

Barcode - 2990100066887

Title - A Beacon Across Asia A Biography Of Subhas Chandra Bose

Subject - GEOGRAPHY. BIOGRAPHY. HISTORY

Author - K Bose

Language - english

Pages - 372

Publication Year - 1973

Creator - Fast DLI Downloader

<https://github.com/cancerian0684/dli-downloader>

Barcode EAN.UCC-13



2 990100 066887



Subhas Chandra Bose

Berlin 1942

A Beacon

Across Asia

A Beacon Across Asia

A Biography of Subhas Chandra Bose

Editorial Board: Sisir K. Bose, Editor-in-chief,
Alexander Werth S. A. Ayer

Contributors: N. G. Jog Lothar Frank
Alexander Werth Fred Saito
Tatsuo Hayashida



Orient Longman

© **Orient Longman Ltd**

January 1973

Registered Office

3/5 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 1

Regional Offices

Nicol Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay 1

17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 13

36A Mount Road, Madras 2

B 3/7 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 1

Published by

Sujit Mukherjee

Orient Longman Ltd

3/5 Asaf Ali Road

New Delhi 1

Printed in India by

S. J. Patwardhan

Sangam Press Ltd.

17 Kothrud

Poona 29

Typography

Sangam Press

PREFACE

At the invitation of the Netaji Research Bureau, Dr. Alexander Werth delivered the ceremonial Netaji Oration in Calcutta in 1969 on the occasion of the 72nd birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. In the course of his oration, Dr. Werth referred on the one hand to the vacuum in European literature regarding Netaji and on the other, to a distorted image of the leader prevalent in many circles. Unfortunately, such lack of information or a wrong view of his role in the history of our times affected intellectuals and historians as well as lay people. It was clear that Netaji's activities during the Second World War and the exigencies of war-time propaganda about him in Britain and all countries allied to Britain were responsible for this state of affairs. This contrasted sharply with Netaji's current status and image in India where he ranks as a national leader with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and where his war-time contribution is widely regarded as the determining factor in India's final liberation from foreign rule. Dr. Werth proposed that German and Japanese friends of Netaji, who had the privilege of working with him or in support of the Indian independence movement abroad during the war, should join hands with competent Indian writers and produce a biography of Netaji for the international community. The biography would seek to present the image of Subhas Chandra Bose in full conformity with his true historical role and personal performance.

In the course of the year the idea developed and took shape. Dr. Lothar Frank visited India and Japan on behalf of Dr. Werth and a plan to publish a trilingual biography by a team of German, Japanese and Indian authors was drawn up.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The Netaji Research Bureau in Calcutta decided to co-operate in the undertaking which was to be in the nature of a joint cultural project of the three countries. A team of writers, translators and editors was organised to carry the project forward. On Netaji's birthday in 1970 Dr. Frank announced the plan in Calcutta. The biography was to have a common team of contributors for the three language editions. The chief editors of three editions, German, Japanese and English, were to be a German, a Japanese and an Indian respectively. The task of writing on Netaji's life and activities in India was entrusted to Mr. N. G. Jog, who was to be assisted by Mr. S. A. Ayer. Dr. Alexander Werth and Dr. Lothar Frank were to be responsible for the chapters dealing with his life and work in Europe while Mr. Fred Saito and Mr. Tatsuo Hayashida would take charge of the part dealing with his activities in Asia.

The authors started their work early in 1970. Manuscripts were exchanged and translated for the purpose of the three language editions. The Japanese and German editions, edited by Mr. Fred Saito and Dr. Alexander Werth respectively, were published in 1971.

The sponsors of this biography are of the view that no proper understanding of contemporary Indian or Asian history is possible without an adequate understanding of Subhas Chandra Bose. A prodigious child of Indian Renaissance, Netaji grew up in the midst of profound social and political changes that transformed the face of India and Asia during the first half of this century. Since his early youth he identified himself completely and unreservedly with the fate of his country. His experiences thus truly reflect the evolutionary and revolutionary changes in Indian society during this period. In order to correctly interpret the more spectacular and the rather controversial activities of his later years, it is necessary to understand his origin, the fundamentals of his faith and idealism and the evolution of his personality through a life of relentless struggle.

Like some other well-known freedom fighters and national revolutionaries, Netaji ultimately reached a position when he was no longer able to further the struggle for his country's freedom with the means and methods available inside the country. He therefore undertook a daring and adventurous journey out of India in January 1941, reached Kabul, then Moscow and finally Berlin in April 1941. It was only logical that as a militant national revolutionary he should seek the help of the opponents of Britain in the final struggle against Britain and resort to means other than merely political, viz. agitation, negotiations and civil resistance.

The history of the last hundred years furnishes several instances of such or similar decisions and deeds. Garibaldi worked for the freedom of Italy from Austria. Sun Yat Sen operated from Japan to free China from the yoke of imperial rule. Eamon de Valera for a time conducted Ireland's fight for freedom from abroad and took American aid for the purpose. Masaryk campaigned in Britain for the establishment of the independent state of Czechoslovakia. Subhas Chandra Bose carried on his struggle against British rule in India from Europe and East Asia with the assistance of the then enemies of the British Empire, viz. Germany, Italy and Japan.

One example of how the distorted war-time official British view of Netaji very largely colours even the more recent English literature is his portrayal in the otherwise brilliant biography of Adam von Trott zu Solz by Christopher Sykes. The familiar but ill-informed and historically untenable opinions about him are repeated by Sykes in his book. The same applies to literature emanating from several European states, regardless of whether they are bourgeois or socialist. Some of the exceptions also deserve to be mentioned. *The Springing Tiger* by Hugh Toye, formerly of the British Intelligence Service, is probably the most significant British work expressing opinions in deviation from the official view. Another important observation on the decisive role of Netaji's Indian National Army in the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

final phase of India's struggle for freedom has been made by the English writer Alastair Lamb :

The agitation against their trial when the war was over, together with the 1946 mutiny in the Indian Navy, seemed to suggest that the British could not rely much longer on the Indian forces to keep India under British rule. This realisation, more than anything else, probably enabled British minds to accept the inevitability of Indian independence.

The British, it seemed, gave in only when by so doing they gave themselves more security than they would have obtained had they continued to resist.

Yet another British commentary on Netaji's role in the achievement of Indian freedom has been given by Michael Edwardes, a noted historian, in his work *The Last Years of British India* :

Only one outstanding personality took a different and violent path, and, in a sense, India owes more to him than to any other man — even though he seemed to be a failure.

West German, French and Italian literature have so far hardly concerned themselves with Netaji. It is, however, a good augury that a beginning has been made in Eastern Europe. In the book *Tiger und Schakal* by the writer from GDR, Reinhold Schnabel, published in 1958, a historical assessment of Netaji has been attempted. The author, after a careful examination of copious documentary material, comes to the conclusion that Netaji in his unsuccessful struggle for India's independence has been frank and free from egoistical artifice. He says :

One can proceed on the assumption that Bose, of whom prominent fighters for Indian freedom have spoken in words of the highest recognition as a patriot, did not act out of opportunism. The assumption is also justified that he viewed the Nazi ideology sceptically and was no stooge of Hitler or Mussolini. Bose believed in functioning in accordance with political realism.

Schnabel also cites from *Weltgeschichte* issued in 1967 in Berlin by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (Volume 9, p. 137)

where Netaji, together with Jawaharlal Nehru, is given the credit for the manifestation of a new impulse in the national emancipation movement, the concrete expression of which was the creation of a left wing of the National Congress.

As we welcome such evidence of a healthy change in attitude towards Netaji, we have to admit that the changes have been rather peripheral and have not yet produced the desired echo in most European countries, irrespective of their political character. A vacuum in real information and a lack of proper interpretation of the man and his work have persisted.

What is true of the West is largely applicable to the Asian continent as well, although, may be, for different reasons. This is all the more unfortunate because Netaji's war-time struggle in East Asia had a direct historical relationship with subsequent developments in all the countries of South Asia.

Apart from Netaji's role in the achievement of India's political independence, the question may well be raised as to his legacy for the Indian and Asian peoples in terms of their present problems and the future. It will be relevant therefore to speculate where India would be today if Subhas Chandra Bose could have formed and led the first independent Government of India on Indian soil. There is no doubt that Netaji's political ideas were based on and shaped by a clear recognition of the common interests of the broad masses of his country, unhampered by the distinctions and divisions fostered by an alien imperialism and indigenous vested interests. He would certainly not have acquiesced himself to the partition of India on religious basis as Britain's price for India's independence. He would have prevented the furtherance of communal and regional considerations threatening the unification of India and the emergence of a united national Indian state. He would not have accepted the British forms of state organisation as models, as was done in India, more or less, after independence. He would have promoted, with his usual courage and zeal, planned socialist recon-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

struction of Indian society in accordance with clearly set priorities and plan of action.

Many in India believe that Subhas Chandra Bose's importance to India has grown rather than diminished with the achievement of independence. Thus, Netaji for India and Asia, is not merely a historical hero and a legend but a prophet of the future. This book, we hope, will make some contribution to the establishment of this total image of Netaji in the world at large.

Readers will appreciate the problems of putting together a biographical work with contributions from different areas of the world in three different languages and varying in approach and style in many important respects. Nevertheless, there has been commendable team spirit in processing this work. No effort has been made to smother the individual characteristics, opinions and manner of the different authors for the sake of uniformity, subject of course to the editorial responsibility and right to minimise elements of discord and maintain a reasonable continuity of thought and events. After all, this book may well be the first experiment of its kind.

