broke up Col. Iwaguro said that the war must be won at any cost and that people in Malaya should be prepared to endure hardships until this goal was attained.

CHAPTER VII
BANGKOK CONFERENCE
15th—23rd June, 1942

In pursuance of the decision arrived at the Tokyo Conference to hold a larger and more representative assembly, Indian delegates from various parts of East Asia assembled at the Thai capital for a nine-day conference commencing on June 15, 1942. The Silapakorn Theatre, Bangkok, was packed to overflowing. There was no standing room anywhere and even the spacious ground itself was packed to capacity, while the roads leading to it were crowded with people who were eager to get a glimpse of the distinguished visitors. The Hall was decorated with portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad, and mottos such as “Freedom is our Birth-right.” A large number of representatives of Japan, Thailand and the Axis countries were also present.

The following Indian delegates attended the conference:


From Manchukuo.—Mr. A. M. Nair.


From Borneo.—Messrs. J. Lalchand, Kranal Singh, V. N. K. Pillai, K. K. Thangavelu Pillai, and Joginder Singh Greval.


From Shanghai.—Messrs. Piara Singh, M. S. Doshi, B. Bobby, and Harnam Singh.


From Indo-China.—Mr. T. S. Subramanin.

In an atmosphere of great political awakening and purposefulness the Conference was opened on June 15, 1942, by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, H. E. Vichitr Vichitr-Vadakarn. The day's programme commenced with the singing of the Indian National Anthem, followed by silent prayers for the martyrs of the Indian Independence Movement. Opening the Conference, H. E. Vichitr-Vadakarn addressed the gathering as follows:

Gentlemen of the Delegation,

I am glad to have the honour of opening this Conference. In performing the pleasant duty, I bring to you a message from His Excellency the Prime Minister, which I shall now read to you:

In the name of the Thai people, I have much pleasure in welcoming this Conference of Indian Delegates which has been arranged to take place here in Bangkok. My pleasure in welcoming the Conference being held in the capital of Thailand is due to two causes.

Firstly, the aim of this Conference is to rid India of the yoke of tyranny and oppression under which she has been for long suffering, and to restore to India her liberty, so that India may rightly be a country for Indians. Since Thailand has been from time immemorial a land of the free, liberty is deeply-rooted in the heart of the Thai people who cherish their independence more than their very life. The Thais, therefore, sympathise with and support all follow-men, whatever their race, who are striving to attain independence for their motherland. When I learnt that the aim of this Conference was to establish the Independence of India, I gave it my whole hearted support.

Secondly, Thais and Indians are deeply bound together in cultural ties. We, Thais, received the Doctrines of Buddhism and our knowledge of Arts and Sciences from India. Even the words we use in our daily speech and in our writings are many of them derived from India. During the period that India had to contend with foreign aggression and fell under the domination of a race alien in language and in culture, resulting in Indian Culture being deprived of support and maintenance which in time brought on a gradual decay, Thailand undertook the duty of safeguarding.
Indian culture. If you visit our National Museum, you will find that we have preserved ancient relics and objects of Art of India in a better state and to a greater amount than those which are to be seen in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. Indians who have come to reside in Thailand have been received all along in a cordial spirit of friendship by the Thais. Thailand herself has taken up the study of Pali and Sanskrit which are highly prized Indian Culture, in a greater extent than any other country in the world. I therefore may safely say that Thais and Indians are bound together in culture in the closest of ties.

For the two reasons stated above, I am happy therefore to have the opportunity of extending my welcome to the Conference for the liberation of India at this capital of Bangkok.

In sending my message for the opening of this Conference, I cannot refrain from expressing my respect for Swami Satyanadapuri, who was one of the prominent figures sharing in the great work of co-ordinating the cultural and spiritual relations between our two nations. I am unable to find words sufficiently appropriate to express my sorrow and sense of loss at his death. I am convinced that his pure soul will come and be present amongst you at this Conference and will help the Conference to achieve success in a satisfactory manner.

Gentlemen, now is an auspicious occasion in which all the Asiatic peoples may collaborate as one in the task of doing away with all the hardships we have suffered from the oppressive rule of alien races. Japan has taken the lead for the liberation of Asia. It is therefore an opportunity for all the Asiatic people to unite their strength and hearts with Japan for the accomplishment of this important task. As India is the mother country of Religion, Culture, Arts and Sciences, as she has been the world's teacher from olden times, the light of India's soul has therefore never been extinguished, but will henceforth shine gloriously brighter, fanned by the unity, endeavour and perseverance of all of us.

I therefore pray the protecting grace of the Triple Gem and all the sacred powers of the Universe to guard and protect the Indian delegates assembled here, so that you will be endowed with good health, united in spirit and strong in wisdom in order to carry out the work of this Conference to the desired successful conclusion for the freedom and happiness of India and of all the Asiatic peoples.

(Sd.) Field-Marshal P. Pibulasonggram,
Prime Minister.

In addition to this message from His Excellency the Prime Minister which I have just read to you, I wish to add an expression of my own sincere hopes for the smooth progress of this Conference and its final conclusion with the desired success. The auspicious moment has arrived. I have much pleasure, Gentlemen, in declaring the Conference opened".

The message of the Thai Premier was translated into English by a lady announcer of the Thai Broadcasting Station and into Hindustani by Mr. Charanjit Rai Narula of the Bangkok League Committee.
The chairman of the Reception Committee of the Conference—Mr. Debnath Dass then read his address. Welcoming the delegates he said:—

Comrades,

It is a great honour for me to welcome you all to-day. While doing so on behalf of the Indian Independence Conference and your thousand comrades of Thailand, I wish to convey at the outset my heartfelt thanks to the people of Thailand and Japan, who made it possible for all of us to meet and embrace each other especially at this time when we need most. Words are poor carriers of the feelings of inner heart but that being the only means of expression on such occasions, I thank the authorities of Thailand and Japan for all the manifestation of their sincere feelings in helping us to serve the cause, we stand for.

While embracing you, however, my mind goes to him—the one who blessed with all the great heritage of Bharatavarsha, carried the message of her cultural supremacy into this land of the Yellow Robe. The confluence of his head and heart became the meeting place of the giver and the given. Swami Satyanandapuri who has lived with us, the one who is living in us, the one who has not cast the shadow of separation even on departure, the one who has gone farther only to come nearer, is no more with us! We feel lonely to-day and welcome you in his name—the name that spells truth and love.

We are deprived also of the services of our respected compatriots, Giani Pritam Singh, Capt. Mohd. Akram and Nlilkantha Ayer. To-day when we are assembled, let us give homage to those martyrs, who have left us only to leave behind a great legacy of love for freedom.

Friends! the land of our birth, Hindustan, is passing through a most crucial period in her history. The history of struggle for freedom that was confined into the prison-walls, has now spread all over and India's struggle for existence has now become the world's struggle. India, who was for century and a half lulled into a dosing whale of humanity by an arrogant imperialism, born of greed and robbery, has now become a mother of a conscious mass. India's fateful hour has now struck as Deshbandhu Subhash Chandra Bose has told and every Indian must now make his decision—decision that no power on earth can undo. The immense sacrifices that our compatriots at home have made for the last seventy years since India's first struggle for freedom in 1857, to lift India from the dark cell of degeneration are now in the hearts of our hearts. We bow our heads down to those, the torch-bearers of freedom, who created for us a field on which all of us stand and see light amidst surrounding darkness. When the rest of the world was still living in awe of the roaring British Lion, the unarmed youths of India were shedding their blood and thus proving that, though India lost everything, she has not lost her soul. This is India's spirit, the spirit that knows no fear, the spirit that steel cannot subdue, neither can fire subjugate. To-day already a gigantic struggle for national emancipation is on in India. India, the fountain-head of all struggles of India's Liberty and Life, is definitely to-day at the parting of ways with Britain and those reactionary non-entities allied with it.

Friends! the awakening of India has a special significance to the world and a particular hope to humanity, since India is a country with a
mission, a nation with a power to contribute to the cause of human welfare. In the conception of her nationalism, when civilisation found its cradle on this quaint land, she has been led by one spirit—the spirit of contributing to the welfare of humanity.

It was this spirit, as Swamiji observed, which moulded her national life and brought perfection to her individual self. It was this spirit that in the days of our death-like slumber kept aglow, even in the darkest days of her life, the light of culture and civilisation, the glimmer of hope that one day she might stand erect before the world and raise with her unshaking hands the torch of truth and love she had lighted with the flame of her life. It is because of this spirit that the hands that were stretched to choke her to death, succeeded only in rousing her to self-consciousness.

All Indian national organisations therefore to be living organism represent such creation, wide and integral, embracing in fact the whole scheme and scope of national life. The central principal of our national struggles, is physical transformation and to evolve collective body or entity—a nation within a nation, with a definite culture, education, religion and society, founded on that inner realisation, through a process of individual and collective purification so as to prepare a field of culture in the truth of unity, yet revealing every variety of India’s self-expression and up-building a political and economic foundation, whose model is no exact prototype but the adoption of modern requirements of the ancient great principle native to her life and genius of India. An organisation to be an Indian organisation must be therefore a fountain spring of SADHANA or in other words becomes a spontaneous flow of the Realisation, Resignation, and Service. India is intent to enjoy freedom only within the larger freedom of the world. “Who lives,” to quote Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, “if India dies and who dies if India lives.”

To-day we have to create this India. India may be a subcontinent but with all her varieties, basically India is a single country. India may be compared with a garland. A garland is composed of so many flowers but all flowers are tied into one with a single string fastening them together. Take away one flower and it will lose its beauty. Such is India. And such are we, when we embrace each other before we march with faith in Man and God to do our duty towards our motherland. Let our services be complimentary to those that are rendered by our comrades-in-arms at home. Let us die, so that India lives.

Comrades, you have come from different places. Let us take ourselves as little rivulets as if springing up from different places only to break ourselves into a river—the river that will break itself finally into the mighty ocean of India’s Liberty and Life. On this most auspicious occasion, let us pray with a craving heart like the Poet: “Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.” Let us cry out with prophetic fire like the Poet: “The injustice, you dread, is far more coward than you. So shatter the shackles of this imaginary fear and rally round the Mother—Mother India.” Out of this vision of Vishwakavi Rabindranath and in the creation of Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest man of the world, has risen the spirit of Modern India on whose forehead slavery has not put its mark neither has fear cast its shadow.

