to join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly.

Baldev Singh expressed acceptance of the plan reluctantly. He characterized the plan a settlement and not as a compromise. He said the plan "does not please everybody, not the Sikh community anyway, but it is certainly something worthwhile. Let us take it at that¹⁸⁶".

Viceroy's Press Conference

The Viceroy addressed a press conference on June 4, 1947. He emphasized that "independence through Dominion Status was complete and that the different administrations were at liberty to opt out of the Commonwealth whenever they pleased¹⁸⁷". Of the numerous questions, three were of special interest: (1) What would

happen if the Muslim League rejected the plan (2) Whether the basic determining factor in drawing the boundaries of the provinces would be the communal majority of the population, or whether other considerations, such as, property, economic viability, etc. would also be included in the terms of reference? and (3) What would be the method of referendum in the NWFP. Replying the first, the Viceroy said that it was a 'hypothetical question'. As regards the second, His Majesty's Government would not agree the partition on the basis of landed property. With regard to the third, the Viceroy said that there were heavier minority weightage *i.e.* 12 seats out of 50, though they were 5% of the population. He assured that the referendum would be perfectly straightforward under supervision of the British officers, selected by him, who would be completely impartial. On the question of immediate devolution of power on the basis of Dominion Status under paragraph 20, the Viceroy explained that under the British Commonwealth of Nations each State would be completely independent to decide their own future and they cannot be forced to stay in if they wanted to go out. He explained the term 'Dominion Status' as 'absolute independence in every possible way, with the sole exception that the member States were linked together voluntarily¹⁸⁸'. Further, in an answer to a question regarding the British withdrawal in June, 1948, the Viceroy said: "The date of the transfer of power is going to be much earlier ... I think the transfer could be about the 15 August¹⁸⁹".

On June 4, Mountbatten met Gandhi also and convinced him that all the salient features of the plan had been based on the principle suggested to him by the Mahatma himself¹⁹⁰. The Viceroy told Gandhi that in earlier days he was not averse to Dominion Status. Gandhi agreed and later sent to the Viceroy a copy of *Harijan* dated December 16, 1939, containing the words: "Similarly, I have said to a friend that if dominion status was offered, I should take it, and expect to carry India with me¹⁹¹". However, Gandhi, who had been preaching in his prayer meetings for the united India, was also approached by Krishna Menon and V.P. Menon, as advised by the Viceroy, and, at last, he never afterwards openly opposed the Viceroy's plan.

On June 5 (morning), Mountbatten held a leaders in his office. Jinnah was at pains to would be independent and equal in every way¹⁹²". dissident Provinces, which were to be allowed interrupt the work of the Government of India On the one hand, there was still suspicion in and the League leaders and, on the other, the meeting with the political explain that both States Nehru said that the to secede, must not or its foreign policy. the hearts of the Congress Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha, which met in Delhi, resolved with stress calling even for an all-India 'Anti-Pakistan Day¹⁹³:

"India is one and indivisible and there will never be peace unless and until the separated areas are brought back into the Indian Union and made integral parts thereof".

Further, the Khaksars, a group of militant Muslims, who demanded a Pakistan stretching from Karachi to Calcutta, staged demonstrations at the AIML Council meeting in Delhi (June 9-10, 1947). Moreover, the Communists, who had been backing Jinnah's demand for Pakistan, changed their attitude and said that "partition and Dominion Status together would enable Britain to maintain her control over India¹⁹⁴", but they did not explain as to how it would be possible. Perhaps, they meant that India and Pakistan being member of the British Commonwealth of Nations would always seek economic and technical assistance for development purposes and, thus, would indirectly be controlled by the British. They might have anticipated the British neo-colonialism in India. However, the partition and independence plan were much applauded by the press in India and abroad. Walter Lippmann wrote in *The Washington Post*: "Attlee and Mountbatten have done a service to all mankind by showing what statesmen can do not with force and money but with lucidity, resolution and sincerity¹⁹⁵". The Guardian reported that the partition of India was not imposed by the British Government and hoped India and Pakistan would unite and "there is the possibility that Moslem and Hindu Bengal may reunite to form a separate Bengali nation". But in view of the previous notorious, inefficient and unstable government, a "separation of Hindu and Moslem Bengal may produce a healthier political life". Further, though the Moslem Pathans regarded the Moslem Punjabis as their ancestral enemies, they would possibly decline to unite with the Punjab and "prefer to federate with the more distant Hindustan¹⁹⁶".

In a meeting on June 7, 1947, with the seven leaders, the Viceroy discussed the problem and procedure for transfer of power. Jinnah did not like to leave the territorial division in the charge of Nehru-Patel dominated Government, was anxious to know the members of the Boundary Commissions, and was fearful of the principles by which the boundaries were to be demarcated. The Viceroy assured that the Commission would be appointed by the U.N.O. with the representatives of the Congress and the league and other parties as, expert assessors¹⁹⁷. Nehru, on June 10, opposing the 'principle of population transfer' said that it was impossible to transfer the Sikh religious shrines in India. He, in other sense, wanted the Indian boundary including the Sikh religious places. The Viceroy assured that Jinnah had promised Sikh access to their religious shrines, but Patel doubted the validity of Jinnah's undertaking¹⁹⁸.