As to the authors, Mr. N. G. Jog, who had already published a highly rated biography of Netaji, made further extensive studies at the Netaji Research Bureau for the purpose of this work. Dr. Lothar Frank, who had known Netaji in Berlin in the 'thirties, went round the world examining papers and meeting people in Delhi, Calcutta, Tokyo, Berlin, Bonn and London. Dr. Alexander Werth drew from his personal experiences with and recollections of Netaji in 1941-43 and the Free India Centre, Berlin, in 1944-45. Mr. A. C. N. Nambiar gave great assistance to both Dr. Frank and Dr. Werth in the preparation of their accounts of Netaji's work in Europe in the 'thirties and the 'forties. Material regarding Netaji's life and activities in East Asia was provided by a group of Japanese officers who had the opportunity of dealing with Netaji directly or with the Provisional Government or the INA. The material was compiled by

Preface

Mr. Tatsuo Hayashida and the account written by Mr. Fred Saito.

The following institutions and their staff have given wholehearted assistance to the authors and editors of the biography with data and documents: Department of Political Archives and Historical Records in the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn, National Archives of India in New Delhi, Historical Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India in New Delhi, India House Library of the High Commission of India in London, India Office Library and Records, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Press Library and the Library of Imperial War Museum, London, and the Netaji Research Bureau, Netaji Bhawan, Calcutta.

Preparation of the manuscript for the English edition has been the responsibility of Mr. Kartic Chakrabarty, assisted by Mr. Sankar Nath Chatterjee, both of Netaji Research Bureau. Messrs Orient Longman Limited have given us every possible co-operation at all stages of the publication.

To all friends and institutions, including those not mentioned here, who have assisted us in this unusual, difficult but extremely important undertaking, we wish to record our very sincere thanks.

Calcutta,
23 January 1973

Sisir K. Bose
Alexander Werth
S. A. Ayer

CONTENTS

Preface			v
Chapter One	An Indian Pilgrim 1897-1933	<i>N. G. Jog</i>	1
Chapter Two	India's Ambassador Abroad 1933-1936	<i>Lothar Frank</i>	46
Chapter Three	The Alternative Leadership 1936-1941	<i>N. G. Jog</i>	60
Chapter Four	Planning for Revolution 1941-1943	<i>Alexander Worth</i>	116
Chapter Five	To Delhi ! To Delhi ! 1943-1945	<i>Fred Satta, Tatsuo Hayashida</i>	145
Chapter Six	Jai Hind 1945-1947	<i>N. G. Jog</i>	231
Epilogue		<i>Lothar Frank</i>	244
Appendices			253
	1. The Karachi Address, 1931		255
	2. Letter to Dr. Thierfelder on Indo-German Relations, 1936		258

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

3. The Tripuri Address, 1939	..	261
4. The Rangach Address, 1940	..	266
5. The Political Testament, 1940	..	273
6. Memorandum to the German Government, 1941	..	281
7. Proclamation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, 1943	..	295
8. INA Proclamations on Entering India, 1944	..	300
9. Radio Address to Mahatma Gandhi, 1944	..	306
10. Special Order of the Day, 15 August, 1945	..	310
11. Special Message to Indians in East Asia, 15 August, 1945	..	321
Bibliography	..	323
Index	..	333

ILLUSTRATIONS

(Between Pages 144—145)

1. Berlin, 1942
2. As a boy
3. Cambridge, 1920
4. Calcutta Congress, 1928
5. As Mayor of Calcutta, 1931
6. With V. J. Patel in Czechoslovakia, 1933
7. At the Haripura Congress, 1938
8. Sick President on the way to the Tripuri Congress with brother Surat Chandra, 1939
9. On arrival in Berlin as "Orlando Mazzotta", 1941
10. With Tagore and Surat Chandra Bose in Calcutta, 1939
11. Addressing the Indian Independence Day meeting in Berlin,
12. On the German submarine with Abid Hasan
13. Transshipment from the German to the Japanese submarine in progress in the Indian ocean, 28 April 1943
14. Taking the salute of his Army in Singapore, July 1943
15. Proclaiming the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, Singapore, October 1943
16. Addressing the Asian Leaders' Conference in Tokyo, November 1943

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

17. Visiting the Sun Yat Sen Memorial in Nanking, China, 1943
18. Visiting Cellular Jail in Port Blair, Andaman Islands, December 1943
19. At the Indo-Burma front, 1944
20. Last available photograph, Saigon Airport, 17 August 1945

AN INDIAN PILGRIM 1897—1933

N. G. JOG

The closing years of the nineteenth century marked the high watermark of the British empire. Britain's imperial pride, power and prosperity found a fitting expression in the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. In the same year was born Subhas Chandra Bose who was to challenge the might of the empire almost single-handed 45 years later.

The foundation of the British empire in India was laid by Robert Clive's victory in the battle of Plassey (1757). The Moghul empire was in a state of complete disintegration then and a host of princes and chieftains were carving kingdoms out for themselves and fighting one another for the overlordship of the Indian sub-continent. The British originally came to India in the wake of the Portuguese and the Dutch as traders under the name of the East India Company. But their zeal for commercial profits soon gave way to a lust for political power and territorial gains. By cunning and intrigue as much as by their sagacity and valour, the British succeeded in establishing an empire during the nineteenth century, which compensated them many times over for the loss of the American colonies in 1776.

The unhindered run of conquest, annexation and exploitation of the East India Company received a severe jolt in the great rebellion of 1857. It was triggered by the mutiny of the *sepoys* (soldiers) of the Company. But it soon developed the character of a popular insurrection. The pent-up discontent and unrest of several decades welled up in spontaneous uprisings in many parts of India. Though crushed with a heavy hand it sounded the death-knell of the East India Company. The governance of India was taken over directly by the British Crown in 1858. A

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

policy of pacification was announced and justice and equality assured to all Indian subjects of Her Majesty. The administration was strengthened though the Indian people had little share in it. The High Courts of Judicature were inaugurated and universities founded in the three presidency capitals.

Actually, a beginning in these directions had been made earlier by the proconsuls of the East India Company. The impact of the West on the East had sown the seeds of an Indian renaissance whose earliest prophet was Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833). The introduction of western education and science, the establishment of law and order, the extirpation of organised bands of robbers (*Pindarees*), and the abolition of evil social customs like the *suttee* (burning of widows) had won for the British many loyal admirers among the first few generations of educated Indians. Some of them even hailed the connection between India and Britain as the result of a divine dispensation! But this loyalist phase gradually began to disappear as the colonial nature of British rule was grasped by Indians. It was alien, unsympathetic and derogatory to Indian self-respect. The mask of a civilising mission could barely hide the face of exploitation.

The birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was a landmark in the modern history of India. Founded by an Englishman, in its early years it was composed of constitutionalists and loyalists. But over the decades it became the organised form of resurgent nationalism and the spearhead of India's struggle for freedom. Most of the notable leaders of India during the last nine decades, from Dadabhai Naoroji to Jawaharlal Nehru, not excluding Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan), belonged to the Congress at one time or other.

The slow pace of constitutional progress, however, irked many young men in India who took to the cult of the revolver and the bomb. Its first manifestation was seen in the murder of two British officers while they were returning from a jubilee dinner at the Government House, Poona. Not content with hanging the culprits, the panicky government vindictively imprisoned

Tilak—the Father of Indian Unrest — on a trumped-up charge of sedition. It was the first prosecution in India under that omnibus charge.

The year of Bose's birth is thus of significance in Indian history. It was forty years earlier in 1857 that the first armed struggle against Britain had been waged. And it was forty-five years later that Subhas Chandra Bose again raised the flag of revolt. His birth thus marked approximately the mid-point of India's march towards independence, achieved in 1947.

Cuttack in Orissa state, where Subhas was born, has been long famous for its gold and silver filigree work. In 1897 it was merely a remote corner of the Bengal Presidency and was without any amenities or even rail connection. Janakinath, Subhas's father, had settled down there for legal practice. The Boses hailed from Bengal. It was a distinguished family and its ancestry could be traced back for twenty-seven generations — to Dasanath Bose, who founded the *Dakshina Bahur* (South Bengal) clan of the Boses at Mahinagar, 14 miles to the south of Calcutta. Among Subhas's paternal ancestors were Mahipati (Subuddhi Khan), War and Finance Minister to the King of Bengal, and Gopinath (Purandar Khan), Naval Commander to a later King.

Bose's mother, Prabhavati belonged to the family of Dutts of Hathkola, a northern suburb of Calcutta. The Dutts had attained eminence by their ability to adapt themselves to the new political order under the British.

Janakinath joined the Cuttack Bar in 1885 and soon built a flourishing practice. He devoted his energies solely to his legal career, successively becoming government pleader and public prosecutor. He later became Chairman of the Cuttack Municipality and in 1912 a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, collecting the title of "Rai Bahadur" on the way. By all contemporary standards, he was a successful man.

Although not directly involved in politics, Janakinath took an active interest in social and educational activities. A deeply reli-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

gious man, he had a soft corner for the poor and the needy and his charities, especially to students, were extensive. During the Pujas, the chief festival in Bengal, he invariably visited his ancestral village Kedalia not merely to join in the celebrations but to extend help to the needy.

Janakinath's charitable disposition was fully shared by his wife Prabhavati. A woman of strong will, the task of bringing up her considerable family of fourteen children – Subhas was the ninth in order – mainly devolved on her. Janakinath was a busy man. He was moreover reserved by temperament and he was glad to entrust the responsibility of looking after the children and the numerous dependents of the family – not to mention the friends and relatives who came for short or long visits – to his wife.