We, their children, who meet to-day under the able guidance of Sree Rash Behari Bose, the pioneer of our movement for freedom in East Asia, must now make a decision,—a decision that will accelerate
Two views of the Bangkok Conference

Mrs. S. R. Mehtani addressing the Conference

The Visitors are listening with rapt attention
the creation of a Free, Happy and United India—an India which the Poet visualised and the superman is creating. The burden is ours. We have to carry it. The success is assured, once we put faith in India.

We are grateful to those who have been showering on us sympathy and encouragement in helping us carry this burden. The spontaneous sympathy from far and near will ever remain as a treasure. We thank every one of you.

"Bande Mataram. In jlab Zindabad, Azad Hind Zindabad!"

Mr. Rash Behari Bose was then formally elected President. He delivered the following Presidential Address:

"Your Excellencies, Friends and Compatriots!

"Allow me to express my sincere thanks for the great honour you have done me by calling upon me to occupy this chair and guide the deliberations of this historic conference. While greatly appreciating this expression of love and affection for me, I am not unaware of the fact that along with this honour you have placed on my shoulders a great responsibility by electing me the President of this Conference. However, if I have obeyed your command and taken this chair in spite of my knowledge of the intricacies of the problems that will come before this conference, I have been prompted to do so by my great faith in your spirit of co-operation and your sincere desire to put your heads together and to come to useful decisions without wasting much of your time on unnecessary discussions and arguments. I am sure I can count upon your unreserved help and co-operation in successfully conducting the business of the conference.

"As I stand here, my thought goes to the unfortunate air accident, last March, that claimed the lives of our four valuable comrades—Swami Satyananda Puri and Gyan Pritam Singhji of Bangkok, and Captain Akram and Mr. Nilakanta Iyer of Malaya, while they were flying to Tokyo to attend our Indian Independence Conference.

"We can well realise the great loss to our cause at such an important period of our struggle and we all feel it very deeply. However, brethren, let us take it as inevitable and pray for the peace of their souls. In our grim final struggle against British Imperialism, we shall have to offer great sacrifices. Many of us will have to lay down our lives before the world can see India free. It can be well said that these four comrades have given us the lead, of which our compatriots in Thailand and Malaya can be well proud of.

"During and since 1857, when we first revolted against British Imperialism in India, hundreds of thousands of our most respected and beloved compatriots have laid down their lives in their efforts to free our motherland. We cannot forget the fact that they have
nourished the seeds of Swaraj with their blood and it is the result of their supreme sacrifices that we are to-day so near our goal and can hope with confidence to achieve independence in the near future. World knows only a part of the long list of those Indian victims of British Imperialism. Let us pay respects to the memory of those numberless known and unknown comrades. Placed as we are to-day, we can do very little beyond that. But the time is fast approaching when in every city and town in India, we shall find a worthy monument erected in their memory and we Indians will pay homage to them and look upon them with pride.

"Our homage is also due to those respected leaders and workers as well as the organisations that have in various ways made untiring efforts since 1857 to liberate our country from bondage. Their list is in no way small and in no way their contributions were negligible. Let us pay our respects to that greatest living Indian Mahatma Gandhi, who, with his magic wand, roused the Indian masses from the centuries-long slumber and has created self-confidence in them. We can have no doubt that when the new and true history of India will be written, Mahatma Gandhi's name will have to be mentioned as the Saviour of India.

"I do not want to take your time by going into the details regarding India's struggle for freedom since 1857. Suffice it to say that although the failure of our revolt of 1857 was a great blow to the nation and although a general depression had overwhelmed the country, our efforts to overthrow British rule never ceased. Under the circumstances prevailing in those days, the activities had to be carried on underground and within a limited scope; and whenever there was an opportunity, a revolt was attempted. After minor preparatory stages our first effort on a large scale was made when the war of 1914-1918 started. Our workers were active everywhere. The Indian army was prepared to join the revolt. A part of the Indian army had actually revolted rather prematurely. We thought we were going to succeed. Unfortunately we did not meet with success on that occasion. Thousands of our compatriots had to pay the highest price of patriotism. Thousands were sent to the Andamans and Mandalay and hundreds of them still remain rotting in prisons and concentration camps.

"During that war of 1914-1918 the British had been partially successful in receiving India's co-operation by telling lies and making false promises. Our people were misled by the fine phraseologies of the shrewd British diplomats. They promised us freedom after the war, as they are doing even during the present war. But soon after the conclusion of that war, it was realised that the British not only did not mean to keep their promises but definitely wanted to take away even that shadow of civil liberty that the Indians were having in pre-war days. When they protested against that, the response from the British side was in terms of bombs, bullets and machine-guns. Needless to mention that the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh of Amritsar in April, 1919, is still fresh in the memory of every one of us and the wound has not yet healed. It really cannot be healed until and unless we have completely destroyed the power that was responsible for the great humiliation of our people.
"Every tragedy, however, has a lesson and so had the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh. The blood of more than one thousand of those innocent martyrs, that included even our women and children, could not go without significant results. The great upheaval that swept India from one corner to the other, and the great movement of Non-Co-operation and Civil Disobedience that has been carried on by the Indian National Congress since 1919 and that has wonderfully organised the masses of India for political struggle, were undoubtedly the direct result of the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh.

"We all must bow our heads in reverence and be greatful to those brothers and sisters who by giving their lives at Jallianwala Bagh have created a new life in India. As we know to-day, millions and millions in India are prepared and determined to suffer and sacrifice their all for the cause of their motherland. When in 1939 the war in Europe started, Britain once again began to indulge in jugglery of words in order to secure Indian co-operation and help. But to the great delight of us all, to this very day the nationalist leaders in India have refused to be misled and have continued to resist all British efforts to drag India into war. Our respect goes to Mahatma Gandhi for the most admirable way, he has led the nation clear of all dangers of being entangled in this war.

"With this background in India, the Greater East Asia War was declared on the 8th December, 1941. No matter in which part of the world he or she might be living, whatever might be his or her attitude towards Japan, I refuse to believe that there was a true Indian patriot who was not extremely delighted and gratified in his heart of hearts when the great news of the declaration of War by Japan against the Anglo-American races reached his or her ears. I refuse to believe there is any true Indian patriot, whatever be his or her career or conviction, who might not have rejoiced, as from day to day, the mighty Imperial forces of Japan on land and sea and in the air went on administering crushing blows against their imperialism in Asia, and the British Imperialist bases in these parts began to totter one after the other like houses of cards. For is there a man whose eyes cannot withhold joyous tears when he sees before his eyes the power of the greatest enemy of humanity and peace, the greatest aggressor of centuries being destroyed? Those of us, who were destined to live and work in Japan, had particular reasons to be overjoyed at these most welcome happenings.

"We have been working in Japan for decades so that we can see Japan in a position to stand by the oppressed Asians and to liberate Asia. We were anxiously awaiting the day when Japan would fully realise the great significance of creating a free and united Asia and would feel convinced that it was in the interest of Japan herself, as also for the rest of Asia if not for the world as a whole, that the octopus grip of the Anglo-Saxon Imperialism in the East must be destroyed root and branch. We all were fully convinced that Japan alone was in the position to take the honour. Thus when on the morning of the most auspicious day, the day of the Enlightenment of Lord Buddha, we heard the most auspicious news of Japan's declaration of war against our common enemy, we felt that our mission in
Japan was fulfilled. We felt convinced that India’s freedom was assured. Being in Japan for decades, I knew well that Japan was not in the habit of talking and debating unnecessary and meaningless things. I knew well that she was not in the habit of taking any serious step unless she had fully weathered her strength and was convinced of her success. I therefore did not share the views of those who thought that due to her continued military activities in China, she was too exhausted to challenge the mighty Anglo-Saxon, or the so called ABCD combined forces. I was one of those who had not the slightest doubt that the war in China was a prelude to the real war against Powers who were actually responsible for the continued fratricidal conflict between China and Japan. Happenings on the international chess board during the past more than ten years have been suggesting that such a worldwide conflict was inevitable. It was also apparent that the question of Indian freedom could be successfully solved only when Japan rose in arms against British Imperialism.

“Now that Japan and Thailand have taken up arms against our common foe, the joint efforts of our worthy allies ensure the doom of the British Empire and our complete victory is assured.

“These effective efforts on different fronts to destroy our common enemy, bring us a reminder regarding our own duties and responsibilities in this common effort for our common cause. We must ask ourselves what we have done and what we are going to do to contribute to this great cause. Only praising Japan, Germany and Italy will not entitle us to the position for which we are craving. We must contribute our mite and must make the greatest sacrifice we can make. Then alone can we command the respect and consideration of our worthy allies and then alone we can claim a place worthy of a great nation like ours in future international assembly.

Realising this very important fact, and our duty towards our motherland at this most important juncture, we in Tokyo promptly met on the 8th of December, 1941 at the Rainbow Grill and decided upon a programme of action. My compatriots formed a committee and asked me to lead the movement and I gladly agreed to abide by their decision. We at first undertook to consolidate Indian opinion in East Asia in favour of a definite fight from without. Meetings were held in different centres of Japan and resolutions were passed emphasising the solidarity of our compatriots, the great need of declaring Independence of India by destroying British Imperialism, and expressing confidence in our work.

On the 26th December, 1941, for the first time in the history of Indians in Japan, a Conference of nearly fifty representatives of the Indian residents in Kobe, Osaka, Yokohama and Tokyo—all the four cities, where Indians reside—was held at the Railway Hotel at Tokyo to consider the problems. A resolution was passed calling upon the Indians to realise the gravity of the situation and the danger ahead of India. The resolution read as follows:

"Whereas the continued defeat of the British and their allies in Europe and Africa has sealed the fate of the British Imperialism in Europe.
Whereas the most decisive destruction of British sea and land forces by Japan in the East has given a death-blow to the power and prestige of British Imperialism in Asia.

Whereas the war is fast approaching the shores and borders of India, the British stronghold, Axis powers may be obliged to invade India in order to destroy the main source of British fighting strength.

Whereas such an invasion will bring unimaginable and extremely unusual hardships, miseries and sufferings to millions of innocent and helpless Indians in cities, towns and villages, and

Whereas the only way to avoid this most unhappy situation is to declare complete independence of India from British rule and to cut off all possible connections with British Imperialism in every possible way immediately;

The Indian Nationals residing in Japan assembled in this Conference, most seriously and earnestly appeal to the Indian National Congress and the people of India to immediately declare Independence and to capture all power from the British in India and to take immediate effective steps to stop each and every source of Indian aid to British Imperialist War and to declare on behalf of the people that India has no desire whatsoever to be involved in this conflict and has never been willing to help Britain.