Last AIML Meeting, Delhi

The AIML meeting held on June 9-10, 1947, in New Delhi's Imperial Hotel, attended by 425 delegates, to consider the Mountbatten's plan of partition, when a group of militant Muslims - orthodox Mullahs, mighty landed barons who had to lose from the Punjab partition, and mercantile magnates who opposed the giving of Calcutta to their Hindu rivals cried out angrily against the plan calling it "betrayal" and a "tragedy for Pakistan". On June 9, Khaksars rushed into the hotel lounge "brandishing *belchas*, or sharpened spades ... shouting 'Get Jinnah'. Before the League National Guards could turn them back, the police tear-gassed to bring the disturbance to an end¹⁹⁹. About fifty Khaksars

would-be assassins of Jinnah were arrested. Jinnah, however, continued the proceedings of the meeting untrammelled by the disturbance on the ground floor. The Khaksar demonstrators clashed with the Muslim League National Guards, "broke furniture and smashed glass panes ... a few persons sustained injuries²⁰⁰". Inside the grand ballroom, Jinnah, when he was hailed as "Shahanshah-e-Pakistan" (Emperor of Pakistan), insisted to say: "I am a soldier of Pakistan, not its Emperor". However, the League Council gave "full authority to President Quaid-i-Azam M.A. Jinnah to accept the fundamental principles of the Plan as a compromise, and to leave it to him, with full authority, to work out all the details of the Plan in an equitable and just manner²⁰¹ ...".

The Congress protested against the League resolution using the word "compromise" and demanded the announcement by the League as a "settlement²⁰²".

On June 12, the first meeting of the Interim Government was held. There was almost a fight between Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan when the Congress forced to appoint Nehru's sister, Madame Pandit, as an ambassador. The leaders went so mad that they did not care when the Viceroy shouted: "Gentlemen, what hopes have we of getting a peaceable partition if the first discussion leads to such a disgraceful scene as this²⁰³". Mountbatten realized that the Indians' nature and habit cannot be assessed by their education and intellect and sensed fear that the plan might collapse, and hurried to make arrangement for transfer of power, and to leave India as early as possible.

On June 14, a joint conference of Sikh organizations in Lahore, welcomed the division of the Punjab. The AICC meeting in Delhi ratified the CWC acceptance of the plan with 29 votes in favor and 15 against²⁰⁴, which revealed the thinking of the people en masse. They accepted the partition resolution with heavy heart and mental reservations. It was inevitably accepted due to insidious communal propoganda, while there was being said that "the Hindus in Pakistan need have no fear as there would be 45 millions of Muslims in India and if there was any oppression of Hindus in Pakistan, the Muslims in India would have to bear the consequences²⁰⁵".

Between June 19 and 23, Mountbatten visited Kashmir. On June 20, Bengal Legislative Assembly opted for partition. On June 23, Punjab Legislative Assembly also opted for partition. On June 26, Sindh Legislative Assembly and Baluchistan Legislative Assembly opted to join Pakistan. In July, Sylhet decided to join East Bengal and NWFP to join Pakistan. On June 27, Jinnah reported: "Thus, we can now look upon the creation of Pakistan on the 15th August as legally decided upon²⁰⁶". On July 2, Mountbatten showed the draft Indian Independence Bill to the Indian leaders. Jinnah told Mountbatten that he himself desired to be Governor-General of Pakistan. On July 4, the Indian Independence Bill was introduced into the House of Commons. On July 10, a debate on second reading of Indian Independence Bill in the House of Commons was held. C.R. Attlee, refuting the charge that the communal problem in India was "created by ourselves in order to perpetuate our own rule", said that they "have all wanted to

maintain the unity of India, to give India complete self-government and to preserve the rights of minorities", but it was found unpracticable. However, he hoped that "this severance may not endure, and that the two new Dominions which we now propose to set up may, in course of time, come together again to form one great member State of the British Commonwealth of Nations²⁰⁷".

On July 16, the Indian Independence Bill was passed at its third reading. On this occasion, Lord Listowel, describing the deadlock between the Congress and the League as a formidable obstacle in the path of constitutional advance, hoped that "when the disadvantages of separation have become apparent in the light of experience, the two Dominions will freely decide to reunite in a single Indian Dominion²⁰⁸". On July 18, the Indian Independence Act received the Royal assent, as a result on July 19, Mountbatten announced establishment of two separate provisional governments, one for India and the other for Pakistan.

The Hindustan Times commented: "When it is placed on the Statute Book, the Indian Independence Act, 1947, will rank as the noblest and the greatest law ever enacted by the British Parliament²⁰⁹". The *Dawn* wrote: "On the eve of independence of the peoples of India, on which this last enactment of the British Parliament sets its final seal, Great Britain is entitled to the highest praise from all the freedom loving peoples of the world²¹⁰". Mountbatten, after consultation with London decided to remain in New Delhi for almost another year, as originally planned.

On July 13, Jinnah assured the minorities in the would-be Pakistan domain that they would have "protection with regard to their religion, faith, life, property and culture. They would, in all respect, be citizens of Pakistan without any discrimination ... The same principle ... would apply to the minorities in India as well²¹¹". He sincerely hoped the Indo-Pak relations cordial and friendly.

Two Interim Governments and Governors-General.

The Interim Government consisted of both Congress and the League representatives. For administrative reasons, the League members withdrew all the portfolios so that the Congress wing in the Cabinet could take charge of all the affairs pertaining to the Dominion of India, while the League members took over corresponding portfolios concerning Pakistan. Thus, two Interim Governments with Congress and League cabinets were created. However, matters of common concern to both the Dominions was decided to be dealt with jointly by both Wings under the Chairmanship of the Governor-General²¹². Jinnah first agreed that Mountbatten would be the common Governor-General of India and Pakistan on August 15, 1947, but, later, Jinnah insisted to be the Governor-General of Pakistan himself and Mountbatten of India. Replying sadly to the latter, Jinnah admitted, "It may cost me several crores of rupees in assets", while Mountbatten added "It may cost you the whole of your assets and the future of Pakistan²¹³". However, a communiqué, confirming these arrangements was announced

by the Viceroy on July 19, 1947. A similar procedure was adopted in the Punjab and Bengal legislative assemblies before partitioning of these States.