It was a typical middle-class household which steered clear both of the luxury and snobbery of the rich and the penury and greed of the poor. Subhas lacked nothing by way of creature comforts but he craved for more parental contact which had to be shared by such a big brood. The children were in awe of their parents who, as was the usual practice in those days, refrained from making an undue exhibition of their affection. No wonder then that with his sensitive nature, Subhas felt like 'a thoroughly insignificant being'.¹

The emotional need for intimate contact with his parents was partially fulfilled by his nurse-cum-governess, Sarada, who called her ward 'Raja'. Subhas thus grew up as an introspective, almost introverted, child but he was free of any egotism or pride. Early in life he had to learn that 'industry and good behaviour are the sole passports to success'.²

Like his brothers Subhas joined a school run by the Baptist Mission in Cuttack. He was five then and his next seven formative years were spent in the Anglo-Indian – more Anglo than

¹ *An Indian Pilgrim - an Unfinished Autobiography and Collected Letters, 1897-1931* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Indian — atmosphere of the mission school. The missionaries did not openly attempt to influence the social and religious ideas of their Indian pupils. Nevertheless, their pupils were cut off from their native milieu and choked by the rampant racial discrimination. Subhas did quite well in the school but when the time came to leave it, he did so without the least regret.

He found the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, which he next joined, much more congenial. His command of English put him high in the estimation of his classmates. The social standing of his family also counted a lot in the new school and Subhas soon became popular with his fellow-pupils and teachers. The headmaster, Beni Madhav Das, made a deep impression on Subhas. Das instilled in his young disciple an awareness of social responsibilities and moral values. The bonds between the teacher and pupil endured long after that particular relationship had ended.

2

It was at the Ravenshaw School that Subhas passed through a spiritual crisis. This is not an uncommon phase in one's teens but for Subhas it proved a period of acute mental conflict causing untold suffering and agony which could not be shared by any friend and was not visible to any outsider. "The mental conflict was a two-fold one," wrote Subhas in his autobiography, "firstly, there was the natural attraction of a worldly life and of worldly pursuits in general, against which my higher self was beginning to revolt. Secondly, there was the growth of self-consciousness, quite natural at this age, but which I considered unnatural and immoral and which I was struggling to suppress or transcend."⁸

It was the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, the famous disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, which helped to resolve

⁸ *An Indian Pilgrim*, pp. 31-32.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Subhas's mental crisis. He pored over Vivekananda's books day and night and they provided a satisfactory solution to the problems which were worrying his mind. "Seek your own salvation in the welfare of humanity", was the essence of Vivekananda's teachings. This fresh interpretation of India's ancient scriptures appealed immensely to Subhas who sought to inculcate it among his circle of friends.

His craving for higher values and spiritual uplift was reflected in his letters to his mother in 1912-13. They reveal the mystic strain which remained with Bose throughout his life. "Without realisation and divine revelation life is worthless", he wrote in one letter and added, "worship, meditation, prayer, contemplation, etc. that man engages in have only one aim — realisation of the Divine. If this purpose is not fulfilled, all else is in vain. One who has tasted this heavenly bliss once will never turn to the sinful material world."⁴

His spiritual quest would be more rapidly fulfilled, Subhas thought, if he found a *guru* in the true Indian tradition. He came across a ninety-year-old *sanyasi* whose precepts he diligently put into practice, but this failed to give him mental peace. Subhas had therefore to return to Vivekananda's gospel of social service. With like-minded friends he started visiting nearby villages to render the rural community such help as they could.

As could be expected, all such influences and activities changed the well-behaved and obedient Subhas into an obstinate and wayward boy and made his parents and teachers anxious about his future. They were, therefore, pleasantly surprised when in March 1913 Subhas passed the matriculation examination with credit, standing second in the Calcutta University. He joined the Presidency College which was then the premier institution of higher education in Calcutta boasting of eminent professors like J. C. Bose and P. C. Ray. Despite its academic prestige the Presidency College had earned a bad name in the

⁴ *An Indian Pilgrim*, p. 129.

eyes of the government which suspected that its hostels harboured young revolutionaries.

Subhas however was too deeply interested in religion and philosophy to have any truck with revolutionaries. He was indeed so obsessed with his spiritual quest that one day he secretly left his home on a pilgrimage. His disappearance made his family extremely anxious but all their frantic search proved unavailing. His parents had almost given up hope of seeing him again when Subhas returned after an absence of two months, disillusioned by the so-called holy men he had come across in his wanderings.

Not long after he had resumed his studies, Subhas got involved in what came to be known as "The Oaten Affair". E. F. Oaten was a British professor of history in the Presidency College. He had a haughty and over-bearing temper and freely aired his antipathy to Indian nationalism. The young students naturally resented this attitude and, inevitably, unpleasant incidents occurred one after another.

When Oaten went to the limit of manhandling a pupil, the students decided to teach him a lesson. An opportunity soon came their way to give Oaten a good thrashing. Subhas was in full sympathy with this action and was an eye-witness to it though he did not participate in the beating. Oaten left India some time later, but his name was recalled when he published a poem in 1967 mourning as well as praising his former pupil.

Such an episode was unheard of in those days and it naturally created a big commotion all over Bengal. The Presidency College was summarily closed and Subhas was rusticated from the university even before the committee appointed by the government to inquire into it had formally submitted its report.

Subhas returned to his home-town. "Lying on my bunk in the train at night," he wrote later in his autobiography, "I reviewed the events of the last few months. My educational career was at an end and my future was dark and uncertain. But I was not sorry — there was not a trace of regret in my mind for what

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

I had done. I had, rather, a feeling of supreme satisfaction, of joy that I had done the right thing, that I had stood up for our honour and self-respect and had sacrificed myself for a noble cause. What is life without renunciation? I told myself. And I went to sleep.

“Little did I then realise the significance of the tragic events of 1916. My Principal had expelled me but he had made my future career. I had established a precedent for myself from which I could not easily depart in future. I had stood up with courage and composure in a crisis and fulfilled my duty. I had developed self-confidence as well as initiative, which was to stand me in good stead in future. I had a foretaste of leadership — though in a very restricted sphere — and of the martyrdom that it involves. In short, I had acquired character and could face the future with equanimity.”⁶

Subhas utilised his forced leisure for intensive social service in Cuttack and adjoining localities. He and his band of fellow-students did yeoman’s work during an epidemic of cholera which swept the town then. He also resumed his spiritual pursuits. Meanwhile his father and elder brothers were trying their best to get the rustication order of the university rescinded.

Their efforts eventually succeeded and Subhas returned to Calcutta to join the Scottish Church College in July 1917. Conscious of the loss of a whole academic year, he took to his studies with a new zest. All the same he joined the University Unit of the Territorial Army and put on a soldier’s uniform with evident relish. His military training was to stand him in good stead when, 25 years later, he raised the flag of armed revolt against the British.

Subhas graduated with first class honours in philosophy in 1919 and was packed off soon after by his father to the U.K., ostensibly for the Indian Civil Service Examination. Entering the ‘heaven-born — service’ was the greatest ambition of most bright

⁶ *An Indian Pilgrim*, pp. 70-71.

young Indians then. Subhas, however, protested that he had not the least desire to be a limb of the British steel frame. But the opportunity of studying in a British university, he thought, was too good to miss.

His parents, on their part, were anxious to keep Subhas away from the explosive political atmosphere in India. The year 1919 was as traumatic in Indian history as was 1857. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar had taken a toll of 379 persons killed and 1,200 wounded, according to official figures, the non-official estimates being much higher. Although strict censorship was clamped on the Punjab which was put under martial law, reports of the atrocities gradually percolated elsewhere and sent a wave of horror and indignation throughout the country.

The poet Rabindranath Tagore renounced his Knighthood for "giving voice to the protest of the millions of my countrymen subjected to a dumb anguish of terror". Like other sensitive young men Subhas was deeply shocked by those happenings although then full details were not known until much later.

Subhas sailed from Bombay for the United Kingdom on 15 September, 1919 by s.s. *The City of Calcutta*.

3

The new academic year had already begun in the British universities when Subhas arrived in London, so he found it difficult to secure admission to a reputed college at Oxford or Cambridge. He somehow managed to join Fitzwilliam Hall which was later promoted to the status of a college under the name Fitzwilliam House. Among his Indian contemporaries in Cambridge were Dilip Kumar Roy, well-known poet and mystic; Dr. G. S. Ghurye, who headed the Department of Sociology of the Bombay University for many years, and Kshatish Prasad Chattopadhyaya, the famous anthropologist.

Subhas had a large number of lectures to attend for the Mental and Moral Sciences Tripos and for the civil service

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

examination. He had barely eight months to prepare for it. He thoroughly savoured the free and intellectual atmosphere of Cambridge. What a change, he thought, from a police-ridden city like Calcutta, where every student was suspect as a potential revolutionary. A fresher at Cambridge was made to feel that a high standard of character and behaviour was expected of him and he did his best to live up to this expectation. Although his heart was not in his studies for the civil service entrance test, Subhas did not spare himself in the least.

It was with a mixture of surprise, relief, joy and also regret that Subhas greeted the news of his success. He had stood fourth in the order of merit, coming first in English composition. Relief, surprise and joy were natural in the circumstances. Regret intruded because Subhas could no longer evade the issue of joining the service. Its covenant had soon to be entered into. Once he signed on the dotted line, he would lose his independence and would have to bid goodbye to all his patriotic aspirations. On the other hand, entry into the I.C.S. would open up a life of opulence and power and his future would be forever assured.