Our representatives were sent to Shanghai and on 20th of January this year, a huge gathering of the Indian residents of Shanghai was held in Young Men’s Association hall when similar resolutions as passed in Tokyo were very enthusiastically passed and our movement was given unanimous support.

In the meantime we established contact with the military and civil high commands in Japan and began to impress upon them the necessity of helping India in her struggle for freedom for the very achievement of the great object for which Japan had declared war against British and America. We made it clear to them that so long as British Imperialism in India continued, Japan could not expect a final victory in this war. At last we succeeded in prevailing upon them and General Tojo, the Prime Minister of Japan, openly declared before the Imperial Diet that his Government was prepared to help the Indians in our efforts to free our country from the long bondage. In his declaration before the Imperial Diet on the fall of Singapore he said:

"It is a golden opportunity for India, having, as it does, several thousand years of history and splendid cultural tradition, to rid herself of the ruthless despotism of Britain and participate in the construction of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Japan expects that India will restore its proper status of India for the Indians and it will not stint herself in extending assistance to the Patriotic efforts of the Indians. Should India fail to awaken to her mission forgetting her history and tradition, and continue as before to be beguiled by the British cajolery and manipulation and act at their beck and call, I cannot but fear that an opportunity for the renaissance of the Indian people would be forever lost."

The declaration offered us great encouragement and we felt convinced that India could safely hope to be free before the East Asia War comes
to an end. Counting upon the promises of General Tojo, we established our headquarters at Sanno Hotel and started our activities and preparations in right earnest. We decided that a Conference of the representatives of Indian organisations in various parts of East Asia should be held for exchanging views regarding our future move. With the help of the military authorities things were conveniently arranged and the representatives of our compatriots residing in Malaya, Hongkong and Shanghai along with us of Tokyo, sat in conference for three days and arrived at certain decisions and framed the preliminary constitution for the working and progress of our movement. Those friends from abroad, who participated in the Tokyo Conference, had occasion to come in contact with responsible members of the Japanese Army in Tokyo and to know more and more about the standing of our movement. Discussion at the Tokyo Conference were varied and we did our best to lay down a solid foundation upon which we could base our plan of action in future. We all know that the Conference in Tokyo was held at a time when things were less settled than they are today. Friends from East Indies were not present. We were deprived of the valuable help and advice of our friends in Thailand due to the unfortunate accident. Burma and Andamans were still in the hands of our enemies. We, therefore, were unable to come to a decision that could be claimed to be representative of the views of our compatriots in East Asia as a whole. We, therefore, decided to hold a larger and more representative Conference at a later date when the decisions taken at Tokyo were to be ratified. This Assembly in which we are participating to-day is the result of that decision.

"The responsibility to convene this Conference was placed upon my shoulders and I was asked to hold it in this city. I am sorry that the Conference was delayed by a couple of weeks. We expected to arrive here earlier but due to extraordinary period, through which we are passing, things could not be always done as expected and we have to adjust ourselves according to circumstances.

"I know I have exhausted your patience by chronologizing the events and activities during the last more than six months. But, it was necessary to acquaint you with what has happened and how we have proceeded, before we sit down to business and put our heads together to knock out far reaching decisions.

"Friends, we all realise the gravity of the situation and also the fact that we are passing through the most important period of India's history. I don't want to waste time on long speeches. We had enough of that during the last more than five decades. We really cannot afford to waste our time on meaningless talks and arguments. Those who want to really serve the motherland cannot have much time to talk. If we go on talking without coming to any concrete decision, time will not wait for us and we shall be left only to shed tears at our past folly, and it will be too late to mend things. I know there are knotty problems that will come before you for discussions and will need your most careful consideration. I know you will have to do a lot of thinking and face a lot of doubts from within before you can decide. But, if you have come with grim determination to thrash out a positive, concrete, and actually useful plan, you will be able to come to quick decisions. Let us all fully realise our responsibilities towards our land of birth and let us realise well, that our down-trodden
country cannot afford to lose this golden opportunity that comes only once in centuries. Our brothers and sisters have in hundreds of thousands laid down their lives and have suffered and sacrificed for more than a century so that our country may be once again free. Let us rise to the occasion and carry their efforts to success so that the souls of martyrs in Heaven may find peace and be pleased. Let us rise and act so that the great preparations that Mahatma Gandhi has made during the last more than twenty decades, may bear fruit and our children in future may think of us with pride and respect as the members of a free nation.

"I know many of you have come with doubts and suspicions regarding the ultimate fate of our country as the result of our activities. I assure you that I can well appreciate your feelings of uncertainty and your desire for security and yet I believe they are based on false promises. Having bitterest experiences of Imperialist exploitations for centuries, we have begun to doubt even our good friends and if we insist on this attitude, the world will go on and we shall be left behind to regret our indecision.

"I want to sound a note of warning here. Our enemies have always been successful in keeping us divided and creating false impressions in our minds on such occasions. On many occasions in the past, we have missed opportunities to free our country by being victims of lying British propaganda. I can only hope that we shall not repeat our folly. Our doubts and suspicions are to a great extent the results of shrewd and well-thought plans of our enemies to sabotage our efforts. Those of us who have intelligence enough and who are not blind to facts and happenings can see the way clearly.

"We should feel thankful to the Governments of Japan, Germany, Thailand and Italy for their most friendly attitude they have been showing towards our cause. We must be particularly thankful to Japan for the most encouraging and hopeful definite promise of help in our sacred cause. Let us not forget the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when he said:

Success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to cowards.

"I make an earnest appeal to you all friends to see that when you conclude your session, you have a most practical and workable plan of action for India's freedom so that we can start our work right after the Conference and march ahead. We are fortunate enough to have the most valuable help of our Indian Army at our disposal. They deserve our great respect for the great service they have already rendered to our cause by refusing to serve the enemies of India. But their greater service is still awaiting our decision. No one can doubt the bravery of our soldiers in a righteous fight for a righteous cause. Our sympathy goes to the families and friends of those Indian soldiers who have, erroneously believing that they have been fighting for a right cause, lost their lives in Europe and Asia. They have been misled by the same propaganda of lies by Britain that is responsible for the unfounded suspicion in the minds of so many of us. I bow my head to the bravery of our soldiers and we should have no doubt that with their wholehearted support we are going to win our final fight against British Imperialism. Let us stand shoulder to shoulder and let us march hand in hand to success. Let us remember we have one indivisible
Nation—India—one enemy,—England,—one goal—Complete Independence. Bande Matram.

Mr. Koh Ishii then read the following telegraphic congratulatory message from the Japanese Premier General Hideki Tojo:—

It is with the greatest of pleasure that I send you my heartiest congratulations on the occasion of the convention of the Indian Independence Conference in Thailand, our ally, on the initiative of the leaders of the 2 million Indians living in East Asia to create a new epoch in the movement for Indian independence.

Since the outbreak of the Greater East Asia War more than half a year has elapsed. During this period the British defences in Asia for the placating of India have practically been wiped out by the gallant Imperial forces and a golden opportunity to realize the long cherished aspiration of Indian independence has come.

At this juncture if the leaders of the two million Indians in East Asia in calling this conference respond to Japan’s true desire for the Indians to create India for the Indians, Japan is quite prepared to give her unstinted support as it has been announced from time to time, and I might add that the Axis Powers are ready to co-operate in accord with their full support.

Britain, which is meeting with defeats in Asia, Europe, Africa and in all theatres of war, is facing an extremely miserable state of affairs which she brought on herself by her own misdoings. She is now demanding great sacrifices of India through her usual crafty way of threat and supplication. However, the far-sighted and able patriotic Indian leaders, wisely realizing the heavenly bestowed destiny of India, and fully cognizant of the world affairs, are determinedly resisting Britain, a fact for which I want to express my deepest respect. Though the construction of India for the Indians constitutes my most sincere desire, India still remains British territory, and military establishments, as well as military forces, are being daily strengthened. Japan is firmly determined decisively to destroy Britain and she will be compelled to take action so long as British military strength remains in India.

In order to rescue India from war disaster, it is necessary that Britain should give up her ambitions in India or India herself must sever her relations with Britain on her own initiative. Fortunately, as I believe, the present Conference represents the general public opinion of the Indian people of the East, I pledge that Japan is fully prepared to support the independence movement.

In congratulating most earnestly upon the success of the present Conference I hope sincerely that the Indian people will fully understand Japan’s true intentions, and, with the people both inside and outside India working in close co-operation, achieve their cherished hope of independence.

Mr. Koh Ishii also read the following congratulatory message from Mr. Shigenori Tojo, Foreign Minister of Japan:—

“I have the pleasure to express my sincere respects for the patriotic ardour of the Indian leaders representing the Indians in the
Greater East Asia, on this occasion of the Indian Independence Conference. As is known to the Indian people, the British domination over India, from its beginning, was due to the unimaginable false and crafty policy of alienation and also at the same time to the British military strength in India.

However, the military bases in East Asia have completely been swept away and England’s fate is now hanging in the balance. Under such circumstances Britain is now resorting to desperate all-out methods such as propaganda in which she is maliciously alleging that Japan, Germany or Italy has certain ambitions in India and to deceitful proposals concerning the revision of Indian administration in an attempt to win over the Indian people to enlist them in the defence of British Empire. There is no other time than the present when the Indians must be on guard against British machination.

Japan has no desire whatever toward India except to see her realize the restoration of freedom and has the firm determination to destroy Britain and America as has been announced previously by Japan. The Indian people who are now faced with the golden opportunity should discard trifles and devote themselves to greater moral principle. They should—endeavour internally to unify the general public opinion and externally co-operate with Japan, Germany and Italy to destroy British Imperialism to bring about the realization of the aspiration of Indians.

As the result of the conference I firmly believe that the independence movement will be put under a unified control, thus to enhance the early achievement of the independence, for which I want to express my sincere congratulations.”

Mr. Anand Mohan Sahay, leader of the delegation from Japan, then made a speech in Hindustani, while Mr. N. Raghavan, President of the Malaya Branch and leader of the delegation from Malaya, spoke in English. In the course of his speech Mr. Raghavan said that India, their mother country, was in danger. She had been enslaved by the British imperialistic expansion of the 19th century and India had been fighting for her independence all the time. Mother India had produced more than 400 millions of her sons and daughters and now she was calling to them. She was calling to her sons and daughters abroad to go to her, to assist her, to escape from the chains and to save her from being trodden down. There was no better opportunity than the present time when they had universal co-operation to release India from the tyranny of British Imperialism. The speaker called on all the sons and daughters of India to come to the aid of their enslaved mother, who was now in ragged and soiled clothes.