Partition Committee and Partition Council

W.H.J. Christie, Addl. Private Secretary to the Viceroy, prepared a note on procedure for division of staff organizations and records, services and institutions, assets and liabilities of the Government of India; future economic relations, domicile, diplomatic relations etc., developing into a 33-page document entitled, "The Administrative Consequences of Partition", which was produced by the Viceroy on June 7, before the party leaders, and a Partition Committee consisting of Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar with Lord Mountbatten as Chairman was set up. On June 27, the Committee gave way to Partition Council, which composition was altered to include two members drawn from each of the Dominion Cabinets. India's representatives were Patel and Rajendra Prasad and Pakistan's representatives were such ministers which were able to attend meetings in Delhi.

Arbitral Tribunal

On June 30, an Arbitral Tribunal was set up under the Presidentship of Sir Patrick Spens, ex-Chief Justice of India, for settlement of such questions on which the two Governments might fail to agree. It was composed of one representative each of India and Pakistan. A few matters, referred to it, were investigated. Mountbatten helped in reaching a mutual agreement. The issues were remitted to Chaudhuri Mahomed Ali and H.M. Patel, who evolved formula acceptable to both parties and, thus, all references to the Tribunal were withdrawn.

Division of Armed Forces

On June 30, the Partition Council decided the procedure for division of armed forces and separate committees were set to work for partition of the army and other administrative elements. Auchinleck was appointed to remain as supreme commander after August 15, 1947, under a Joint Defence Council. The Partition Council decided that "from 15 August the Indian Union and Pakistan would each have within its territories forces under its own operational control, composed predominantly of non-Muslims and Muslims respectively". Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief, was re-designated as Supreme Commander from August 15, under the Joint Defence Council under the Chairmanship of Lord Mountbatten and the Defence Ministers of India and Pakistan as members. The Council continued to function till April 1, 1948, but the Supreme Commander ceased to work from December 1, 1947, when his post was abolished, as Patel questioned his impartiality. The British troops started withdrawing from India on August 17, 1947, and the last contingent, Somersetshire Light Infantry, left the Indian shore on February 28, 1948.

Partition of Provinces ²¹⁴

The 'Boundary Awards' was preceded by arrangement of implementation of the Mountbatten's partition plan. To decide whether the provinces would like to join the existing Constituent Assembly being in force in New Delhi or to join a separate new Constituent Assembly to be formed in Karachi or Lahore, according to the June 3rd Plan, the Provincial Constituent Assemblies in Bengal, Punjab, Sindh and NWFP were required to vote, while to decide the fate of Baluchistan the members of the Quetta Municipality, which comprised of Shahi Jirga and non-official members, were required to vote. The region of Sylhet was controversial, where a referendum in General, Muhammadan and Indian Christian constituencies was held. East Bengal, West Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, NWFP and Sylhet decided to join Pakistan; and West Bengal, and East Punjab, which were strategic, and seven other provinces - Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, which were Hindu-majority provinces, voted in favor of India. Separate description of the strategic provinces is given below:

(1) Bengal²¹⁵: The Bengal Provincial Legislative Assembly met on June 20, and decided by 126 votes to 90 in favor of joining Pakistan. The members of the non-Muslim majority areas of West Bengal, then, decided by 58 to 21 votes that the provinces should be partitioned and should join India; while the members of the Muslim majority areas of East Bengal decided by 106 to 35 votes that the provinces should not be partitioned and to join Pakistan, amalgamating Sylhet.

(2) Punjab²¹⁶: The Punjab Legislative Assembly, under strong police guard due to communal disorders, met and decided by 91 to 77 votes to join Pakistan. The members of Muslim majority areas of West Punjab decided by 69 to 27 votes that the province should not be partitioned and to join Pakistan, while the members of the non-Muslim majority areas of East Punjab decided by 50 to 22 votes that the province should be partitioned and to join India.

(3) Sindh: The Sindh Legislative Assembly met on June 26 and decided by 30 to 20 votes to join Pakistan.

(4) Baluchistan: As decided by the Viceroy, the Shahi Jirga and the non-official members of the Quetta Municipality met and decided to join Pakistan.

(5) Sylhet: As the Muslims in the region formed 60.7% of the population but were only 54.27% on the electoral list, Liaquat Ali Khan suggested that "the number of Muslim votes should therefore be multiplied by a factor which would equate the voting strength of the Muslims with their population strength", while the Congress claimed that "the voters in the Labour and in the Commerce and Trade constituencies of the district should be allowed to participate in the referendum²¹⁷. At last, referendum was

held in the General, Muhammadan and Indian Christian constituencies in early July, 1947. The majority of voters - 239,619 to 184,041, decided separation and joining East Bengal.

(6) NWFP²¹⁸: Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a close associate of Gandhi, objecting to the voters being said to vote on communal question, said that they should be allowed to vote also for an independent *Pathanistan* besides to vote according to June 3rd Plan. The Congress supported and Jinnah opposed this view. The Viceroy decided that the procedure cannot be changed without consent of both the parties. As Jinnah characterized *Pathanistan* as 'insidious and spurious' and assured full autonomy of NWFP in Pakistan, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan did not concede and appealed his followers to boycott the referendum²¹⁹. However, the referendum was held from July 6 to 17, and of the total electorates - 572,798, only slightly over 50 percent voted - 289,244 in favor and 2,874 against joining Pakistan.

The Princely States²²⁰

There were 565 big and small princely states. The big Muslim states were Hyderabad, Bhopal and Rampur, where the majority of inhabitants were non-Muslims; and one or two states in Kathiawar, Junagarh and Manawar were in a similar predicament. The rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Baroda, & Patiala were Hindus. The ruler of Kashmir was a Hindu and the majority of its inhabitants were Muslims. One-fifth of the Indian territory was under the princely rule and the population comprised of two-fifth of the total population of India i.e. out of forty crores they totalled sixteen crores.

The policy of the Cabinet Mission Plan on May 12, 1946, was reiterated by Mountbatten's announcement of June 3, 1947, which stated²²¹:

"When the British withdraw from India, paramountcy would lapse and the rulers of the Indian states would become technically and legally independent; they could enter into any relationship with the successor government or governments; or they could remain independent; and they were free to decide all this at their convenience".