What course should he follow? Which choice should he make? Would he not betray his ideals by joining the service? Would he not deeply hurt his parents if he did not? Months passed in this painful cogitation. The state of Subhas's mind is reflected in the letters he wrote to his brother and friends. He wrote to his elder brother Sarat Chandra on 22nd September 1920, soon after the result was declared: "After all, is service to be the be all and end-all of my life? The civil service can bring one all kinds of worldly comfort, but are not these acquisitions made at the expense of one's soul? I think it is hypocrisy to maintain that the highest ideals of one's life are compatible with subordination to the conditions of service which an I.C.S. man has got to accept. National and spiritual aspirations are not compatible with obedience to civil service conditions."⁶

⁶ *An Indian Pilgrim*, pp. 95-96.

It was inevitable that the thought of renouncing the service should triumph in the mind of a person like Subhas. When the decision leaked out, tremendous pressure was brought on him by official quarters in Britain and his own people in India. His father Janakinath did not disguise his acute disappointment. Subhas was not to be cowed by official threats or family pressures and he handed in his formal resignation on 22nd April 1921. The die was cast. Subhas stayed on in Cambridge a couple of months longer to take his Tripos and it was only in June 1921 that he bade goodbye to the U.K.

Subhas's contemporaries in Cambridge have left a vivid picture of his life there. His close friend Dilip Kumar Roy wrote: "Bose was always so tidy, he never left a book lying on a sofa as we the care-free always did. His files were all neatly docketed; his wardrobe was never in dearth of clean stiff collars and suitable ties, none could claim to have seen his trousers without their neat crease; never did his jacket betray an accidental stain or give a frayed appearance." "Subhas was always serious in his purpose and outlook," Roy further says. "I cannot remember a single Indian student in England who took life as seriously to make himself the standard-bearer of free India."⁷

"Subhas was fastidious about his dress and surroundings," recalls another friend, Y. N. Sukthankar, who joined the I.C.S. and rose to the position of a State Governor in free India, "but that was an aspect of his self-discipline. Though friendly, there was a certain amount of secretiveness about his nature. He would never tolerate in his presence any loose talk about sex or women or any denigration of India or Indian culture. That explains his dislike of Indians who had gone to England as small boys and received schooling there before joining the university. They had, subject to some exceptions, all become miniature *sahibs*. Although in Cambridge days Subhas had be-

⁷ D. K. Roy, *Netaji, The Man* (Bombay, 1966), p. 89.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

come rational and logical, there was a mystic side which he could never shed completely”

Apart from being a mystic, Subhas was also something of a punitan, almost a prig. He was shy in the company of women and generally avoided them. It goes without saying that he was a strict teetotaler. He always warned his friends against “the two formidable temptations of the European civilisation — wine and woman”. On the whole Subhas enjoyed his life in Cambridge. He came to respect the British as a people though he continued to nurse his ire against them as colonial rulers. “In this country,” he wrote to a friend, “people possess certain qualities which really make them great. The people here are real optimists. In our country people always bewail and bemoan their difficulties. Here they talk more about happiness, joy and god-given light.”

4

It was a self-assured young man of 21 that landed in Bombay on 16 July, 1921, after twenty months abroad. A halo had already surrounded Bose's name then. Although under the aegis of Mahatma Gandhi (who in 1921 was hailed as a peerless star in the political firmament) sacrifice had become the order of the day, Bose was the first Indian to discard the prized and prestigious I.C.S. job.

When he returned to his motherland he did not have a clear idea what particular work he would take up. But he had made up his mind to participate wholeheartedly in the national effort for the achievement of freedom. The road, he knew, would be long and hazardous. He would have to climb mountains and traverse valleys, suffer privations, imprisonment and even face police bullets. But he was steered for anything and everything.

The year 1921, in which Bose made his debut on the political scene, was a veritable *annus mirabilis* in Indian history. Gandhi's

Article in the *Indian Express*, 28 January 1970.

promise of "*swaraj* (freedom) within a year" had electrified the country. Tens of thousands of people followed him blindly and even hardheaded elderly persons were swept off their feet by the prevailing enthusiasm.

Students left their schools and colleges, lawyers their courts of law, and not a few government servants their jobs. Bonfires of foreign cloth were lit all over the country and liquor shops were picketed. Mass meetings, processions and demonstrations on an unprecedented scale fired the spirit of nationalism. The cry of '*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*' (Victory to Mahatma Gandhi!) reverberated through the length and breadth of India.

It was only to be expected, therefore, that Bose would take the earliest opportunity to meet Gandhi and seek advice regarding the course of his future activities. Besides, like many of his compatriots, Bose was unsure about the rationale of Gandhi's philosophy and the practicality of his non-cooperation movement. Gandhi happened to be in Bombay and Bose called on him soon after he landed.

There were mainly three issues on which he asked for elucidation. First, how were the different activities conducted by the Congress likely to culminate in the last stage of the campaign, *viz.* the non-payment of taxes? Second, how could mere non-payment of taxes or civil disobedience force the government to retire from the field and leave India a free nation? Third, how could the Mahatma promise *Swaraj* within one year as he had been constantly doing?

Gandhi patiently explained to his young interlocutor the background of his movement. His reply to the first question satisfied Bose, that to the second did not appeal to him while the third failed no better. Bose's initial confrontation with Gandhi thus revealed the gulf between their thinking and approach to political problems. "Though I tried to persuade myself at the time that there must have been a lack of understanding on my part," Bose wrote later, "my reason told me clearly, again and again, that there was a deplorable lack of clarity in the plan that the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Mahatma had formulated and that he himself did not have a clear idea of the successive stages of the campaign which would bring India to her cherished goal of freedom."⁹

This might be a biased judgment, but it shows that Bose did not surrender himself to the Mahatma's magic as many others had done at their very first meeting. While parting, Gandhi advised Bose to report to C. R. Das in Calcutta. This directive was unnecessary as while in Cambridge, Bose had already started a correspondence with the Bengal leader and, indeed, had promised to serve him in any capacity he desired.

C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru were perhaps the only two Indian leaders then who could claim to be anywhere near the level of Gandhi. Gandhi highly valued their judgment and generally sought the advice of both before formulating any new line of action. Das and Motilal Nehru were the leaders of the Bar in their respective provinces (Bengal and the United Provinces) and commanded lucrative practice.

Apart from his legal brilliance and forensic skill, Das had the heart of a poet and the spirit of a revolutionary. His munificence was proverbial. He freely spent his fortune on charitable causes. The reputation of Das (as of Motilal Nehru) reached a new peak when both joined the non-cooperation movement and gave up their princely earnings at the Bar.

Bose was captivated by Das at their first meeting: "During the course of our conversation I began to feel," he recalled later, "that here was a man who knew what he was about and could give all that he had, and who could demand from others all that they could give, a man to whom youthfulness was not a shortcoming but a virtue. By the time our conversation came to an end my mind was made up. I felt I had found a leader and I meant to follow him."¹⁰

Das, on his part, welcomed his dashing young Lieutenant with open arms and entrusted him with a number of responsible

⁹ *The Indian Struggle, 1920-1942* (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 54-55.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

jobs. He was put in charge of publicity for the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and made head of the National Volunteer Corps. He was also appointed Principal of the newly started National College. The able manner in which Bose discharged his many duties won encomiums from opponents as well as friends. The Anglo-Indian daily *The Statesman* ruefully remarked that while the Congress had gained such a capable man, the government had correspondingly lost a civil servant of high promise.

A visit of the Prince of Wales to India was due then to pacify public opinion and to prepare the ground for the inauguration of the constitutional reforms recommended in the Montagu-Cholmsford Report. But it had a contrary effect, being viewed as an insult added to the Jallianwalla Bagh injury. Much to the chagrin of the government, the Congress asked the people to boycott the Prince's visit and to observe a *hartal* (closure of all business and public activities) on 17 November, 1921, the day scheduled for the Prince's landing in Bombay.

Like other Indian cities, Calcutta observed a complete hartal that day and it seemed as if Congress volunteers had taken charge of the city. Their organisation was promptly banned by the government. The Bengal Congress Committee could not take such a summary ban lying down and it decided to start civil disobedience as a protest. In the event that the Committee itself would be declared unlawful, all its powers were vested in its president, C. R. Das, who put Bose in charge of the movement. It was begun modestly with batches of five volunteers hawking *khaddi* (hand-spun and hand-woven cloth) on the roads.

The campaign gathered a sudden momentum when Das's wife, who was leading a batch of women volunteers, was arrested and locked up in jail. Thousands of young men and women joined the movement and courted arrest and there was no room for them all in the jails! Highly piqued, the government arrested Das and his chief lieutenants, including Bose, who was sentenced to six months' imprisonment on 7 February, 1922. "Only six

months?" — Bose laughingly asked the magistrate as he was led out of the dock. This was the first of the eleven jail terms undergone by Bose during the next nineteen years. Bose had the privilege of serving C. R. Das in prison as cook, secretary and valet.

5

The tremendous success of the non-cooperation movement had unnerved the government and the British Viceroy, Lord Reading, was particularly galled by the boycott of the Prince of Wales. Wherever the Prince went in India he saw only deserted streets, closed shutters and black flags. Gandhi made it clear that no personal offence to the Prince was intended and the demonstration was aimed only at the government which remained unresponsive to public opinion.