After Mr. Raghavan, General Mohan Singh G.O.C. of the Indian National Army, spoke in Hindustani for more than one hour. “For nearly a century we had been fighting without arms,” he said. “Let us thank the Almighty God that to-day Japan the mighty Eastern Power, is our friend. For humanity’s sake and with Mahatma Gandhi’s choicest blessings let us fight for the peace and liberation of our country.” The General assured the leaders of the Indian Independence
Movement that services of the I. N. A. would be placed at their disposal, but the I. N. A. would fight under the command of Indian officers only and would exclusively work for the freedom of India.

Colonel N.S. Gill then spoke in English. He stated that it was a shame that the people from three tiny islands in the west of Europe could hold and dominate an ancient and civilized nation like Indians. The domination dated back to the 19th century and ever since India had fought for her liberty and independence inch by inch sacrificing hundreds of thousands of her patriotic sons. In his boyhood he had heard the girls in a village in India sing a song which encouraged the men to fight for India's independence and freedom. That song, he said, was handed down from father to son from the day of domination of India by foreign Power. With the aid of Nippon as well as Germany and Italy India now had the golden opportunity which would never occur for centuries again for the patriotic off-springs of India to drive away the oppressors and robbers of India's wealth and free India for the Indians.

Mrs. Sibagham, the wife of the proprietor of Karachi Store, Bangkok, made a speech in Hindustani.

The speeches of Mr. T. Tsubokami, the Japanese Ambassador in Thailand, of Dr. E. Wendler, the German Minister, and of Signor Guido Crolla, the Italian Minister in Bangkok, then followed:

"I feel it a great honour to have the opportunity to be present at this historic Indian Independence Conference that has just been opened," said Mr. Tsubokami.

"The independence of India has been the long cherished aspiration of the Indian people; its freedom has long been nourished by the three hundred fifty million Indians. As a member of the Asiatic races we Japanese have also ardently desired the realization of the hope of India for Indians.

"It is a matter of congratulation that the time has become ripe for Indian independence and its signal fire is now about to be lighted in a corner in East Asia. That this conference is being held in the capital city of Thailand, the people of which enjoy the greatest understanding of Japan, cannot be said to be coincidental. The Indian leaders who have assembled here from all parts of Asia are patriots who have endured the harsh sufferings of imprisonments, of having been obliged to seek refuge in foreign lands, of exerting themselves through long years of hardship with unabating hope for the noble cause of seeing their country become free. Their efforts have not been in vain and at this Conference the dawn of their aspiration is now about to be realized. I can see quite well how great must be their joy and satisfaction. We Japanese who, as your comrades in your struggle against the British injustice for the liberation of the peoples of East Asia, obviously cannot be disinterested in this most great and significant enterprise.

"The results achieved by the Imperial Japanese forces on land and sea and in the air for the last six months since the outbreak"
of Greater East-Asia War have been unprecedented in the world's history of war. Hongkong, Singapore and Rangoon, supplemented by Manila and Netherland Indies, were a series of fortifications for the preservation of the security of Britain and at the same time the bulwark to defend India.

"As India was Britain's lifeline, it was indispensable that she should have constructed these series of double and treble re-inforced impregnable lines of fortifications in Asia to defend her lifeline. However, these groups of fortifications have helplessly succumbed before the irresistible Japanese forces.

"Moreover, the British fleet in the Indian Ocean has been speedily annihilated and the Japanese navy is now carrying out operations in even the extreme south of Africa. The mastery of the Indian Ocean is no longer in the hands of the British navy, and thus the defence of India which Britain had built at great effort through long years has completely vanished. India has now virtually become a defenceless 'island of seclusion'.

"Concerning the present India we see two significant factors, namely: firstly, Britain cannot any longer enlist the wealth of India for its economic and military needs; and secondly, as the yoke of Britain over India has been broken, the chance for the independence of India has become imminent. In other words, the fall of the British Empire signifies the realization of the independence of India. Under such circumstances this Indian Independence Conference has emerged. Its purpose is identical with one of the objectives of the Greater East Asia War which is to liberate India from Britain.

"In this connection one thing must be made clear and that is that Japan, Germany and Italy in relation to the Indian problem have had the closest understanding and co-operation from the beginning to the end. These three nations, following the conclusion of the tripartite treaty, have been and are standing arm in arm to destroy Britain, their common enemy. That the three nations, since the beginning of the war, have mutually been carrying out their tasks in crushing the Anglo-Saxon forces amply demonstrate how completely the tripartite treaty is being carried out. If we are to assume that the independence of India means the overthrow of Britain, it is clear that the three nations have been and are working in perfect agreement. That the three nations do not have any ambition toward India also demonstrate that there will be no conflict of interests among these three nations.

"Britain and America who are no longer able to defend India are now resorting to propaganda to cause disunion among the Axis Powers, but unless the latter happen to be exceptionally stupid, there is little hope that they will fall victims to such childish propaganda. It is our intention to have made it clear for the Indian brethren that they will even be backed up by the joint strong support of Japan, Germany and Italy.

"India is now being blessed with a heaven-sent opportunity. Hence if she should lose this opportunity she cannot hope for another such
chance for independence. The eyes and ears of the whole world, including the three hundred fifty million Indians, are now focussed on the developments of this Conference. As you reflect on this fact you must no doubt realize that every word you say and everything you do carries with it tremendous responsibilities. Generally speaking, in order to accomplish great things it is necessary to discard trifles and unite in the execution of the general objectives. The cause of Japan's epochal achievements rests on just this principle and on the spirit of her national unity.

"Now is not a time for argument but a time for action. India's independence can be achieved through the united action of entire Indian nation. I believe that the success or failure of the Conference rests solely on your spirit of co-operation.

"Sharing in your faith I pray from the bottom of my heart for the success of the Conference."

"It is especially gratifying to me as German Minister in Bangkok," stated Dr. Wendler, "to be able to accept the invitation to attend the opening session of this Conference at which prominent representatives of the Indian people will deliberate as to the means to shape and safeguard the future of India in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people.

"I need hardly emphasize that Germany too takes a lively interest in these questions as was also stressed a short time ago by the fact that the German Chancellor received at his headquarters the well-known champion of the Indian Independence idea, Subhas Chandra Bose. The world war raging to-day will spell the end of the dominion of the British and Americans who have ever subjugated and used for their own purposes the peoples in their power.

"The nations allied to each other by the Tripartite Pact, Germany, Italy and Japan, will see to a just New Order, terminating Anglo-American tutelage over the rest of the world. Thus also the possibility arises for the Indian people, after nearly two centuries of subjugation by the British, a subjugation which has cost India so much misery and suffering, to shape the future destiny of their country according to their will.

"The German people have shown the greatest sympathy towards the people of India. The outstanding cultural achievements of India during the course of her long history dating back thousands of years, have always been the source of special interest in Germany. Germany was also the first country in Europe in which the great values in the spheres of Indian philosophy and poetry were fully appreciated. It is therefore self-evident that the German people, notwithstanding the titanic struggle in which they find themselves involved, even at the present time follow with much sympathy the significant happenings in India and, together with the peoples of Italy and Japan, show the greatest interest in the fight for freedom of the Indian people.

The Great Powers of the Tripartite Pact are all the more in a position to raise their voices as sincere friends of the Indian people since, they have no territorial interests whatsoever in India. They have but one desire:
that India and her people, in free self-determination, should be heading for a better future and develop to a level corresponding with the riches of the Indian soil and the great gifts of its inhabitants.

"It is indeed a source of deep gratification for me," stated Signor Guido Crolla, the Italian Minister in Bangkok, "to attend the opening session of this Conference which, thanks to Thailand’s hospitality, gathers here to-day the representatives of the various Indian Movements in the Far East. The bonds between India and Italy date far back in history. They were existing even before the Roman Empire, which was a great attempt of unifying western and eastern cultures. In the Middle Ages the daring exploits of an Italian, Marco Polo, brought the two worlds closer again, while the Republics of Venice and Genoa were intensifying their trade with India through the Mediterranean. In more recent times Indian culture found and still finds in Italy many scholars and admirers and the Italian youth is taught in school how to appreciate the contribution given by India to the history of humanity. The Italian people who have for so long hardly struggled to recover their unity and independence cannot feel but sympathy and understanding towards the suffering and aspirations of the Indian people.

"Italy’s interest for the cause of Indian Independence is deeply rooted in the past. Indian exiles have alway found in Italy a most cordial welcome and hospitality. This particular sympathy, which is spontaneous, lively and disinterested, has recently found expression in the institution of a society in Rome called ‘The Friends of India,’ where the Indian patriots of undaunted faith and sincerity, such as Iqbal Schedai, are working for the cause of Indian liberty followed by the friendly and unanimous encouragement of the Italian public opinion. ‘The Friends of India’ wish to create as closer connections as possible between cognate associations existing in Germany, Japan and Thailand with a view to attaining the final aim through a better and greater co-ordination of their respective efforts. The enduring passion of the Indian people is approaching its decisive moment.

"The war which the Tripartite Powers are victoriously waging against India’s secular oppressor is destined to create a new order in contrast with the old one ruled by Anglo-Saxon selfishness and abuse. Within the frame of such a New Order the Indian people, after having shaken the British yoke, shall, as a free Nation, find the place which their high civil and cultural traditions entitle them to. Italy, Germany and Japan have no territorial ambitions in India. Their support is therefore all the more disinterested and their friendship all the more sincere.

"The representatives of Free India gathered in Bangkok to-day are confronted with the highly responsible task of shaping the future destiny of their own country in accordance with the wishes and the interests of the Indian people. In unison with Germany and Japan, Italy is wishing this Conference the best success."

Mr. Narulla then read the following message from Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose to Mr. Debnath Das, Chairman of the Reception Committee.

"I am delighted to have your message inviting me to your Conference which is going to meet under the distinguished presidency of the revo-
lutionary leader, Rash Behari Bose. Since it is not possible to join you in person, I must content myself with sending you this message conveying my most cordial greetings. The branches of the Azad Hind Sangh (Friends of India Society) in Europe also associate with me in sending this message.