The Congress pleaded that as 'paramountcy' came into existence as a fact and not by agreement, the Congress or the successor authority will rule over the states after Independence and the princes would have no right to declare independence or decide to accede to India or Pakistan²²². The Congress policy was that the 'people' of every state should decide their own destiny, while the Muslim League took the stand that the right either to accede to India or Pakistan should be vested to the 'rulers'. The League did not consider it necessary to give the right to the people of the states to express their opinion. The League wanted the accession of Muslim states to Pakistan on the basis of Islam. In this case the Muslim League could have got Hyderabad, Bhopal and Rampur, but the geographical position of these states was such that it was not possible. Moreover, on

this principle, they could have lost Kashmir, which Raja was a Hindu. They could not have rationalized the double standards. Further, the Muslim League had agreed to accept the verdict of the Boundary Commission as final. The Commission gave India the district of Gurdaspur, which boundary touched with India and Kashmir. Thus, India had got a direct accession to Kashmir. If Gurdaspur was not given to India, there was a problem for the Maharaja of Kashmir to accede to India. As the League's policy was 'accession declared by the ruler', Pakistan has no right, morally or legally, to the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. Had Jinnah adopted the policy as demanded by the Congress *i.e.* "accession as decided by the people of the state", Kashmir would have gone to Pakistan. Jinnah failed to realize that the geographical position of the Muslim states in India was not such that they could have a strong and permanent footing for accession to Pakistan. Thus, in principle, Pakistan lost Kashmir and other Muslim states in India.

The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes was HH Hamidullah Khan, the Nawab of Bhopal, a strong anti-Congress element, trying to create a front in association with a number of small states. Constitutionally, the Interim Government and the States had no link. The States had their own laws and ministers. The Viceroy was the only link between them. The Viceroy wanted an early settlement between the Interim Government and the States. The Chancellor put in a state of dilemma, when a number of Hindu states decided to join the Indian Constituent Assembly. On March 24, 1947, the Chancellor said to Mountbatten during his 75-minute meeting that the States or Group of States should be granted Dominion Status and to establish relationships with other countries like the USA, and to purchase arms from USA and UK. Describing the split among the Princes, the Chancellor said that the Sikh Maharaja of Patiala was in the Congress pocket and requested for the delay in transfer of power²²³. On the same day the Maharaja of Bikaner, HH Sri Sadul Singhji Bahadur, met with the Viceroy. From him, the Viceroy felt that the States of Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Patiala, Daroda and Gwalior would join the Center. The Maharaja, however, said that they would follow the Congress lead²²⁴. The Viceroy to form a strong Centre, rejected the plea of the Dewan of Travancore for granting Dominion Status to the States and their admission to the British Commonwealth²²⁵.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, HH Nawab Mir Usman Ali Khan, thought Jinnah and Churchill his allies, but his Prime Minister, Mirza Ismail, disagreed to his policy. When the Nawab invited and intrigued with Jinnah, the Mirza resigned²²⁶.

Disturbed with the anti-Congress actions of Hyderabad and Bhopal, Jawaharlal Nehru, at the All-India States People's Conference, presided over by Sheikh Abdullah at Gwalior on April 18, 1947, threatened that "those States that did not join the Constituent Assembly now would be regarded as hostile States²²⁷ ...", as a result the Maharaj-Rana of Dholpur, who suffered "from a belief in the divine right of kings" and the Nawab of Rampur complained to the Viceroy against the Nehru's threat of hostility. The Viceroy,

adopting rather an anti-Congress posture, stated that the "States would have complete freedom of choice as to which Constituent Assembly they would join, independent of geographical considerations²²⁸", but supported Patel's stand at every step. The Nawab of Bhopal sought right to arm his state with modern armaments, forgetting that the real threat was not from external invasion but from the long-oppressed people of the state. In early May, Baroda and its associated States decided to join the Constituent Assembly.

Clause 7 of the Indian Independence Bill ended the British suzerainty over the Indian states. The Nizam of Hyderabad, perhaps, was the most affected. The Viceroy said to the Nawab of Chattari, who led a delegation, that "the states would be absolutely free after 15th August²²⁹". On July 12, the Maharaja Jiwaji Rao Scindia of Gwalior and the Maharaja of Jodhpur welcomed the Congress policy²³⁰, in view of Patel's statement of July 5, that the Congress "wish them and their people under this aegis all prosperity, contentment and happiness²³¹", which made the princes hope that they would continue to enjoy their internal freedom as before. However, the Nawab of Bhopal signed the Instrument of Accession on August 7, 1947. On August 8, the Nawab of Rampur, Saiyid Raza Ali Khan Bahadur, accompanied by his Chief Minister, Zaidi, visited the Viceroy and complained that "Jinnah had been bringing every possible pressure to bear on him personally to stop him from acceding to the Dominion of India²³²". Zaidi pleaded with Liaquat Ali Khan that his moral support would not be sufficient in case of show-down with India²³³". The Muslim Leaguers created serious riots in Rampur, but the Viceroy's troops restored order.

The Hindu Maharaja of Indore, HH Yashwant Rao Holkar, was under the influence of the Nawab of Bhopal. Mountbatten told Holkar that he had told the Maharajas of Baroda and Gwalior that the Viceroy's letter of invitation represented a threat and thus he charged him with "lack of responsibility²³⁴".

On August 11, Shahaji Chhatrapati of Kolhapur signed the Instrument of Accession as a "Standstill agreement²³⁵". The Maharaja of Travancore, HH Bala Ram Varma, was proclaiming independence, supported by his Dewan, C.P. Ramaswami Ayar. When he was stabbed by some revolutionary, the Maharaja cabled the Viceroy to sign the Instrument of Accession. The Muslim Nawab of Junagadh, HH Mahabat Khan Rasulkhani, who had 800 pet dogs, each looked after by one man, and spent three lakh rupees on the occasion of wedding of his two dogs, had signed an accession with Pakistan. He fled to Pakistan when the Indian army entered the State, whose 80 percent population was Hindu, and the State was surrounded by Hindu States.