In a last-minute bid for compromise Lord Reading sent letters to C. R. Das and other Congress leaders that he would rescind the ban on the Congress volunteer organisation, order a general release of prisoners and also summon a Round Table Conference to consider the proposed reforms, if only the Congress would call off the proposed boycott of the Prince's visit to Calcutta on 24 December. The last was a major concession to the Congress and would serve as a token fulfilment of Gandhi's promise of *Swaraj* within a year — which was running out. The practical statesman that he was, C. R. Das sent a telegram to Gandhi recommending the acceptance of Lord Reading's offer.

Time was of the essence of the compromise and as Gandhi quibbled over its terms, the Viceroy broke off the parleys. "The chance of a lifetime has been lost," Das remarked none in sorrow than anger. But a bigger shock was soon to follow. A few weeks later, as a vicarious atonement for the murder of a few policemen by angry villagers in a remote part of the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh), Gandhi called off the non-cooperation movement altogether. The Congress rank and file

was dumb-founded by this dissipation of the tremendous public sanctions generated during the previous few months. The government heaved a sigh of relief and promptly arrested Gandhi. A dutiful judge sentenced him to six years' imprisonment. A brief but glorious chapter of the freedom struggle had ended.

However, freedom's battle once begun never stops. C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru began to devise new means to rouse public enthusiasm. They realised that the Congress boycott of the legislatures was a mistaken tactic since loyalists and such other elements had eagerly occupied them. In a revolutionary struggle, Das thought, no point of vantage should be left in the hands of the enemy. Therefore, all elective seats in the legislatures, as also on other bodies, he suggested, should be captured by Congressmen. This proposal, formally mooted at a provincial Congress conference in Chittagong in May 1922, proved a bone of contention and split Congressmen into 'pro-changers' and 'no-changers', according to their views on the entry into legislatures.

Bose's superb ability as a social worker was demonstrated when he was deputed by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee to organise relief work in the districts of Bogra, Rajshahi, Patna, Dinajpur and Rangpur inundated by floods of unprecedented magnitude in 1922. Food crops were destroyed, hundreds of houses reduced to rubble and innumerable head of cattle swept away. Bose organised a band of volunteers and went with them to the affected areas to distribute food, agricultural implements and house-repairing material. Bose and his devoted volunteers worked day and night to put the destitutes on their feet. The relief organisation was a unique success and earned for the Congress and Bose personally the thanks of Lord Lytton, Governor of Bengal.

A battle royal was fought over the issue of contesting the elections to the legislatures at the annual Congress session in Gaya in the last week of 1922. The session was held under the presidency of C. R. Das. The delegates, a majority of whom were

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

orthodox followers of Gandhi, rejected Das's proposal for council entry. Das, therefore, resigned the presidency as well as membership of the Congress and, with the backing of Motilal Nehru, organised the 'Swaraj Party'. The main aim of the new party was to fight for freedom from within the legislatures. Bose naturally threw in his lot with Das and accompanied him on a tour of the country to popularise the new party. A journal in Bengali called the *Banglar Katha* and an English daily called the *Forward* were also started to conduct propaganda for the new party. Bose was appointed editor of the former and manager of the latter.

The Swaraj Party made impressive gains under the dynamic leadership of Das and Motilal Nehru. It drafted a constitution with the declared *immediate* objective of Dominion Status at a conference in Allahabad in March 1922. Such rapid strides were made by the new party within the next few months that when the annual Congress session came round again at Delhi, the Swarajists turned the tables on the 'no changers'. They got a resolution passed enabling Congressmen to take part in the ensuing elections to the legislatures. The Swarajist triumph was complete when towards the end of 1924, Gandhi (who meanwhile was released after an operation for appendicitis) himself blessed the new party and approved its programme of giving fight to the government from within the legislatures.

As a loyal follower of Das, Bose took a vigorous part in the activities of the Swaraj Party. He built up the *Forward* as a powerful party organ. He also gradually earned a name as a youth leader. He formed the "All-Bengal Youth League" with himself as its president. The League served as a model for similar youth organisations all over the country. Towards the end of 1923, Bose also became the general secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

The Swaraj Party candidates gave an excellent account of themselves in the general elections. Especially in Bengal its nominees, whose names were unknown to the public till then,

defeated veteran leaders such as Surendranath Banerjee, Sir Nilratan Sirkar and S. R. Das, the Advocate-General, who was a cousin of C. R. Das. Due to the non-inclusion of his name in the electoral roll, Bose could not stand for election and help his chief directly in the legislature.

But he remained Das's right-hand man in all his multifarious activities and imbibed from him valuable lessons which were to serve him well in his public life. Das's incisive intellect, which could quickly detect the weak points of the opponent, his broad sympathies which embraced all men and communities and the generosity which had become his by-name — all appealed to Bose. But in no sense did he become a blind follower of Das. Despite his loyalty to his leader, he retained his independence of outlook and judgment.

6

Even while he was giving battle to the government in the legislature, Das decided to capture the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. The Swaraj Party had almost a walk-over in the municipal elections in 1924. Its candidates were elected from almost all the wards, Bose being returned unopposed. It was a foregone conclusion that Das should be elected Mayor. But when the newly elected Corporation appointed Bose as its Chief Executive Officer — a British civilian preserve till then — it irked the government considerably and even caused heart-burning in the party itself. Das, of course, had full faith in his chief executive, whom he called 'a young, old man'.

Bose had just completed his 27th year and had little administrative experience. But he proved equal to the exacting job and soon made a name as an able and conscientious administrator. He never forgot that he was a disciple of Das: the very first decision he took was to donate half of his salary of Rs. 3,000 per month to charity. He ensured a new deal to the citizens and a new look to the administration.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Health Associations were opened in different wards to render medical aid and advice. A commercial museum and a directory of Indian products was started to give a fillip to *swadeshi* (indigenous) goods. The uniforms of the Corporation employees were made exclusively of *khadi*. Above all, the practice of presenting addresses to official dignitaries was stopped. Instead, receptions were arranged only for national leaders. Altogether, a new civic consciousness was created among the Corporation employees as well as citizens.

Bose applied himself to the civic work with single-minded devotion. He curtailed his political activities and was in his office or on inspection rounds of the different wards at almost all hours of the day. His dispatch of files amazed his subordinates, including departmental heads, most of whom were British. Bose was aware of the need to acquit himself well and also prove the credentials and capabilities of his party and the Congress.

The Swamy Party had meanwhile become a thorn in the side of the government. The latter was frequently defeated on the floor of the Central Legislative Assembly while the very working of the constitution was rendered difficult in Bengal. The Swarajist policy of creating a spirit of resistance to the British government was richly fulfilled. The bureaucracy became panicky, especially in Bengal where the cult of the revolver had again raised its head. Warrants were prepared under the antiquated Regulation III of 1818 and mass arrests of Congressmen were made in the early hours of 25 October 1921. Bose was one of those arrested, though everybody knew that he had virtually eschewed all political activities after being installed as Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation, six months earlier. To justify the arrest, a fantastic allegation was made by two Anglo-Indian journals of Calcutta that Bose was the brain behind a revolutionary conspiracy to overthrow the government.

The omnibus arrests sent a wave of indignation throughout the country. The arrest of Bose especially angered C. R. Das and he gave impassioned vent to his feelings from the mayoral

chain. "All that I want to say," he thundered, "is that Bose is no more revolutionary than I am. Why have they not arrested me? I should like to know why? If love of one's country is a crime, I am a criminal. If Bose is a criminal, I am a criminal. Not only the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation but the Mayor of this Corporation is equally guilty. Bose's arrest is sheer brute force on the part of the bureaucracy. . . No charge was made against him. No reason was given but he was simply told: we have got brute force and we shall drag you to prison. Is this law? Is this justice?"

The antiquated regulation under which Bose was arrested made it unnecessary for an arrested person to be brought before a court of law. Bose was kept in jails in Calcutta and Behanmpore for about three months, when it was decided to deport him to Burma which then formed a part of India. Only next to the Andamans, Burma with its remote location and alien atmosphere was a favourite choice of the government for banishment (with or without trial) of Indian political agitators. Among the distinguished leaders who were sent to rot there were Lokamanya Tilak for six years and Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh for lesser periods.

With typical sang-froid Bose and his fellow-detainees felt honoured when they were lodged in Mandalay in Burma. "It gave us consolation and pride," wrote Bose, "that we were following in the footsteps of our great compatriots." They tried their best to adjust themselves to the new life though nobody knew how long they would be detained there or whether they would live long enough to see their motherland again. Bose spent his time mostly in reading and meditation. He made a special study of Burmese folk arts and of criminal psychology. His letters to his friend Dillip Kumar Roy from Mandalay faithfully reflect his feelings in those days. "The enforced solitude in which a detainee passes his day," he wrote to Roy on 2 May 1925, "gives him an opportunity to think deep into the ultimate problems of life. In any event, I can claim this for myself, that

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

many of the most tangled questions, which whirl like eddies in our individual and collective life, are edging gradually to the estuary of a solution. The things I could only puzzle out feebly, or the views I could offer tentatively in days gone by are crystallising out more and more presentably from day to day. It is for this reason, if for no other, that I feel that I would be spiritually a gainer through my imprisonment."¹¹ In another letter Bose protested when Roy described his imprisonment as 'martyrdom'.