"After Stafford Cripps' departure from India, the last phase in our national struggle has begun. In this historic struggle all nationalists whether in India or outside must play their part. The experience I have gained during the last 18 months has convinced me that in our fight against British imperialism, the Tripartite Powers are our best friends and allies outside India and I have no doubt that they will gladly render us such assistance as we may need. But the emancipation of India must be the work primarily of Indians themselves. We who are the vanguard of the national army have the sacred mission of leading the national struggle to a successful conclusion. Tough I have clear and definite views regarding postwar reconstruction in India, it is the Indian people in free India who must determine the future destiny of the country and of the Free Indian State.

"My own objective study and observation in different parts of the world for 18 months has led me to the irresistible conclusion that Britain will lose this war and that the British Empire will be completely dismembered. All the forces that are striving to destroy or weaken the British Empire are helping India's emancipation, while all forces that are endeavouring to save the British Empire are attempting to perpetuate India's slavery.

"It is a matter of profound gratification to all nationalists outside India that all nationalists inside India are united in the aim of India's independence. We, who form the vanguard of the national army, feel however that the time will soon come when it will be necessary to take up arms in the final stage of the struggle. And we also feel that since the British Empire is seeking help all over the world and is trying to flood India with foreign soldiers and foreign war material, it is the right and duty of the Indian nationalists to accept any help that may be offered them. Given the right leadership and the necessary capacity, the Indian people will undoubtedly be able to overcome all obstacles and win their freedom. When the crucial moment arrives nobody will be able to prevent my entering India again with a view to participating in the final struggle.

"I am convinced that during the course of this war India will be free. India's liberation will mean the expulsion of Anglo-American imperialism, the goal of the victorious Japanese Army. The freedom of India will also afford powerful stimulus to freedom movements all over the world.

"I am glad to find that the branches of Azad Hind Sangh in Europe are doing their very best to participate in the national struggle and are preparing for the post-war reconstruction that will follow. It is now time to link up Indian nationalists all over the world in one all-embracing organisation. I wish all success to your
Conference and I ardently hope and trust that it will prove to be a further mile-stone in our march towards victory.

"Inquialb Zindabad! Azad Hind Zindabad!"

In moving a vote of thanks at the conclusion of the open session of the Conference Colonel G. Q. Gilani stated that when he was in Thailand he did not feel strange, because the culture and architecture of the Thai people were similar to those of the Indians. He felt no doubt that Thailand and India had been friends in old days and that fact could be proved by the most hospitable attitude and sympathy shown by Thailand towards the Conference. He thanked Thailand, the Land of the Free, for allowing the Conference to be held in her capital as well as for honouring the Conference with a message from her Premier.

FUTURE OF INDIA.

Momentous decisions on which would depend the future of India were taken at the Bangkok Conference, which concluded its sessions on June 23, 1942. This Conference endorsed the policy laid down by the Tokyo Conference that the complete independence of India free from foreign control, interference or domination shall be the object of the Movement. It decided that the organisation for carrying out the Movement should be known as to the Indian Independence League and framed the constitution of the League with its sphere of operation extending over the whole of East Asia. Its policy vis-a-vis the Indian National Congress was also clearly defined.

The formation, control, status and scope of the Indian National Army were discussed at great length and important decisions bearing on these matters arrived at. The Army was placed under the direct control of the Council of Action of the League. Any military operation contemplated by the Army against the British in India should conform with the wishes of the Indian National Congress, expressed or implied.

This Conference laid down in definite and unmistakable terms what the future relationship of Free India with Japan should be and in a business-like manner warned the Imperial Government of Japan to endorse this policy by a formal declaration.

By way of crowning their deliberations the delegates brought their efforts to a happy issue by deciding to invite Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose the Man of the Hour, who was then known to be living in Germany after his mysterious disappearance from his home at Calcutta early in 1941, and to offer him the leadership of the Movement in East Asia.

The resolutions passed at the Conference are as follows:

(1) Whereas it is the objective of the War of Greater East Asia to destroy British Imperialism in the East;

And whereas it gives an opportunity for India to realise the goal of complete independence;
And whereas it is the belief of this Conference that a new and regenerated Asia of Free Nations is certain to arise as a result of this said War;

This Conference expresses its sincere gratifications at the war policy of Japan and conveys to the Imperial Government its wishes for the continued successes of the Imperial Japanese Armed Forces.

(2) This Conference conveys to all the Powers fighting against British Imperialism its sincere congratulations and prays that their efforts may meet with complete success.

(3) This Conference places on record its sense of deep gratification for the most determined manner in which the nationalist leaders at home have been trying to refuse to be drawn in this War on the side of the British and their Allies and for the frank and definite demand for the withdrawal of the British from India.

In the opinion of this Conference, unless the British withdraw from India and the Allied Forces cease to make use of India as a base for war operations and war preparations, unimaginable and innumerable sufferings will be the lot of the people of India.

(4) Resolved that a movement for achieving complete and immediate independence of India be sponsored by this Conference.

(5) Object. This Conference endorses the view of the Tokyo Conference held in March, 1942, that the complete independence of India, free from any foreign control, domination or interference of whatever nature, shall be the object of this movement and is emphatically of opinion that the time has arrived to take the necessary steps for the attainment of that object.

(6) Resolved that the Indian Independence Movement sponsored by this Conference shall be guided by the principles indicated below:—

(a) That Unity, Faith and Sacrifice shall be the motto of the Indian Independence Movement.

(b) That India be considered as one and indivisible.

(c) That all activities of this Movement be on a national basis and not on sectional, communal or religious basis.

(d) That in view of the fact that the Indian National Congress is the only political organisation which can claim to represent the real interests of the people of India, and as such be acknowledged the only body representing India, this Conference is of the opinion that the programme and plan of action of this Movement must be so guided, controlled and directed as to bring them in line with the aims and intentions of the Indian National Congress.

(e) That the framing of the future Constitution of India be done only by the representatives of the people of India.

(7) Resolved that an organisation be started for carrying on the Indian Independence Movement and it shall be known as The Indian Independence League.
(8) Resolved that the Indian Independence League shall immediately proceed to raise an army called the Indian National Army from among the soldiers (combatants and non-combatants) and such civilians as may hereafter be recruited for Military service in the cause of Indian Independence.

(9) Resolved that for the purpose of financing the Independence Movement, the Council of Action be authorised to raise funds from Indians in East Asia.

(10) Resolved that a request be made to the Nippon Government that it may be pleased to place immediately all Indian soldiers in territories in East Asia under their control, at the disposal of this Movement.

(11) Resolved that the formation, command, control and organisation of the Indian National Army be in the hands of Indians themselves.

(12) Resolved that it is the earnest desire of this Conference that the Indian National Army from its inception be accorded the powers and status of a free National Army of an Independent India on a footing of equality with the armies of Japan and other friendly Powers.

(13) Resolved that the Indian National Army shall be made use of only:

(a) For operating against the British or other foreign Powers in India.

(b) For the purpose of securing and safeguarding Indian National Independence, and

(c) For such other purposes as may assist the achievement of the object, viz., the Independence of India.

(14) Resolved that all officers and men of the proposed Indian National Army shall be members of the Indian Independence League and shall owe allegiance to the League.

(15) Resolved that the Indian National Army shall be under the direct control of the Council of Action and that the said Army shall be organised and commanded by the General Officer Commanding, Indian National Army, in accordance with the directions of the Council of Action.

(16) Resolved that in the event of military action being taken against British or other foreign Powers in India and for the said purpose the Council of Action may be at liberty to place the military resources available to it, under the unified command of Indian and Japanese Military Officers under the direction of the said Council of Action.

(17) Resolved that before taking any military Action against the British or any other foreign Power in India, the Council of Action will assure itself that such action is in conformity with the expressed or implied wishes of the Indian National Congress.

(18) Resolved that the Council of Action shall make all efforts to create an atmosphere in India which would lead to a revolution in the
Indian Army there and among the Indian people and that before taking military action the Council of Action shall assure itself that such an atmosphere exists in India.

(19) In view of the great urgency and imperative necessity of informing and convincing our countrymen in India and abroad and the friends of India all over the world of the meaning and purpose of this Movement and in view of the fact that propaganda in and outside India is one of the most effective means of waging the war for Indian Independence, this Conference resolves to take immediate steps to carry on active and vigorous propaganda by broadcasts, leaflets, lectures and by such other means as may be found possible and practicable from time to time.

(20) That all foreign assistance of whatever nature shall be only to the extent and of the type asked for by the Council of Action.

(21) This Conference places on record its grateful appreciation of the support and encouragement given to this Movement by the Imperial Government of Japan and resolves that the Council of Action be authorised to approach if and when necessary the said Government with a request to render such monetary help as may be required from time to time for the successful carrying out of the object of his Movement on the distinct understanding that such monetary help is to be treated as a loan repayable to the Imperial Government of Japan by the National Government of India.

(22) Resolved that the Imperial Government of Japan be requested to be good enough to provide all facilities for propaganda, travel, transport and communications within the area under the control of the Imperial Government of Japan in the manner and to the extent requested by the Council of Action and also all facilities to come into contact with the national leaders, workers and organisations in India.

(23) Resolved that the Imperial Government of Japan be requested to be good enough to arrange with the local authorities concerned that in matters of administration affecting the Indian community, the Indian Independence League in the respective places, and in places where there are no branches of the League, recognised leaders of the community approved by the League Branch nearest to such places, be consulted.

(24) Resolved that the Government of Thailand be requested to be good enough to consult the Indian Independence League (formerly known as the Indian National Council and the Independence League of India) in matters of administration affecting the Indian community in Thailand.

(25) This Conference, while recording its grateful appreciation of the various pronouncements made by General Tojo, the Premier of Japan, expressing the preparedness of the Nipponese Government to give its unstinted support to the cause of Indian Independence, reiterates the resolution of the Tokyo Conference that in further clarification
of the attitude of Japan towards India, the Imperial Government of Japan be good enough to make a formal declaration to the effect:—

(a) That immediately on the severance of India from the British Empire, Imperial Government of Japan shall respect the territorial integrity and recognise the full sovereignty of India, free of any foreign influence, control or interference of a political, military or economic nature.

(b) That the Imperial Government of Japan will exercise its influence with other Powers and induce them to recognise the national independence and absolute sovereignty of India.

(c) That the framing of the future Constitution of India will be left entirely to the representatives of the people of India without interference from any foreign authority.