The Maharajas and Nawabs signed the Instrument of Accession in great distress. The Maharaja of Bikaner signed in a 'dramatic gesture'. The Maharaja of Baroda wept like a child. One of the princes suffered a heart attack. The Maharaja Hanwant Singh of Jodhpur and the Maharaja of Jaisalmer had secret meetings with Jinnah, but they

helplessly signed. The Maharajas of Indore and Dholpur signed on August 14, 1947, in an intolerable situation. The problem of Hyderabad and Kashmir remained.

In West Punjab, the Hindus and Sikhs believed that Lahore would fall in India, but when they knew that Lahore would fall in Pakistan, they fled to the east in panic seeking only to save their lives. Mountbatten flew to Lahore on Sunday, July 20, and suggested the Punjab Partition Committee that "the new government of east Punjab's unessential personnel" all be moved out to Simla by August 10, but Radcliffe's final award would remain top secret till the eve of partition and Independence²³⁶".

On August 5, Khwaja Nazimuddin, assuring cordial attitude to the minorities in East Pakistan, said: "I can assure Dr. Ghosh and the members of the minority community living in the Eastern Pakistan State that *Inshaallah* (God willing) we will not only give them protection, but we shall be generous towards them and we shall make them feel that they are one of us²³⁷".

On August 7, before departure to Pakistan, Jinnah, seeking excuse for being unable to reply individually to the thousands of messages of greetings and good wishes on the establishment of Pakistan owing to enormous pressure of work involved in the division of India, stated:

"I bid farewell to the citizens of Delhi amongst whom I had many friends of all communities and I earnestly appeal to everyone to live in this great and historic city with peace. The past must be buried and let us start afresh as two independent sovereign States of Hindustan and Pakistan²³⁸". He wished Hindustan prosperity and peace.

Jinnah and his sister, Fatima, flew out of New Delhi in the Viceroy's Dakota on the morning of August 7, 1947. They reached Karachi where thousands of admirers cheered them with slogan of "*Pakistan Zindabad*". The first constituent assembly of Pakistan met in Karachi on August 11, and unanimously elected Jinnah to preside over its meetings. Jinnah thanked the assembled delegates for electing him as the first President of Pakistan. He emphasized that the partition was "unprecedented cyclonic revolution, which has brought about the plan of creating and establishing two independent Sovereign Dominions in this sub-continent... This mighty sub-continent with all kinds of inhabitants has been brought under a plan which is titanic, unknown, unparallel²³⁹...".

Birth of India and Pakistan

Mountbatten reached Karachi on August 13, 1947, and inaugurated the Dominion of Pakistan on August 14, 1949²⁴⁰. Delivering the message of greetings to the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, Mountbatten said²⁴¹:

"Tomorrow two new sovereign states will take their place in the Commonwealth; not young nations, but bears of old and proud civilization ... not immature governments or weak, but fit to carry their treat share of responsibility for the peace and progress of the world".

Jinnah was sworn in as Governor-General of Pakistan and Mountbatten as Governor-General of India. Pakistan cabinet was headed by Liaquat Ali Khan. In September, as desired by Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan moved the Cabinet to Lahore.

After addressing the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, the Viceroy flew back to New Delhi, and inaugurated the Dominion of India on August 15, 1947. Thus, the British Raj came to an end in India leading to the freedom of one-fifth of mankind. Communicating the message of goodwill and greetings from the British Crown to the Indian Constituent Assembly, Mountbatten, paid homage to Gandhi as the architect of India's freedom through non-violence and said:²⁴²

"Your first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, you have a world renowned leader of courage and vision. His trust and friendship have helped me beyond measures in my task. Under his able guidance, assisted by the colleagues whom he has selected, and with the loyal cooperation of the people, India will now attain a position of strength and influence and take her rightful place in the comity of nations".

Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected President of the Assembly and the Indian Cabinet was headed by the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who made a famous broadcast at midnight of August 15, 1947²⁴³:

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom ...".

Maulana Azad had said²⁴⁴:

"The division is only on the map of the country and not in the hearts of the people, and I am sure it is going to be a short-lived partition".

Radcliffe's Boundary Awards²⁴⁵

Mountbatten handed the Radcliffe Award to the leaders of both dominions in Delhi on August 16, 1947.

On June 27, 1947, the Viceroy invited Jinnah, Nehru, Patel, Liaquat and Baldev, and proposed a Boundary Commission consisting of four high court judges, two chosen by Congress and two by the League, to sit on each commission for partitioning the Punjab and Bengal. As suggested by Jinnah, the British Barrister, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, was

invited to chair both the Commissions. Radcliffe reached New Delhi on July 8, 1947. During July 16-24, the Bengal Boundary Commission, and during July 21-31, the Punjab Boundary Commission, were in session. In view of disturbances and bloodshed, the Partition Council announced a Punjab Boundary Force to be set up and both the governments pledged themselves to accept the awards of the Boundary Commission and guaranteed protection of the minorities. On August 1, the Punjab Boundary Force was set up to protect the refugees. During August 4-6, the Bengal Boundary Commission considered the partition of Sylhet, and on August 6, the Partition Council met for the last time. On August 13, the Radcliffe Award was ready and made public on August 16, 1947. The terms of reference of either Commission were to demarcate the boundaries "on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims, In doing so, it will also take into account other factors²⁴⁶".