While Bose was thus gradually settling down – if that is possible in a prison – the news arrived that C. R. Das had passed away on 16 June 1925. It was more than a national calamity to Bose. It was a great personal bereavement. No longer could he sit at the feet of his friend, philosopher and guide. For weeks he mourned his grievous loss. He wrote to Roy: "It for the nation the loss in the death of Das is irreparable, for the youth of Bengal it is cataclysmic, appalling." Bose's feelings for C. R. Das – as man and politician – bordered on idolatry. Many years later he paid a tribute to Das's political acumen in the following words. "Das knew more than anyone else that the situations favourable for wresting political power from the enemy do not come often, and when they do come, they do not last long. While the crisis lasts, a bargain has to be struck. He knew also that to sponsor a settlement when public enthusiasm is at its height needs much courage and may involve a certain amount of unpopularity. But he was conscious of his exact role, namely that of a practical politician, and he was, therefore, never afraid of courting unpopularity."¹²

The drab and dreary life in Mandalay was suddenly convulsed in October 1925 when funds were denied to the Hindu detainees to celebrate their *Durga Puja* although Christian prisoners were given money to celebrate Christmas. When pleas for reconsidering the issue were unceremoniously turned down, Bose and

¹¹ *Netaji the Man*, pp. 175-77.

¹² *The Indian Struggle*, pp. 110-11.

his comrades in jail went on a hunger-strike which continued for a fortnight.

When the incident was reported in the Indian press, it caused great sensation and the government was compelled to promise redress. Bose lost 40 lbs. in weight and his health was seriously affected by the hunger-strike. He developed broncho-pneumonia in the winter of 1926 and as tuberculosis was also suspected, he was transferred to Rangoon for examination by a Medical Board. The Board recommended his immediate release, the jail superintendent also strongly backing the recommendation.

With its usual perversity, however, instead of implementing the Medical Board's report, the government made an offer to Bose that he would be released and put on board a ship sailing for Europe from Rangoon if he agreed to go to Switzerland at his own expense for recouping his health. At the same time he was informed that he would not be allowed to see his relatives. This inhuman proposal was promptly turned down by Bose. He wrote to his brother Sarat Chandra: "I have on this occasion tried to anticipate the worst that may befall me if I do not accept the offer of government, but I have not been able to persuade myself that a permanent exile from the land of my birth would be better than life in a jail leading to the sepulchre. I do not quail before this cheerless prospect, for I believe as the poet does, that 'the paths of glory lead but to the grave'."¹⁸

Public pressure for Bose's unconditional release mounted when the state of his health became known to the people. After a check-up by another medical board, he was brought to India and released on 16 May 1927. His detention without trial had lasted two years, six months and twenty-one days.

7

Bose's main concern after his release and return home was

¹⁸ Subhas Chandra Bose, *Correspondence 1924-1932* (Calcutta, 1967), p. 343.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

naturally to recoup his health which was badly shattered during his incarceration in Burma. A long period of rest along with medical treatment was advised by his doctors, but he was anxious to resume his political activities as early as possible. He was now a leader in his own right. His days of apprenticeship were long since over. During his enforced solitude in Mandalay he had pondered long and deeply over the problems facing the nation.

The previous two years were marked by a general political slump and communal troubles throughout the country. In Bengal especially the situation had deteriorated since the passing away of C. R. Das. Several factions had raised their heads in the Congress. The stock of the Swaraj Party had fallen and some of its stalwarts like M. R. Jayakar and N. C. Kelkar had formed a rival Responsivist Party. Gandhi was in virtual retirement since his release and was devoting his attention solely to the uplift of the depressed classes.

What was particularly deplorable, however, was the worsening of the communal situation. Hindu-Muslim riots were taking place all over the country, those in the summer of 1927 alone having taken a toll of 250 killed and 2,500 injured. The cold-blooded murder of Swami Shradhanand, a Hindu religious leader, by a Muslim fanatic in December 1926 had started a chain reaction which nobody could stop or control. Muslim communalism was matched by Hindu communalism, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha being their respective champions.

Despite his unsatisfactory health Bose, on whom the mantle of C. R. Das had fallen, had therefore to take up the helm soon after his release. His return to active life was hailed by all sections of Bengal Congressmen and he was elected President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in place of J. M. Sengupta. Misunderstanding between these two leaders, however, was to erupt before long and disfigure Congress politics in Bengal for several years. Rival groups of the *Jugantar* and

Anushilan parties rallied around the two leaders respectively. As a result of these internal feuds, Bose had to suffer defeat in the Mayoral election to the Calcutta Municipal Corporation.

The general political regress, however, was arrested by a fortuitous development. This was the announcement, in the first week of November 1927, of the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission under Section 84A of the Government of India Act, 1918, which provided for decennial reviews of the political situation in India. The Commission was headed by Lord Simon and was, therefore, popularly known as the Simon Commission. All British political parties were represented on this body but, significantly, it had no representative of Indian opinion. No wonder then that it provoked universal condemnation in India.

A resolution was passed at the plenary session of the Congress in Madras in December 1927 calling for the boycott of the Simon Commission "at every stage and in every form". A nation-wide *hartal* was observed on the day of the arrival of the Commission in India and it was greeted everywhere with shouts of 'Simon, go back!' Skirmishes between the police and the demonstrators took place in a number of cities. At Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai, known as the *Lion of the Punjab*, received blows on his chest which eventually led to his death. Public anger against the government reached fever-pitch and Bose thought it provided an excellent opportunity to launch an all-out movement to oust the British raj from India. Along with Jawaharlal Nehru he was made a general secretary of the Congress at the Madras session thus making his debut on the all-India stage. In his new official capacity Bose visited Mahatma Gandhi at his *ashram* (seminary) at Sabarmati (Ahmedabad) and urged him to come out of his retirement and conduct the proposed struggle.

To his disappointment and chagrin, the Mahatma refused to emerge from his self-imposed shell. Nor did the Congress Working Committee give a fighting lead. Its attention was focused

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

more on the preparation of a constitution for India in reply to the arrogant challenge of Lord Bakenhead in the British Parliament. The Indians, he had sneered, would be incapable of producing an agreed constitution for themselves.

The task was remitted to a committee appointed under the aegis of an All-Parties Conference and headed by Motilal Nehru. The committee succeeded in presenting a unanimous report recommending Dominion Status for India subject to certain reservations. This conflicted with the goal of complete national independence set by the Madras Congress and created resentment in the minds of the younger elements. Bose and Nehru offered to resign their joint general secretaryship of the Congress and to organise an 'Independence of India League'. They were advised by the Congress Working Committee not to resign since their proposed League could carry on its activities without coming into conflict with the Congress.

The boycott of the Simon Commission was zealously taken up by the youth of India who were fired by a new upsurge. Youth Leagues were formed in a number of provinces and their leadership naturally devolved on Bose and Nehru, the former being younger by eight years. The youth movement marked the emergence of radical and militant trends in the nation and many of the present-day Indian leaders came to the fore by participating in this youth movement. Bose presided over more than one Youth Conference and his addresses everywhere urged a spirit of activism in place of the passivism preached by older leaders like Gandhi. His utterances were outspoken to the point of bluntness and it is no wonder that they ruffled many feathers. His direct criticism of Mahatma Gandhi was particularly resented by the latter's faithful followers.

Typical of his attack on the Gandhian philosophy was the speech Bose delivered as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Youth Congress in Calcutta in December 1928. He said, *inter alia*: "The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Sabarmati (*i.e.* the Gandhian) school of thought is to create

a feeling and impression that modernism is bad, large-scale production is an evil, wants should not be increased and the standard of living should not be raised, that we must endeavour to the best of our ability, to go 'back to the days of the bullock-cart and that the soul is so important that physical culture and military training can well be ignored'. After mounting a similar attack on the Pondicherry, *i.e.* the Aurobindo Ghosh School, Bose made a fervent plea for a policy of activism in the concluding part of his speech: "It is the passivism, not philosophic but actual, inculcated by these schools of thought against which I protest. In this holy land of ours, *ashrams* are not new institutions and ascetics and yogis are not novel phenomena. They have held and will continue to hold an honoured place in society. But it is not their lead that we shall have to follow if we are to create a new India at once free, happy and great. In India today we want a philosophy of activism. We must be inspired by robust optimism. We have to live in the present and to adapt ourselves to modern conditions."¹

Bose's adversaries made political capital out of this speech and dubbed him a rebel which, in truth, he was. But, actually, the foregoing rebellious views had already been expressed by him in his presidential address to the Maharashtra Provincial Conference in Poona in May 1928 and he had only dotted its 'i's' and crossed its 't's'. Bose was never in the habit of dissembling his thoughts. From his childhood he had believed in giving expression to what he really felt, even though this occasionally put him in hot water.

The year 1928 was marked by unrest among industrial workers. A wave of strikes swept the country, the textile mills of Bombay, the jute mills of Calcutta and the Tata Iron and Steel Works in Jamshedpur — all being affected by it. The strike in the steel works was nearing collapse when Bose was prevailed upon to take up its leadership. He soon succeeded in bringing

¹ *Important Speeches and Writings of Subhas Bose*, ed. J. S. Bright (Lahore, 1947), pp. 81-82.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

about an honourable settlement of the strike. This occasion marked the initiation of Bose in the workers' movement and, soon after, he was elected President of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

The end of the year saw Bose as the general officer commanding of the Congress volunteer force raised for its annual session in Calcutta. It was a strong, well-drilled and uniformed body and the impressive uniform worn by Bose focused public attention as much on the G.O.C. of the volunteers as on the President of the session, Pandit Motilal Nehru. (That uniform is still preserved in the Netaji Museum in Calcutta).