(26) Resolved that this Conference is committed to a definite policy of the closest co-operation with Japan and it shall on elicit an official definition satisfactory to this Movement of the term “Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere” and its implications, endeavour to persuade Independent India:—

(a) To be a member of such Sphere or a member of any other international combine of which Japan is a member, on a footing of equality with Japan; and

(b) To confer on Japan the most favoured nation treatment on a reciprocal basis.

(27) Whereas it has come to the knowledge of this Conference that Indians in the territories, which are now freed from the domination of the Anglo-Saxons and their allies by the Imperial forces of Japan, own considerable movable and immovable properties in these territories; and

Whereas owing to the exigencies of the War, a number of Indians had to leave these territories leaving behind their properties without making arrangements for their care and management; and

Whereas the Imperial Government of Japan has promised its unstinted support to the cause of Indian Independence; and

Whereas enormous amount of money is required to carry on and complete the object of the said Movement in East Asia; and

Whereas an appreciable steady income is likely to be derived from the said properties in the said territories; and

Whereas in the opinion of this Conference the handing over of such properties to the Indian Independence League by the authorities concerned, on the distinct understanding that the said properties are to be returned to their rightful owners when claimed, will be welcome as a sign of goodwill and encouragement towards this Movement.
Now this Conference resolves that the Imperial Government of Japan may be pleased to arrange with the authorities in the territories now freed from the domination of the Anglo-Saxons and their Allies by the Imperial forces of Japan to hand over properties owned by Indians (including those owned by Indian companies, firms or partnerships) and left behind by them owing to the exigencies of the War, to the Council of Action of this Movement, in trust for their rightful owners, to manage and control the said properties and advance the income thereof for the use of this movement to be repaid as and when claimed by the said owners.

(28) This Conference, having learnt with regret that Indians residing in certain countries under the occupation of the Imperial forces of Japan are being treated as enemy aliens and suffer hardships and loss in consequence, resolves that the Imperial Government of Japan may be pleased to make a declaration to the effect (a) that Indians residing in the territories occupied by the Imperial forces of Japan shall not be considered enemy nationals so long as they do not indulge in any action injurious to this Movement or hostile to the interests of Japan and (b) that the properties both movable and immovable of those Indians who are now residing in India or elsewhere (including the properties of Indian companies, firms or partnerships) be not treated by Japan as enemy properties so long as the management or control of such properties is vested in any person or persons residing in Japan or in any of the countries occupied by or under the control or influence of the Imperial Japanese forces and to instruct the authorities concerned in the respective territories to give effect to this policy as early as possible.

(29) That this Movement adopts the present National Flag of India and requests the Imperial Government of Japan and the Royal Government of Thailand and the Governments of all other friendly Powers to recognise the said flag in all territories under their jurisdiction.

(30) This Conference requests Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose to be kind enough to come to East Asia and appeals to the Imperial Government of Japan to use its good offices to obtain the necessary permission and conveniences from the Government of Germany to enable Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose to reach East Asia safe.

(31) This Conference places on record its deepest appreciation of and grateful thanks for the co-operation, assistance, and support extended to this Movement and its objective by the Imperial Government of Japan.

(32) That no unauthorised publicity be given to any of the resolutions, adopted at this Conference, but a manifesto be issued by this Conference, setting out the purpose and policy of this Movement and incorporating such decisions and details as may be found proper and beneficial to be made public.

(33) This Conference gratefully acknowledges the sincere and friendly attitude, the Governments and the people of Germany and
Italy have adopted towards our struggle for freedom and places on record its deep appreciation and thanks for the offer of assistance and co-operation extended by them to this Movement.

(34) This Conference places on record its grateful thanks to the Government and people of Thailand for the opportunity given to hold this Conference at Bangkok, for their kind hospitality, and for their sympathy and co-operation in India's struggle for freedom.

The following constitution of the Indian Independence League was adopted at the Conference:

(i) The Indian Independence League shall consist of:

(a) A Council of Action,
(b) A Committee of Representatives,
(c) Territorial Committees, and
(d) Local Branches.

Local Branches.

(ii) a. Local Branches of the Indian Independence League may be formed only at a public meeting of Indians in any locality who shall elect a Committee and a President.

b. Vacancy on such Committee or in the Office of the President may be filled up by the Committee.

c. All Indians above the age of 18 shall be entitled to be members of such Branch on compliance with rules of such Branch.

d. No such Branch shall be recognised as a Branch unless the Territorial Committee as constituted hereinafter accords, and continues to accord, to such Branch due recognition; provided however that all Branches of the Indian Independence League now in existence and recognised in the various Territories mentioned in article (vi) hereof shall, until otherwise decided upon, be recognised by this Movement (Indian Independence Movement).

Territorial Committees.

(iii) Representatives elected by the Committees of Local Branches in each Territory shall form a Territorial Committee and the Territorial Committee shall make such rules as it may consider necessary for the effective working of the Movement within the Territory.

(iv) The Territorial Committee in each Territory shall guide, supervise and control the work of the Movement within its Territory and shall also elect representatives as constituted hereinafter.

(v) Territorial Committees and Committees of Local Branches under them shall have power to make rules not inconsistent with the rules made by the Committee of Representatives or in case of Local Branches by the Territorial Committees.

Committee of Representatives.

(vi) a. A Committee of Representatives shall be constituted by civilian representatives selected by the Territorial Committees
in the Territories hereinbelow set out and by representatives selected by the Indian National Army:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territory</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan and Manchukuo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borneo and Celebes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong, Canton and Macao</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parts of China including Shanghai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo-China</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andamans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                      | 57 |

Indian National Army        | 33 |

90

b. The Council of Action shall be at liberty to include in the above list of Territories any other Territory, and fix the number of representatives from such Territory to the Committee of Representatives, providing in that event, for increase in the representatives from the Indian National Army, equal to two-thirds of the number, fixed for such Territory.

Oath of Secrecy.

(vii) Every member of the Committee of Representatives shall sign the Oath of Secrecy in the prescribed form before he takes the seat on the Committee.

Policy and Programme.

(viii) The Committee of Representatives shall be responsible for the general policy and programme of the Indian Independence Movement and its decision shall in every case be final and binding on each and every member of this Movement.

Alteration of Decisions.

(ix) The Committee of Representatives shall have power to alter, amend or rescind any previous decision made by it, including any decision arrived at in this Conference.

Quorum.

(x) No meeting of the Committee of Representatives shall be valid unless two-thirds in number of the Members of the Committee are present (either in person or by proxy).

Council of Action.

(xi) A Council of Action consisting of a President and four (4) members, of whom at least one-half shall be from Indian National Army in East Asia shall be appointed by the Delegates to this Conference.
Mr. N. Raghawan
Member Council of Action and President I. L. Malay

Col. Niranjan Singh Gill
The right-hand man of General Mohan Singh

Col. G. Q. Gilani
Member Council of Action

Mr. K. P. K. Menon
Member Council of Action
The first President shall be Sjt. Rash Behari Bose and the four members shall be:

1. Sri N. Raghavan
2. Capt. Mohan Singh
3. Sri K. P. K. Menon

**Vacancies.**

(xii) Any vacancy in the Council of Action caused by death, resignation or otherwise of Members not exceeding two in number at a time may be filled up by the other Members of the Council and in the event of more than two such vacancies the Council of Action shall call a meeting of the Committee of representatives to fill such vacancies.

**Duties and Powers.**

(xiii) The Council of Action shall be responsible for the carrying out of the policy and programme of work laid down by this Conference and as may hereafter be laid down by the Committee of Representatives and shall deal with all new matters that may arise from time to time and which may not be provided for by the Committee itself.

(xiv) For the proper and efficient carrying out of the work, the Council of Action shall have power to create as many Departments as are necessary and to appoint and dismiss administrative officers and staff whenever necessary.

(xv) The Council of Action shall have no power to alter or amend the policy laid down by this Conference without the sanction of the Committee of Representatives.

**Meeting of Committee of Representatives.**

(xvi) The Council of Action may at any time summon a meeting of the Committee of Representatives to be held at such places as the Council may decide provided that necessary facilities for travel to Representatives and at least 14 days' notice of such meeting have been given to the Secretaries of the Territorial Committees and to the Headquarters of the Indian National Army. On a requisition by 20 members (Representatives) hailing from more than one Territory such a meeting shall be called by the Council of Action and the necessary notices and facilities for travel shall be given.

**Control.**

(xvii) The Council of Action shall have general superintendence and control over all Branches of the Indian Independence League in all territories mentioned in article (vi) and over the Indian National Army.

**Register of Organisations.**

(xviii) The Council of Action shall cause to be kept a register of all the Territorial and local organisations and may remove therefrom the names of any such organisations and withhold or withdraw recognition of any such organisations.
Collective Responsibility.

(ix) The Council of Action shall have collective responsibility.

Portfolios.

(x) The allotment of Portfolios shall be amongst the Members of the Council of Action and at the discretion of the President.

Headquarters.

(xi) The Headquarters of the Movement shall be at Bangkok or such other place as may hereafter be decided upon by the Committee of Representatives or the Council of Action.

Privilege.

(xii) The deliberations of the Committee of Representatives and the Council of Action shall be privileged and no action of a disciplinary character can be taken against any Member in consequence thereof by any Branch or Territorial Committee or by the Indian National Army.

Alteration of Constitution.

(xiii) Changes in the Constitution of the Indian Independence League may be made only by a vote of the Member in three-fourths of the Members of the Committee of Representatives.

CHAPTER VIII

LEAGUE Prepares FOR THE STRUGGLE

The following four or five months saw great activity at the Indian Independence League Headquarters at Bangkok. Provincial Leagues already working in Malaya and Thailand were reorganized. A new branch was opened in Burma. A network of local branches was formed all over these countries under the Provincial Leagues. The following portfolios were entrusted to different members of the Council of Action:

2. General Mohan Singh—General Officer Commanding or C-in-C of I. N. A.

Besides Sri B. K. Das who worked as Secretary of the Central League office, Sri S. A. Ayar, Sri D. S. Deshpande, Col. N. S. Gill, Sri A. M. Sa'ray and Sri A. S. Nayyar were devoting full time to the movement and proved to be very useful.
Broadcasts were begun to be given under the name of "Indian Independence League Headquarters Radio" from Bangkok Radio Station. Sri S. A. Ayar was put in charge of publicity and broadcasting under Sri Menon. A daily paper 'Aza'1 was also started. Sri Bose and Sri Deshpande undertook an extensive tour of East Asia to organize League branches. Sri Deb Nath Das was elected President of the Thailand Provincial League. Sri S. Ali Khan, Sir Jagr Ishar Singh and S. Bachan Singh were the active supporters in this branch. The Malaya League was the best organized under the Presidentship of Sri N. Raghwan. This League published many pamphlets and tracts. A number of newspapers was also started and broadcasts were given from the Singapore Radio Station under the name of the League. Burma Provincial League was also reorganized. Sri C. B. Parashar was put in charge of the branch in place of Sri Latha. As Burma was to be the centre of future activities of the League, Sri D. S. Deshpande was deputed there as President.