The partition Was made according to 1941 census of the districts. The Muslim majority districts in general which formed East Pakistan were: in Chittagong Division - Chittagong, Noakhali and Tippera; in Dacca Division - Bakarganj, Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensing; in Presidency Division - Jessore, Murshidabad and Nadia; and in Rajshahi Division - Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi and Rangnur. Two-thirds portion of Nadia (Muslims 61.4%) and Malda (Muslims 56.2%), about one half of Diriajpur (Muslims 50.2%), two police stations of Jessore, four police stations of Sylhet, and the whole district of Murshidabad (Muslims 56.6%) were transferred by Radcliffe to India. According to terms of reference, in case the referendum in Sylhet was in favor of Pakistan, Muslim majority areas of "the adjoining districts of Asam²⁴⁷" were to be awarded to Pakistan, but Radcliffe did not transfer to Pakistan even an inch of such areas, although there were a number of such areas. The non-Muslim majority districts in Bengal, which were transferred to East Pakistan were: the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Total population - 247,053; 94.5% tribes, 3% Muslims and 2.5% Hindus and others), Khulna (Muslims 49.36% and non-Muslims 50.64%) and from Jalpaiguri three Muslim majority and two non-Muslim majority police stations.

The Muslim majority districts in the Punjab, which constituted West Pakistan were: in Lahore Division - Gujranwala, Gurciaspur, Lahore, Sheikhpura, and Sialkot; in Rawalpindi Division - Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Rawalpindi and Shahpur; and in Multan Division - Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan and Muzaffargarh. The portions which were transferred to India out of the districts of Gurdaspur and Lahore were:

Gurdaspur Non-Muslim majority tehsil (sub-district) of Pathankot and two Muslim majority tehsils Gurdaspur (Muslims 52.1%) and Batala (Muslims 55.1%) joining Kashmir.

Lahore A portion of Muslim majority tehsil of Kasur (Muslims 57.2%).

Radcliffe may be charged as victim of anti-Islamic pathogenic spirit when we find no reason why he did not transfer to Pakistan the Muslim majority portions of the Non-Muslim majority districts of the borders of Ferozepore, Amritsar and Jullundur, given below:-

<u>Ferozepore</u>	Zira Tehsil (Muslims 65.6%) and Ferozepore Tehsil (Muslims 55.2%).
<u>Amritsar</u>	Ajnala Tehsil (Muslims 59.4):
<u>Jullundur</u>	Nakodar Tehsil (Muslims 59.4%); Junundur Tehsil (Muslims 51.1%).

The transfer of the above Tehsils to India cut off the Muslim majority state of Kanurthala from the Pakistan border line.

Comments on the Awards

Dewan Bahadur S.P. Singha wrote: "It is a one-sided award, and most unfair to Pakistan. The principals of the contiguity of majority areas have been completely overlooked²⁴⁸". Abdur Rab Nishtar said: "It is extremely unfair and unjust to Pakistan and is based on no principles. We believe it is a parting kick of the British²⁴⁹". Hasan Ispahani remarked: "The award is abominable. It violates the fundamental and accepted principles of contiguous majority areas. It is devoid of justice and Muslims have been the sufferers²⁵⁰". Jinnah spoke²⁵¹:

"No doubt, we feel that the carving out of this great independent, sovereign Muslim State has suffered injustices. We have been squeezed in as much as it was possible and the latest blow that we have received was the Award of the Boundary Commission. It is an unjust, incomprehensible and even perverse Award. It may be wrong, unjust and perverse and it may not be a judicial but political award, but we had agreed to abide by it and it is binding upon us".

The Pakistan Times at length, wrote that Radcliffe took undue advantage of the clause "other factors" and militated against the Muslims while dividing Bengal and the Punjab. The paper writes²⁵²:

"...where the Muslim right to non-Muslim territory on grounds of "other factors" was fully established as for instance over certain canal head-works this brilliant lawyer has suggested joint control and we fail to see why similar joint control could not have worked for the non-Muslims ... The final line, however, while it has taken away a lot from the Muslims, has done little for the Sikhs. They still remain more or less equally divided between Pakistan and India, their shrines

for which so much noise was made in India and in London still remain in Pakistan".

The paper further observes that the British purpose of the "wrong, unfair and unjust" award was to fish in troubled waters of weakened Pakistan, which could ever depend on the goodwill and help of the British and the Hindu capitalism and tension between Pakistan and India. The Kashmir and Indus River water issues are permanent threat of war between the two countries. The motive of the Viceroy and Radcliffe was otherwise towards Pakistan. They had planned earlier to accede Kashmir to India and for this purpose they intentionally gave Gurdaspur to India. According to the 'Instructions', the district should have gone to Pakistan being a Muslim majority district. This is a good example for Indians and Pakistanis to realize that the Britishers were not their friends as they laid seeds of communal disharmony on the land of Gurdaspur. This finds support on the fact that instead of determining the boundary line according to natural barriers like rivers, mountains, canals or hills, he went from village to village sowing seeds of eternal discord between the two Dominions. However, the resultant boundary gave to East Pakistan was 54,501 sq. miles with 41.8 million population; to West Pakistan 8,03,943 sq. miles and India 32,87,782 sq. miles.

Impact of the Partition

Before coming into existence of the two dominions, there were already communal violence, loot, arson, massacre, bloodshed, loss of life and property and continuous disorder and riots, the roots of which, may be said, was the Direct Action Policy of Jinnah. The situation in Punjab and Bengal, due to its plan of partition, was most serious. There was even a Sikh Plan to assassinate Jinnah on the day Pakistan was born, but the Viceroy brought him back with himself in an open carriage. When they reached inside the Government House, the Viceroy said: "Thank God I was able to bring you back alive²⁵³". While the Armed Sikhs in Amritsar began killing every Muslim they could find, the Muslim gangs - many of them 'police', stabbed and gunned down every Hindu and Sikh in Lahore. The entire trainloads of refugees were gutted and turned into rolling coffins and funeral pyres, smokes and flames everywhere in Punjab darkened the skies. In Bengal, Gandhi held fast on the Independence Day, when all business houses were closed in Calcutta. The Hindu Mahasabha raised black flags against the vivisection of Mother India- *Akhand Bharat*. The Calcutta Muslims fled and hid in panic and crowded in predominantly Muslim areas. General Taker reported: "deserted, leaderless, depressed and on the defensive²⁵⁴". However, peace was restored when Gandhi undertook a fast-unto-death recalling to stop killing of the innocents. The Ramazan ended on August 18, 1947, and Jinnah in his *Id* Message rejoiced the establishment of Pakistan²⁵⁵. He, on receipt of reports of mass killing, rape, arson and looting, wept and "his handkerchief furtively often went to his moist eyes²⁵⁶ ...".