8

The controversy between the Right and the Left, which was increasingly to dog politics in India as in other countries came to a head at the Congress session in Calcutta over the Nehru Committee Report referred to earlier. At the Calcutta Congress session (1928) Gandhi moved a resolution accepting the report. But Bose and Nehru moved an amendment rejecting Dominion Status recommended in the Nehru Report and reiterating the goal of complete independence set out in the Madras Congress. The tactician that Gandhi was, he withdrew his original resolution and proposed another giving the British government only a year for the acceptance of the Dominion Status formula of the Nehru Committee.

This resolution was passed by the subjects committee by 188 votes to 45, both Bose and Nehru abstaining from voting. This was taken as their tacit acceptance of Gandhi's resolution, which was moved by Gandhi in the open session the next day. Everything seemed to be going smoothly when, to the consternation of everybody, Bose stood up and moved an amendment stating that the Congress would be content with nothing short of independence, which implied severance of the British connection. He put a straight question to the delegates: "In the main resolu-

tion you have given twelve months' time to the British government. Can you lay your hands on your hearts and say that there is any reasonable chance of getting Dominion Status within this period? Pandit Motilal Nehru has made it clear in his speech that he does not think so. Then why should we lower the flag for these twelve months? Why not say we have lost the last vestige of faith in the British government and that we are going to take a bold stand?"¹⁵

When Nehru also supported the amendment, it seemed almost certain that it would be passed. But the followers of Gandhi made it an issue of confidence in the leader. They warned that the Mahatma would retire from the Congress if the amendment was passed. Consequently, it was lost by 973 votes to 1,350. The majority of delegates later voted for Gandhi's resolution not because they believed in it but solely because they did not want to be a party to ousting the Mahatma from the Congress. Nevertheless, the trend of voting revealed that the Left Wing had emerged strong and influential.

Soon after the Calcutta Congress, Gandhi took the wind out of the sails of his leftist critics by declaring in his weekly journal, *Young India*, that if by 31 December 1929, the government did not concede Dominion Status to India he would turn an *Independence-wallah* on 1 January 1930. Bose was not impressed by this assurance and feared that the temporising resolution of the Calcutta Congress would only serve to dampen public enthusiasm. A succession of sensational events, however, belied this fear.

On 29 March 1929, several prominent labour leaders from all over the country (not all of whom were communists) were arrested on a charge of conspiracy "to deprive His Majesty of the sovereignty of India". They were put on trial in an out-of-the-way place like Meerut where trial by jury did not obtain. (Hence this case is known as the Meerut Conspiracy Case).

¹⁵ *Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose* (New Delhi, 1962), pp. 42-43.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Among those arrested were three Englishmen, which explains the interest roused in the trial in British labour ranks. The trial dragged on for four years during which public interest in it never waned and 28 of the accused were eventually sentenced to various terms of imprisonment from three years to transportation for life. Bose was associated with the Defence Committee and he had to visit Meerut frequently to meet the underground labour leaders.

A still more sensational event occurred when Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt hurled bombs, along with a bundle of pamphlets entitled *Hindustan Socialist Republic Army Notice*, from the visitors' gallery on to the floor of the Central Legislative Assembly. It was the first time when a daring outrage like this had taken place in India and it was the talk of the country for several weeks.

Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt said in their statement before the court that they had thrown the bombs not with the intention of taking anybody's life but solely with the object of attracting the world's attention to conditions in India. Later these two young men were also implicated in the murder of Saunders, a police officer, as a reprisal for his assault on Lala Lajpat Rai during the demonstrations against the Simon Commission. The fearless and dignified behaviour of Bhagat Singh and his comrades made a deep impression on the public mind. Bhagat Singh became a hero overnight and every town and village in the country resounded with his name. To this day, he is honoured as one of the foremost Indian revolutionaries.

Among others arrested and put on trial in the Lahore Conspiracy Case was Jathindra Nath Das, who had served as a volunteer under Bose at the Calcutta Congress. Stormy scenes were witnessed at the trial as the accused were denied their elementary rights of defence. In protest against the treatment meted out to them by the police and the court, the accused went on a hunger strike which dragged on for two months and created a great stir.

Although his colleagues gave up the struggle one after another or were forcibly fed, Jatin Das continued his hunger strike until his death on the 31st day - 13 September 1929. This caused countrywide grief and commotion. People gathered in their thousands at every railway station to pay homage to Jatin Das's body as it was taken from Lahore to Calcutta for cremation. Among the tributes paid to him from many countries was one from the family of Terence McSweeney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, who had similarly given up his life in the cause of Irish freedom. Bose took a leading part in arranging the last rites of his former comrade in Calcutta.

Throughout the year Bose was busy in presiding over a number of conferences, especially of youth, such as the Punjab Students Conference in Lahore, the Central Provinces Youth Conference in Nagpur, the Berar Students' Conference in Amraoti and the Political Conference at Rangpur. The burden of his speeches at all these conferences was more or less the same. The accent was on patriotism, integrity, sacrifice, courage and a firm adherence to the cause of national independence. He asked young men and women to think for themselves.

"On occasions," he told his youthful audience in Nagpur, "you will have to take the responsibility of creating public opinion or of stemming the tide of public feeling. If you want to solve the fundamental problems of public life, you will have to look miles ahead of your contemporaries. The mass mind is often unable to cut itself off from present-day moods and visualise the future. It is not improbable that the mass mind will refuse to accept your prescription." "On such an occasion", Bose continued, "you must summon courage to stand out alone and friendless, in the presence of the cross as it were and fight the rest of the world. One who desires to swim with the tide of popular approbation on all occasions may become the hero of the hour, but he cannot live in history. For the most unselfish actions, we should be prepared to get abuse and vilification;

from our closest friends we should be prepared for unwarranted hostility."¹⁰

Bose did not see any inherent difference between evolution and revolution. Evolution, he considered to be revolution spread over a longer period, while revolution was evolution compressed within a shorter period. Bose visualised free India "as a perfect synthesis of all that is good in the East and the West". As the future architects of free India, Bose called upon students to train themselves in such a manner as to become pioneers of social reconstruction.

9

In the latter part of the year the issue of the selection of the president of the ensuing annual session of the Congress at Lahore came up for a decision. The consensus of opinion was in favour of Gandhi, who, however, declined to accept the nomination. Nor did he favour the names of other senior leaders such as Patel and Rajendra Prasad, and to everybody's surprise -- including that of the nominee himself -- plumped for Jawaharlal Nehru. This was a shrewd tactical move to wean Jawaharlal Nehru from his Leftist leanings and to turn him into a spokesman of the Establishment. Bose was sharp enough to see through the Mahatma's game and wryly observed that Gandhi had contrived to get a consistent and unfailing supporter in Jawaharlal and that the Mahatma's gain was the Leftists' loss.

A Labour Government had come into power for the first time in Britain in May 1929 and to placate public opinion in India it authorised the Viceroy to make an announcement that "it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress is the attainment of Dominion Status". The Viceroy further stated that a Round Table Conference would be held in London after the publication of the Simon Commission's Report. This ingeniously worded statement,

¹⁰ *Important Speeches and Writings*, p. 87.

which could mean anything or nothing, created high hopes in some quarters.

At the instance of Vithalbhai Patel, President of the Central Legislative Assembly, a leaders' conference was called in Delhi. A joint manifesto was adopted by the conference accepting the Viceroy's declaration in the belief that it would be fulfilled soon. Among those who signed the manifesto were Gandhi and the Nohus. Bose alone suspected that it was a trap in which the Congress should not be caught. Jawaharlal Nehru realised his mistake too late and, in days to come, repented it bitterly.

The Lahore Congress session is historic in India's annals as the flag of independence was solemnly raised during that session amidst deafening shouts of *Inquilab zindabad!* (Long Live Revolution.) True to his promise, Gandhi himself moved the resolution advocating complete independence. The Leftists were no doubt pleased by the turn of events but they pointed out that the resolution failed to incorporate any plan of action to achieve the Congress goal. On their behalf Bose moved an amendment that the Congress should immediately organise workers, peasants and youth and set up a parallel government. He declared that he was an extremist and his principle was *All or Nothing!* Needless to say, the amendment was defeated. When Bose and men of his persuasion were excluded from the new Congress Working Committee on the specious plea of having a homogeneous body, the Leftists staged a walk-out. Bose formed a Congress Democratic Party to pursue his militant programme, but it proved stillborn as he was sentenced to a year's rigorous imprisonment after his return to Calcutta. He had thus to remain a passive and helpless observer of the stormy political events that took place in 1930.

Gandhi had warned the government that in pursuance of the independence resolution he would soon launch another civil disobedience movement. But, he added, he would refrain from it if the British government conceded his demands which contained 'the substance of independence'. These demands were

issued in January and are known as the Eleven Points. They formed a Mahatmic mixture, which only bewildered the Leftists. What earthly bearing could the abolition of the Salt Tax, for instance — which appeared to be Gandhi's main demand — have on the attainment of freedom? — they wondered. Similarly, how was the total prohibition of alcohol (Gandhi's first demand) going to lead to the attainment of independence?

Gandhi knew his mind — and his magic. On 2 March, he sent a long letter to the Viceroy Lord Irwin, clarifying the significance of his demands. Referring to the abolition of the Salt Tax, he wrote: "Even the salt the peasant must use in order to live is so taxed as to make the burden fall heaviest on him if only because of the heartless impartiality of the incidence. The tax shows itself more burdensome to the poor man, for salt is the one thing he must eat more than the rich, individually and collectively." Gandhi concluded his letter with a solemn warning to the Viceroy: "If you cannot see your way to deal with these evils and my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the eleventh day of this month I shall proceed with my co-workers in the ashram to disregard the provisions of the salt laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's point of view. As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest of the land, a beginning will be made with this evil."