Formal branch of the I. I. L. could not be organized in Indo-China due to the hostile attitude of the French Government, but the propaganda from the "Aza" Hind Radio Saigon" made up for this deficiency. It proved to be of great help to the movement. Col. Ehsan Qadir and Col. Hassan were in charge of this work.

While the organisation and propaganda work was in full swing, General Mohan Singh was busily engaged in the most important and arduous task of organizing and equipping the Indian National Army. He knew that the I. N. A. was to play the chief part in the Indian Freedom Movement, and he wished to make it worthy of the great task. The General had also doubts about the intentions of the Japanese, so he wanted to make the Indian National Army a great force—a force as could successfully counteract even the Japanese, when a contingency arose. Originally, he intended to raise an Army of two lacs, but the Japanese stood in the way of expansion. The I. N. A. now consisted of about 17,000 armed and equipped soldiers. Another contingent of 23,000 trained soldiers was kept as surplus volunteers. The Japanese did not equip them with arms. It is estimated that about two lacs more were ready to join the I. N. A., but they were not allowed to be enlisted by the Japanese.

The following Brigades and Sections constituted the Indian National Army:

(i) Field Force Group—It consisted of 1/14 Punjab Regiment, 3/17 Dogra Regiment, 1—2/18 Garhwal Regiment (all infantry battalions), an artillery regiment, a signalling company and an armoured corps—Commander Lt. Col. Bhonsle.

(ii) Gandhi Brigade—Commander Major S. S. Brar.

(iii) Nehru Brigade—Commander Major M. Z. Kiani.

(iv) Aza1 Brigade—Commander Major Parkash.

(v) S. S. Group—Commander Major Taj.

(vi) Intelligence Branch—Commander Tajomal Hussain.

(vii) Military Hospital.
(viii) Medical First Aid Corps.
(ix) Engineering Company.
(x) Military Propaganda Unit.
(xi) Reinforcement Group.

A training camp under the command of Captain Shah Najwaz was started at Singapore. The general outlook of the soldiers was completely changed. Instead of being mercenary soldiers, they were now the Army of Liberation of their Motherland. While in British Army, they were kept ignorant of all political, economic and social problems and were mostly illiterate. General Mohan Singh undertook to enlighten the common soldiers of his army. Discourses on topics of national importance, international problems, history of Indian National Movement, Imperialism, Capitalism, Socialism, lives of Indian National leaders and such other subjects were given from time to time. General Mohan Singh gave instructions to every unit, that no soldier should remain illiterate. After some time political literature was supplied in the forces. The ordinary soldier began to take interest in politics and his mental outlook was greatly developed. For the special training of officers another camp was opened under the command of Col. Habib-ul-Rahman.

National spirit was infused in the I. N. A. by various ways. They were taught to live and take their meals together in common kitchens. Festivals of all religions were celebrated jointly. Differences of caste, creed and religion did not stand in the way of complete unity. The Army was inspired by the lofty ideals of Unity, Faith and Sacrifice. Every soldier had taken a solemn pledge to sacrifice his all for the honour of his motherland and the national tri-colour. They were taught to equip themselves fully for the coming struggle. This was a unique movement in our history of national struggle and was to play an important part in the future. Needless to say that credit of it all goes to General Mohan Singh.

CHAPTER IX

THE PARTING OF WAYS—I

Burma incidents precipitate matters

We have seen that the Bangkok Conference was followed by great enthusiasm among all classes of Indians in East Asia—military as well as civil. Indian Independence League and Indian National Army were now fully organized and stood on a firm footing. The whole of Burma was now in the hands of Japan. On the other hand situation in India itself had greatly changed. The All-India Congress Committee had passed the "Quit India" resolution on August 7, 1942 at Bombay. This was followed
by wholesale arrests of the top-ranking Indian leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawahar Lal and Maulana Azad. Then followed the unfortunate disturbances of August 1942 and consequent ruthless vengeance of the British. All these revolutionary events further encouraged the leaders of the Indian Independence Movement and they thought that that was the opportune time to gain their freedoms.

But this enthusiasm was marred somewhat by the uncertain attitude of the Japanese Government. At no time had the Indians placed complete faith in the intentions of Japan. Some of them suspected that Japan had designs on India and they wanted to be on the guard so that they should not fall from frying pan to the fire and their efforts and sacrifices may not end only in the change of masters.

To begin with most of the patriotic Indians were not unaware of the fact, that Indian National Congress at home was wedded to non-violence and more especially, it was opposed to any kind of invasion of India by the Japanese or with the help of Japan. They realized that it was their duty to ensure the safety, dignity and integrity of India, after the British were ousted. And so before taking any further forward step it was necessary to clear matters, to understand their position and pursue a clear-cut policy.

All this required clarification from the Japanese Government on certain points and that clarification was not forthcoming in spite of repeated requests. The patience of the Council of Action was exhausted as time rolled by. Misgivings, suspicion and fear grew, when the Japan Government tried to evade the issues raised in the resolutions of Bangkok Conference—nay, it was working against the spirit of these resolutions. The Conference wanted the Indian Independence League and Indian National Army to be recognized by the Japan Government. It wanted a full, formal and solemn declaration regarding the intentions of Japan to recognize and support the absolute independence and full sovereignty of India, immediately on the removal of British rule in India. And it had waited for it for full six months.

Several incidents occurred to aggravate the situation and we shall now narrate these one by one.

At the time of occupation of Burma by the Japanese, a number of Indians, left that country without making arrangements for the care and management of their movable and immovable property. According to international law, Indians were to be treated as enemy nationals and ownerless Indian properties in Japan had to pass into the hands of Japanese Government. As Indians in East Asia had made common cause with Japan, the Indian Independence League rightly thought that Indians were not to be treated as enemy aliens. Consequently it had passed a resolution in the Bangkok Conference, requesting the Japanese Government to hand over the ownerless Indian properties to the Indian Independence League, on the distinct understanding that their income would be utilized to carry on the movement and these will be returned to their rightful owners when claimed. What transpired
after this request and how the resolution was treated, will be clear from the following report of Mr. Deshpande and Mr. Prashad of the Indian Independence League Rangoon to the League Headquarters at Malaya. The report needs no comment and fully reveals, what little regard there was for the League on the part of the Japanese authorities. No wonder, that this incident opened the eyes of the Council of Action and made it restless.

It appears that the Japanese were bent upon treating the ownerless Indian property, as the property of enemy nationals and wanted it to be managed by the Indian Independence League according to their instructions. What was more annoying, was the fact that any ordinary Japanese soldier could break open the locks of the Indian property under the control of I.I.L. and take away what he liked. No action was taken against these intruders. The League rightly protested against this high handedness, but their protest fell on deaf ears.

The report runs as follows:—A scheme for the management of the ownerless Indian property in Burma was handed over to us through Mr. Yutani. After perusal of the same, we found that certain amendments were essential. On the 10th October 1942, we went to Iwaguru Kikan office and had a talk with captain Tsuchimochi. We informed him that we had received a scheme from the Political Department for the management of Indian Ownerless Property in Burma, but the scheme needed certain amendments to keep the prestige of the Indian Independence League—both the Headquarters and the Burma Branch.

Captain Tsuchimochi told us that the scheme had already been signed and sealed by the Commander-in-Chief and hence any amendment was out of question. Still he asked us to submit to Iwaguru Kikan a copy of the amendments suggested, asking that he would see how far he can make the English rendering of the scheme (original being in Japanese) better worded to make it acceptable for us. Naturally we parted with great misgivings, in as much as we found that the original scheme would remain as it was, but the English rendering only is to be improved, if possible. We, however, promised to bring our amendments for his perusal.

We took two days to prepare our amendments because in view of what had transpired, we had to make the minimum amendments to the scheme to make it acceptable to us. We are forwarding a copy of the original scheme as well as that of our amendments for your perusal and we are sure, you will agree with us, that the acceptance of the original scheme by us would mean to ignore the spirit of the Bangkok resolutions.

Thinking on these lines, we approached the Iwaguru Kikan office on the 12th Oct., to acquaint them with the bearing of the acceptance of the scheme by us on the Independence Movement, and to request them to accept the necessary amendments. Of course, we wanted to discuss the matter and come to a mutual understanding. Mr. Yutani of the Political Department of Military administration was also present besides Lt. Col. Kitabe, and Captain Tsuchimochi of the Iwaguru Kikan.

We quote below the conversation that took place between us:
Lt. Col. Kitabe: Since I have other work to attend to, I will not be here and hence I shall tell you whatever I have to say in this matter, before I go. In the first place I wish you to clear your misunderstanding on two points. The first point is that you always seem to refer to the Bangkok resolutions. It was all right for the Bangkok Conference to pass those resolutions, but you will be mistaken to think that those resolutions are binding on the Japanese Government. The Japanese Government have never announced that they have accepted all the resolutions passed at Bangkok by the Indian Independence Conference. What the Japanese Government have up to now said about the resolutions amounts to that they would help the Indian Independence Movement to the best of their capacity. Moreover, the Japanese Government have never accepted the Council of the Indian Independence League as a Government body with whom they could enter into any treaty or pact. Therefore, what I would like to say is, that, although you may look up to the Council of Action for orders or instructions, it is not necessary for us, who represent the Japanese Government, to always respect those orders and instructions which the Council of Action may issue for you.

Incidently, Col. Kitabe also mentioned, while talking about the Council of Action, "The Council of Action being a body without any territory to rule over and without any financial status, it cannot be looked upon as a Government, but it is only an organisation having come into existence to fight for India's Independence and deriving its power from the Japanese Government. Any decision of the Council of Action, in order to be worked upon, must be such as to be found acceptable to the Japanese Government."

He added, "It is ridiculous for the Council of Action to make any decision without trying to ascertain whether it is acceptable to the Japanese Government or not." He urged us not to lose sight of this "important" point while seeking help from them in carrying out our activities.