The horror stories told by the Hindu and Sikh refugees gave vent to the Sikhs of the Akali sect and the Hindu fanatics of the RSS in Delhi to launch a wave of terror on the

morning of September 3, 1947, the day Gandhi ended his fast in Calcutta. Max Olivier Lacamp saw the Hindus looting Muslims' shops and butchering owners and Nehru above their heads "in a white Congress cap whirling a *lathi*, beating the rioters, showering them with curses, trying by his actions to arouse the dozen indifferent policemen behind him²⁵⁷". The RSS burnt a Muslim woman at the gate of Nehru's York Road residence "as a protest against their Prime Minister's efforts to protect India's Moslems²⁵⁸". The collapse of order in Delhi had menaced the whole sub-continent. By the evening of September more than 1000 had died. Nehru in anger called Pakistan "a 'carbuncle' that had settled on the back of India's body politic²⁵⁹".

Pakistan After Independence

The Christie's note had defined the formula for sharing all pre-partition assets of the British raj, but Patel and Baldev Singh "were specially loathe to "arm" Pakistan with the wherewithal to fight India-whether in the Punjab, Sindh, Kashmir, or Bengal²⁶⁰", and, in consequence, Pakistan's position was very precarious. Jinnah guarded each rupee. He once told Begum Shah Nawaz that he had "only twenty crores (200 million) rupees in the treasury and nearly rupees forty crores of bills lying on the table²⁶¹". Jinnah on August 24, 1947, issued a statement to the press urging calm in the face of the "grave unrest" assuring people to "give succor and relief to the victims". The people "kept their heads cool and lived amicably". As the goods and services due to overflowing of bureaucrats, refugees, workers and merchants were in high demand, their prices skyrocketed and property values soared. However, Sindh began to blossom with Karachi. On the other hand, "the sick and dying brought every need, demand and physical blight with their battered bodies to a city whose housing shortage had been tripled by arson and whose water supply was infested with the worst diseases of dead and disintegrating corpses thrown into its arteries. Its spacious mosques and once beautiful Mughal gardens were turned into crowded camps for Muslim refugees fleeing Sikh persecution²⁶²". Had India not withheld the agreed share of Reserve Bank's cash balances amounting to some Rs.55 crores, Pakistan could not have suffered this serious blow of the circumstance. Ismay reported that "Jinnah was full of wrath against Congress, saying that he could never understand these men's hatreds and was now beginning to feel that there was no alternative but fight it out²⁶³".

The Fate of Hyderabad

The Nizam of Hyderabad was trying to purchase "armaments in Czechoslovakia²⁶⁴". Sir Walter Monckton resigned as Constitutional Adviser to the Nizam as he was being attacked by the Hyderabad press. Kasim Razvi declared that Hyderabad would never surrender her independence and if plebiscite would be enforced, the sword would be the final arbiter. The Nizam became so indifferent that he even did not like the Viceroy to visit Hyderabad. The Nizam by two ordinances prohibited export of precious metals from Hyderabad to India and acceptance of Indian currency in Hyderabad. Further, the Hyderabad Government advanced a loan of Rs.20 crores to Pakistan, at the moment when India hoped that Pakistan would die due to their acute economic and financial

crises. The leaders of India were "furious over it²⁶⁵". The Razakars, led by Kasim Razvi, began to invade Madras, Bombay and Central Provinces. It was said that the Razakars ruled by day and the Communists ruled by night. K.M. Munshi, who was sent to Hyderabad under a 'Standstill Agreement' signed on November 29, 1947, between India and Hyderabad, was imprisoned in his house. On March 31, 1948, Razvi urged the Razakars to march forward with the Koran in one hand the sword in the other to hound the enemy, and that "the forty-five million Muslims in the Indian Union would be our fifth columnists in any showdown²⁶⁶". On April 12, 1948, he declared "The day is not far off when the waves of the Bay of Bengal will be washing the feet of our Sovereign²⁶⁷" and Asaf Jahi Flag would fly on the Red Fort. He threatened that if India would invade Hyderabad, they would find only the bones of 1½ crores of Hindus. Lord Mountbatten left India on June 21, 1948, without solving the problem of Hyderabad. There spread a reign of terror and killing of Hindus forced India to invade. The Indian army entered Hyderabad on September 13, and the Hyderabad army surrendered on September 17, 1948. On September 19, Kasim Razvi was arrested and Razakars were disbanded.

Accession of Kashmir

The strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir was alluring to India and Pakistan. In the State of the three million voiceless subjects, the Muslims were in majority (75%) and in Ladakh the Budrhists. Maharaja Hari Singh's Prime Minister, in 1947, was Pt. Ram Chandra Kak. Like other rulers of the princely states, the Maharaja had also to accede to one or other dominion. He refused to join either dominion. He feared that Jinnah would dethrone him for religious reasons and hated "Nehru with a bitter hatred" because of his socialist proclivities and democratic demands²⁶⁸". Nehru, Gandhi and Patel, who were not allowed to visit Kashmir, had lost patience with him,²⁶⁹ while the Maharaja went on his way quite unconcerned. Gandhi went to Kashmir on August 1, but the Maharaja stood his ground, due to which Kak resigned and Major-General Nanak Singh was appointed in his place on August 11, 1947. The new Prime Minister was inclined towards India. Pro-Congress Sheikh Abdullah was in prison and Nehru wanted his release to influence upon the Maharaja to accede to India. After the announcement of June 3rd Plan, Mountbatten had visited Kashmir and assured the Maharaja that Patel would have no objection to his joining Pakistan. But his mission failed. After August 15, Lord Ismay also persuaded him, but he also could not succeed. The Maharaja was in a state of mental dilemma. If he joined India, the Muslim population had threatened to revolt, and if he joined Pakistan, the Hindus of Gilgit and other places had adversely acted. He, therefore, announced to enter into Standstill Agreements both with India and Pakistan, and signed a Standstill Agreement with Pakistan.

