

But Mr. Amery thinks that there he can stop. Apart from the imputation which is attributed to him that he is only using the disagreement among Indian political parties as an excuse for with-holding the progress of India, it seems to me he entirely fails to understand his responsibilities. The British Government has not merely the right to call upon Indians to produce an agreed solution, but it has got the duty to settle the difference if Indians are not able to settle it themselves. The duty is cast upon the British Government by reason of the fact that the British Government denies to the Indian people one important final, and often the only means, of settling a constitutional deadlock. That means is no other than the means of war. Some will be shocked at this. But let no one forget that the English Revolution the French Revolution and the American Civil War are all instances when constitutional deadlocks had to be solved by war. The employment of this means, the British Government to the good of all interdicts. This means it must step in to decide a dispute which either by the recalcitrance or obstinacy of a party cannot be settled.

That being the case, the British Government cannot throw the responsibility of settling the constitutional difference on Indian shoulders as a final escape. It must recognise its ultimate responsibility in this matter. That being my view. I think it is possible for the British Government to make a declaration on the following lines:—

(1) That, it is proposed to raise India to the status of a dominion within three years from the date of peace.

(2) That, for the speedy consummation of that end the elements in the national life of India will be required to produce an agreed solution of their constitutional difference within one year from the date of the signing of the armistice.

(3) That, failing agreement, the British Government would submit the dispute to an international tribunal for decision.

(4) That, when such a decision is given, the British Government shall undertake to give effect to it as part of the dominion constitution for India.

Such a declaration must satisfy all reasonable people. As far I am unable to see, it meets Mr. Jinnah's point of view and the point

of view of the Depressed Classes that there must be an agreed solution of the communal problem. It also meets the Congress point of view that no element in the national life of British India should be allowed the power to veto the birth of a dominion constitution. The argument that we are in the midst of the war is no argument against making the declaration. Indeed, it is an argument in favour of it.

The war effort depends on three things :—(1) Sense of urgency; (2) appreciation of the purpose of the war; and (3) a concrete conception of how we expect to win the war—the need for a realistic and convincing plan. The entry of Japan in the war has brought to the Indians the required sense of urgency; at any rate, to those who think that working to save ourselves from immediate destruction is more important than the ultimate goal. The appreciation of the purpose of the war is wanting and a declaration by the British Government to withdraw its authority in favour of the Indian people will bring about that appreciation.

Should the declaration be accompanied by a National Government? It would be better if it could be done. But Mr. Jinnah is making two demands. One is ultimate, namely Pakistan. The other is immediate, namely 50 per cent, representation in the Cabinet. I can quite understand the demand for Pakistan. When Mr. Jinnah says that the Muslims are a nation. I feel no reason to quarrel. When Mr. Jinnah says the Muslims must have Pakistan because they are a nation. I say, have it if you do not thereby run away with a large belt of the Hindu population who on your own theory, are of a different nationality.

With regard to Pakistan, I feel like pointing out that Mr. Jinnah seems to be counting his chickens before they are hatched and reckoning without the host. The N. W. F. is the integral part of this Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah must admit that he is not the host of the N. W. F. The host is Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. Without his consent, there could be no Pakistan. Rather than carry on whirlwind propaganda in favour of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah should spend his time and energy in converting Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. That is, however, a matter for Mr. Jinnah to consider.

Pakistan Demand

As I said, I can understand Pakistan. But I cannot understand this demand for 50 per cent, representation for the Muslim community. Nor can I see how this immediate demand of 50 per cent is related to the ultimate demand of Pakistan. I am sure this demand of the Muslim League is a monstrous thing, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow has done the greatest service to India by putting it down. I am definitely of opinion that no National Government ought to be established in India as an interim measure if it means conceding to Mr. Jinnah his claim for 50 per cent representation. After all, I cannot believe that the national Government can do more in the matter of war effort than what is being done.

India simply cannot do more. Her capacity has not been developed. The fault lies entirely with the British Government. They chose not to develop the resources of India in peace time, and it is therefore impossible for the Government or the National Government to do more than what is being done. If she had been fully developed, she could have defended the Empire. She cannot now defend herself. She must. Indeed, she is compelled to look to England to defend her from the impending Japanese invasion; such is her helpless condition.

The appointment of an Indian as Defence Member may be good but is that enough? Without the means of defence at his disposal, what an Indian Defence Minister can do it is difficult to understand. I should have thought that the wiser course for India would be to ask England to send out to India the means of defence which she is hoarding for her own safety. Therein lies the immediate interest of India and therein also lies the duty of England.” A. P. ¹

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1. : The Times of India : February 27, 1942.