Mr. Deshpande: Even if we accept the argument advanced by you in principle, it is yet essential for the Japanese side to adopt ways and means which would save the prestige of the Indian Independence League. Already there is an underground propaganda to the effect that the League is for them to invade India. In view of this fact, is it not of utmost importance for the Japanese not to take any step which would only strengthen the public misgivings and misapprehensions? Likewise is it also not of great importance for the Indians to act in every way so as to be able to keep their head erect before the Indian public and to behave with self-respect before the Japanese?

Col. Kitabe: Since the Indian Independence League and its activities are solely dependent on the help and assistance given by the Japanese Government, why not the public be told straightway that the Indian Independence League works under the leadership of the Japanese Government. In my opinion it would be better to do so in order to avoid a lot of misunderstandings in future. Whatever resolutions passed at Bangkok have been accepted by the Japanese Government are left to the discretion, so far as their interpretation is concerned, of the Commanders-in-Chief of
different occupied territories, and as such we should always bear in mind that the way of application of the resolutions in one territory may not be the same as in another. He emphasized that we should never bring any complaints to him, that a certain Bangkok resolution had been interpreted and given effect to in different way here (Burma).

In continuation of the subject it was pointed out to us that in the Japanese system of working, the Commander-in-Chief of each occupied territory is to act solely on his own responsibility. Each Commander-in-Chief receives only cryptic instructions embodying main lines of policy, and he is left to act upon them using his own discretion as to the details. (This point was also told to us previously on the 10th by Captain Tsuchi-mochi.

At this point Col. Kitabe went away.

Mr. Yutani wanted to discuss the amendments to the scheme of the management of Indian ownerless property suggested by us.

Mr. Yutani: Indians here are labouring under the wrong impression that the ownerless Indian properties belong to Indians. Absentee Indian property according to the International Law is enemy property and belongs to the Japanese Government, and the Japanese Government have never intended to make a secret of this fact. What properties do you have here? You are all paupers. It is the generosity of the Japanese, which you must acknowledge and appreciate, that entrusts you with the management of the absentee Indian property. But mind that you can only manage it under the control and discretion of the Commander-in-Chief, who is the sole owner of the properties. In assuming ownership of such properties, you must understand that the Commander-in-Chief has not acted high handedly. He has only followed the injunctions laid down by the International Law. It is you, who, in trying to quote the letter of Bangkok resolutions, presume that the absentee Indian property belongs to the Indians and not the Commander-in-Chief. You must understand that this position adopted by you is weak and untenable and the quicker you give it up, the better for all concerned.

Mr. Parshad: We have nothing to say about the ownership of the absentee Indian property according to the International Law: neither we are ungrateful to the Japanese Government for their generosity in helping our movement and handing over the management of the ownerless properties to us, but we always expect the Japanese Government to help us to keep the prestige of the Indian Independence League in the eyes of the Indian public, because the management of Indian properties is our secondary work, our main activity being Indian Independence.

Mr. Yutani: Prestige—What prestige? Notion of prestige is a false notion. The prestige of Indians becomes secondary to the execution of the order of the Commander-in-Chief. Any one living in Burma must obey the order of the Commander-in-Chief for the duration of the war. The Indian Independence League also cannot be exempted. The Indian Independence League should not think that it is an independent body—that it has already achieved independence. Do not be swollen-headed.
Mr. Parshad: We only want you to treat the Indian Independence League better than a mere servant executing the orders of and working under the Japanese Government. We agree that the Commander-in-Chief is the sole man in charge of Burma and everyone has to obey his orders.

Mr. Yutani: Certainly you are servants. The Commander-in-Chief can command anyone in Burma to do the work, and any insubordination can be treated as treason. Why should you be ashamed to work as a servant? If the Commander-in-Chief is showing any leniency to you, you should not mistake the same for indulgence. You must realise and appreciate why Japanese Government have offered to help the cause of Indian Independence. Try to be grateful for that, instead of indulging in finding faults about this order and that instruction issued by the Commander-in-Chief.

Mr. Parshad: We think that the Indian Independence League has to carry on the movement for India's independence with the help of the Japanese Government, but it is not to act or behave like a puppet to the orders and instructions that may be given to it in connection with Independence Movement. We think the Japanese Government itself would not like the Indian Independence League to be relegated to such a position.

Mr. Yutani: We do not want you to be puppets. But if we do, what is the harm in being puppets? Why is a puppet bad?

Mr. Deshpande: Why do you think a puppet is good?

Mr. Yutani: (To Captain Tsuchimochi in Japanese). You cannot argue with these people, because the Indian way of arguing amounts to indulging in useless feats of hair-splitting. Until these people drop this habit, there cannot be perfect understanding between them and us. In my opinion, they must be plainly told that the Commander-in-Chief has every right to direct, guide and control the activities of the Indian Independence League.

Capt. Tsuchimochi: I agree with you on this point in so far as the Indian Association is concerned, but, although the League activities may be watched by the Commander-in-Chief, yet they will not be guided and controlled by him.

Mr. Deshpande: As it is, the management of the Indian ownerless property leaves the League no time for the Independence Movement activities and to undertake to manage it under the scheme presented to us by you makes the task all the more less thankless. We would feel very much relieved to wash our hands off this business and let others be appointed by you to do the work. On our part we would gladly co-operate and assist them as far as we can, but we are convinced that it is not worth while to accept the work in the name of the League under the present scheme.

Captain Tsuchimochi: Why is it not worth while for the League to manage it?

Mr. Deshpande: As it is, our predecessors, that is, the Rangoon League, has been and is being made the butt of the public blame. Thé
reasons are that they had undertaken a task, for the successful execution of which they had neither the power nor the authority needed. The result was mismanagement for which the public, not knowing where the real fault lay, began to hold the League responsible.

Captain Tsuchimochi: The authority and power were duly delegated to the League and, if there was mismanagement, the League was rightly held responsible for it by the public.

Mr. Parshad: As agreed upon by you, the League had posted its labels on ownerless properties, buildings, godowns, etc. Any ordinary Japanese soldier would come and tear off the label, break open the godowns and carry away whatever he likes, or if the soldier was a little more considerate he would simply tear the League labels and paste his own, the posters reading enemy property, or property held under control by this or that unit or the military supply department, and so on. Cases like these are every day brought to our notice, about which we have been telling you, but the frequency of such acts only shows that from what you speak to us, even you have no authority to put a stop to it. And now it is the talk in the town that in such cases it is no use going to the League since it is impotent. Our predecessors had a hard task coping with such public opinion, and it is precisely the same which we want to avoid. Consequently, we do not want to have anything to do with the management of the Indian ownerless properties unless we have the necessary power and authority.

Capt. Tsuchimochi: If you find the soldiers removing the League labels and pasting their own you can remove their labels and again paste the labels of the League, since the soldiers are ordered not to tamper with League labels which are pasted always with the sanction of the Military Administration Department.

Mr. Parshad: This is easier said than done. Cases are not wanting wherein our people were beaten, in some cases severely, by soldiers for no fault whatsoever, and supposing that a soldier sees one of our men removing their label and it enters into his head to give the man a good hiding, who is there to stop him from doing so?

Capt. Tsuchimochi: In such cases we admit there is very little to do but the remedy I would suggest is for you to employ watchmen from the cooly class, who have no sense of self-respect and who get beaten to-day and forget about it to-morrow. And in some cases we also may be able to redress the wrong done.

Mr. Yutani: You talk of power and authority, and as I have already told, you, power and authority cannot be delegated to you. As a matter of fact, power and authority cannot be vested in anybody except the Commander-in-Chief.

Mr. Parshad: We realise this, and hence in our amendments we have asked co-operation and assistance of the Japanese Authorities. For instance, we want to borrow a number of soldiers from you, who would see that looting and tampering with the labels are not done.
Mr. Yutani: This we cannot do. We are already short of hands. Perhaps this may be one of the reasons, why we asked you to manage the Indian ownerless property.

Mr. Parshad: You want us to do the work without any power, while your promise of assistance is inadequate, and naturally all the blame for mismanagement will be ours.

Mr. Yutani: You have to take this as it is. Originally everyone in the Military Administration Department was opposed to the idea of asking Indians to manage their ownerless properties, but it was I whose efforts have been responsible for persuading them to agree to let the Indians manage it. Then again, it was thought that only the Rangoon ownerless property should be handed over for management to the Indians. This was thought to be a trial measure. Nobody has any confidence in the ability of the Indians for the efficient carrying out of this work, and so they argued that, if the Indians showed themselves efficient in the management of the Indian ownerless properties in Rangoon, the question of handing over to them all the Indian ownerless properties throughout Burma for management could be thought of. Here again I stood up like a rock and argued in favour of the efficiency and ability of the Indians for such kind of work, and ultimately I am glad to say that my views prevailed. Moreover, we had no idea of asking the Indian Independence League to do this work. We could have very well asked the Indian Association to do it. But there, through the good offices of the local Iwakuro Kikan, it was agreed upon to ask the League to undertake the work. And now we find, that you are letting us down. There cannot be greater ingratitude than this.

Mr. Parshad: We are grateful to you for being so considerate and agreeing to the request of the Iwakuro Kikan to allow the Indian Independence League to take charge of ownerless properties of Indians in Burma. But under your scheme the Indian Independence League is relegated to the position of an agent, a servant and an employee of the Japanese Government. We only want the League to be treated in a better manner.

Mr. Yutani: Our scheme was prepared in view of the fact that we had to deal with people like Mr. Lathia, who with his subordinates proved himself very inefficient and incapable. Look, how they have bungled the whole affair. Their mismanagement was another reason why we had to prepare a scheme wherein all rights of control, guidance and supervision had to be reserved for the Japanese Authorities. And now that the scheme has been signed and sealed, we can only assure you that we have confidence in your capacity to manage the work, and we shall assist you in the best possible way. Drop the argumentative attitude, accept the scheme as it is, do not find flaws in the working and start the work. If you are reluctant to take it up, we will have no other way but to ask the Indian Association to do it.

Mr. Deshpande: We would feel very much relieved in that case.
Mr. Deshpande: Mr. Vyutani, I think it is just the other way.

Mr. Vyutani: With this attitude of hair-splitting and narrow mentality, I feel pessimistic if the Indians can ever achieve independence.

Mr. Vyutani: It is unwise to split it into two organisations, which may only cause mischief for all practical purposes as the Indian National League, and it everybody knows, whilst the bodies have been formed into one, which grows now and ask the ghost of the Indian Association to do it. As

Capt. Tsuchimochi: It is absolutely inadmissible to dig up old...