The flood of refugees brought blood-curdling tales of tragedy, that fired the Frontier Muslims, famous for bravery, zeal and Islamic brotherhood, who demanded revenge against the "infidels" *i.e.* the Hindus in India. As a revenge they planned to occupy Kashmir and dethrone the Maharaja (who, they afraid, could accede to India being a Hindu) and, thus, to make Pakistan stronger and able to take revenge of killings of

Muslims coming to Pakistan. Meanwhile, Poonch revolted against the Maharaja, who sent forces to crush the uprising. The Frontier Muslims (tribes) occupied the highway roads that served transit of petrol and other vital needs which Pakistan had to supply to Kashmir under the 'Standstill Agreement' with her. Further, the Pakistani Muslims (Frontier tribals) crossed the Poonch border to help their co-religionists and by mid-October all supplies from Pakistan was stopped. Jinnah sent his British Military Secretary thrice to Srinagar, wrote himself to Hari Singh, and also sent Major Shah to Kashmir, to induce the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan, but failed. Under this circumstance, Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan took over as Prime Minister of the State. Mahajan, on October 15, complained to the British Minister about the breach of 'Standstill Agreement' as supplies had discontinued and pointed out that the State border from Gurdaspur to Gilgit was threatened by Pakistan with invasion, but received no response. When complained to Jinnah, he charged the tone and language.

To relieve the State from material crisis, India sent salt, kerosene and sugar to "blockaded" Srinagar²⁷⁰, disregarding the "Standstill Agreement" of Kashmir with Pakistan. Pakistan sensed it a pretext of India for occupying Kashmir. Therefore, Pakistan invaded India with 5000 armed Pathan Afridi, Waziri and Mahsud tribesmen of the NWFP, who committed acts of rape and pillage. Belgian Mother Superior, Sister Mary Adeltrude succumbed to her wounds²⁷¹. On October 24, Pakistan informed New Delhi that "tribal volunteers" had "entered" Kashmir. "Their advance guard ... only 35 to 40 miles from Srinagar²⁷²". On October 24, the raiders had occupied the Mahura Power House and had plunged Srinagar in darkness. They declared to reach Srinagar on October 26, and celebrate the *Id* celebrations in the Srinagar Mosque. On October 24, the Maharaja appealed to India for help. India did not take any action on the information and appeal. However, on October 25, 1947, as decided by the Defence Committee meeting, presided over by Mountbatten, sent V.P. Menon to Srinagar to study the situation. Menon met with Mahajan and sent the Maharaja from Srinagar to Jammu as there were news that the raiders had started infiltration in Srinagar. Menon returned to New Delhi in the morning of October 26, 1947, and brought Mahajan with himself. Menon reported to Nehru and Patel that the Maharaja "had gone to pieces completely" and could "come to no decision". Mahajan recalls²⁷³:

"I requested immediate military aid on any terms ... Give us the military force we need. Take the accession and give whatever power you desire to the popular Party. The army must fly to save Srinagar this evening or else will go to Lahore and negotiate terms with Mr. Jinnah".

Nehru angrily said, "go", but Patel consoled and Sheikh Abdullah supported him. Nehru became peaceful. The result of the morning discussion was that the Indian Cabinet agreed to accede Kashmir to India and send its army on October 27th morning. Menon and Mahajan again flew to Jammu and met with the Maharaja, who after some discussions, signed the Instrument of Accession to accede to India. Menon took the

documents immediately back to India. Patel took them from the aerodrome and went straight to the meeting of the Defence Committee, which finally decided to accede Kashmir to India subject to a plebiscite later on.

As decided by the Defence Council, the First Sikh Battalion of 329 flew from New Delhi to Srinagar in the night and landed at dawn on October 27, and at 9.00 A.M. news of their action came to New Delhi. Jinnah hearing the news of Kashmir's accession to India, ordered General Gracey, the Acting Commanding-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, to send troops to Kashmir, but the latter refused as in that case the British officers were to be withdrawn; hence, Jinnah cancelled the plan and on October 30, 1947, issued a statement that accession of Kashmir to India was "based on fraud and violence and as such cannot be recognized²⁷⁴" and declared establishment of her control over Gilgit which was a part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. On January 1, 1949, a ceasefire was ordered by the United Nations. Since then many efforts have been made to solve this dispute, but they have not succeeded.

Conclusion

On February 20, 1947, Attlee declared the intent to transfer power not later than June 1, 1948, and if the Indians failed to form a fully representative Constituent Assembly, the British Government would hand over power as desired by them and replaced 'Ravel' by Lord Mountbatten in March, 1947. Mountbatten called the leaders at Simla. Menon's proposal for 'Dominion Status' to both India and Pakistan became acceptable. The Congress and the League accented the partition of the sub-continent. The Viceroy on June 3, 1947, in a broadcast declared August 15, 1947, For Independence of India and Pakistan and the Congress and the League leaders declared their acceptance. Two Interim Governments- one for India and the other for Pakistan were formed. The Partition Council divided the armed forces. On August 14 and 15, 1947, Pakistan and India respectively came into being. Radcliffe handed over the 'Boundary Awards' on August 16, to India and Pakistan. The princely states joined India. Hyderabad was forcibly acceded to India and Kashmir agreed her accession to India.

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