Lord Irwin sent a curt reply expressing his regret that Gandhi should be contemplating a course of action which was clearly bound to involve the violation of law and danger to the public peace. Gandhi's rejoinder was quick and characteristic: "On bonded knees I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English nation responds only to force. The only public peace the nation knows is the peace of the public prison. India is a vast prison-house. I repudiate this (the British) law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the nation."

On 12 March, Gandhi began his historic 211-mile march to the

sea-shore at Dandi with a band of 78 chosen followers. The march lasted 24 days and it turned out to be a spectacular pilgrimage to freedom. People from far and near came to watch the march and to participate in it. Its daily progress was reported in every nook and corner of India and it created unprecedented enthusiasm and excitement.

The government which was at first inclined to dismiss the march as a farcical spectacle became gravely anxious as the frail old man neared his destination to challenge the might of a powerful government by the simple expedient of picking up a lump of salt or making it out of sea-water. Salt suddenly became a magic word, a token of strength, a symbol of rebellion. The solemn ritual of breaking the law was performed at Dandi on 6 April as the eyes of not only India but the whole world were focused on Gandhi. "Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the salt law has been committed," declared Gandhi, "it is open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Act, to manufacture salt whenever he wishes and wherever it is convenient."

Considering that the Indian peninsula is surrounded on three sides by the sea, it was an easy thing to organise open and spectacular breaches of the Salt Act in most parts of the country. Preparation of illegal salt from sea-water looked like a Boston Tea Party multiplied a million times. And where it was not convenient to reach the sea, people organised raids on the government salt depots such as Dharasana (Gujarat) and Wadala (Bombay). Where even this was not possible, hundreds of people including women broke the Forest Law — or any other law they could — in a spirit of open rebellion. This brought on brutal reprisals from the police which resulted in numerous broken heads and bruised limbs. But the people continued to break the laws regardless of the reign of terror and the arrest of their leaders. The spirit of revolt spread even to the Indian Army when a detachment of the Royal Garhwali Rifles refused to obey the order to fire on peaceful demonstrators in Peshawar.

Biography of Nctaji Subhas Chandra Bose

What was most notable was the spirit of discipline and non-violence observed by the people at large in the face of police brutalities. George Slocombe, a representative of London's *Daily Herald*, felt it 'humiliating for an Englishman' to watch the atrocities perpetrated by the police during a raid on the Wadala Salt Depot. An American reporter, Webb Miller, found the scenes at Dhuasana so painful and harrowing that he had to turn his eyes away.

10

Bose heard and read about these developments in his prison cell with joy. And as fate would have it, in an incident in the prison he himself had to suffer such a severe beating from the jail staff that he was rendered unconscious for more than an hour. This experience was actually welcomed by him as a link with his people outside who were daily subjected to similar assaults. For once, he had nothing but admiration for Gandhi's leadership and his capacity to evoke the highest acts of bravery and sacrifice from the people.

Such a high pitch of public agitation could not, however, be sustained for long since their leaders were behind prison bars. Gandhi was detained at Yeravada without trial. An Ordinance Raj took over in India as the Viceroy promulgated one Ordinance after another to circumvent the regular laws and to break the spirit of the people. Congress committees were declared unlawful organisations, their meetings were banned and their properties were confiscated. Nevertheless, it was the Congress that ran in cities like Bombay and Calcutta and only the loyalists supported the government.

No wonder then that the report of the Simon Commission came like a dead letter when it was published in June. Nor did the Round Table Conference, which opened in London on 12 November, evoke the least public interest in India whose political future it was discussing. Its delegates were hand-

picked by the government and the Congress was conspicuous by its absence. *Hamlet* could not be kept running for long without the Prince of Denmark. When the Conference adjourned on 19 January 1931, the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, made a significant declaration. "If, in the meanwhile," he said, "there is response to the Viceroy's appeal from those engaged at present in civil disobedience, steps will be taken to enlist their services." With the nagging realisation that his term was running out without anything being done to justify his appellation of the 'Christian Viceroy', Lord Irwin ordered an unconditional release of Congress leaders. He also appealed to them to withdraw the civil disobedience movement and to participate in the constitution-making processes in London.

Bose was released earlier, his term of imprisonment having expired. He was, however, severely injured in a police beating while leading a procession as Mayor of Calcutta on the very day that Gandhi came out of jail — 26 January, the day the Independence Resolution was passed. (This is observed as the Republic Day since India became independent.) He appeared in the court the next day with his clothes stained with blood and his arm in a sling to receive another sentence of six months' imprisonment. He was however released soon after, on 8 March, in the general amnesty.

The appeals of Premier Ramsay MacDonald and the Viceroy Lord Irwin to Gandhi to withdraw the civil disobedience movement and to help in the drafting of a new constitution for India were supported by leading Indian delegates on their return from the Round Table Conference. They persuaded Gandhi to have heart-to-heart talks with the Viceroy. These talks, which began in February 1931, are of interest to the student of history partly because of their dramatic background and partly due to their sweeping denunciation by Winston Churchill. The Conservative leader considered it "alarming and nauseating that a half-naked *fakir* (meaning Gandhi) should be allowed to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor".

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The prolonged negotiations were crowned with success in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5 March. Gandhi on behalf of the Congress agreed to suspend the civil disobedience movement and to participate in the Round Table Conference. The Viceroy offered to withdraw the emergency ordinances, to release political prisoners, to permit peaceful picketing and the manufacture of salt without the payment of duty. Although Bose, Nehru and the Leftists generally were none-too-happy over the pact, it was hailed with relief by the people at large, whose earlier euphoria was naturally on the wane. Despite the Leftist opposition to it, Gandhi stood by the terms of the Pact and was bent on getting it ratified at the ensuing session of the Congress at Karachi at the end of March. But the execution of Bhagat Singh and two of his comrades convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy Case on the eve of the session, cast a dark shadow on it. Bose had long talks on the Pact with Gandhi at Bombay, from where they travelled together to Karachi.

The ovations which the Mahatma received at all railway stations on the way testified to his hold on the people, though in Karachi itself he was greeted with black flags by members of the All-India Youth Congress. Despite their dissatisfaction over the Pact, the Leftists decided not to oppose the resolution on it in view of the peculiar circumstances in the country. Its passage was adroitly assured when Nehru was prevailed upon to move it and the bereaved father of Bhagat Singh to support it.

Bose, who had discreetly kept silent at the Congress session, subjected the Gandhi-Irwin Pact to a severe indictment in his presidential address to the Navjawan Bharat Sabha.¹⁷ "It is exceedingly unsatisfactory and highly disappointing", he said. "What pains me most is the consideration that at the time the Pact was drawn up we actually had more strength than would appear from the contents of the document." Bose and his fellow-

¹⁷ See Appendix for full text.

Leftists in the Congress ranks were not the only persons who viewed the Gandhi-Irwin Pact with disfavour. Members of the Indian Civil Service, who were mostly Britishers, were none too pleased by it. They sought every excuse and opportunity to hamper and evade its implementation. Their opposition was strengthened by the change in the Viceroyalty. Lord Willingdon, who succeeded Lord Irwin, was known for his bitter hostility to the Congress and for his personal allergy to Gandhi.

From the very beginning, therefore, the Pact made heavy weather. Distrust on both sides was evident in its working and the political atmosphere was marked by tension instead of the expected cordiality. The vicious circle of unredressed popular grievances and official repression again began to produce an explosive situation and even Gandhi was overcome with doubts whether the Pact he and Lord Irwin had so laboriously consummated was not being nipped in the bud. Gandhi, who was appointed as the sole Congress plenipotentiary to the Round Table Conference, was loath to leave for London until he was sure of the faithful implementation of the Pact. Somehow a last minute compromise formula was hammered out and Gandhi sailed for London on 29 August. But as in India so in U.K. the pitch was already queered for him by the intervening change of government in Britain.

At their very first meeting, Sir Samuel Hoare (later Lord Templewood), the new Secretary of State for India, bluntly told Gandhi that there could be no question of immediate independence for India or even Dominion Status. The Round Table Conference itself rejected outright Gandhi's claim to represent the people of India as a whole and he was consistently outmanoeuvred and outvoted at the conference. His speeches were politely listened to, but his appeals for a united front to the British government were rejected out of hand. It was not long before Gandhi realised that he was waging a vain fight against an entrenched alien power which had set up a plethora of

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

feudal, communal and sectional interests to defeat and nullify the Congress demand for independence. He solemnly warned the British government at the concluding session: "The Congress will wander, no matter how many years, in the wilderness rather than lend itself to a proposal under which the hardy tree of freedom and responsible government can never grow."

Bose was not surprised by the failure of Gandhi's mission. He thought that it was a grave tactical mistake to send Gandhi as the sole representative of the Congress: "Alone in an assembly of about one hundred men, with all kinds of non-descripts, flunkies and self-appointed leaders arrayed against him like a solid phalanx, Gandhi was at a great disadvantage"¹⁸ He further thought that if fifteen or so Congress delegates, including nationalist Muslims, could have accompanied Gandhi — according to the Viceroy's original offer — they would have crossed swords with the reactionary elements.

Bose also criticised Gandhi personally for the manner in which he had conducted himself in London. "Sometimes he conducted himself not as a political leader who had come to negotiate with the enemy, but as a master who had come to preach a new faith — that of non-violence and world peace. Because of his second role, he had to spend his time with people who were quite useless in promoting his political mission."¹⁹ If Gandhi had to go to London at all, Bose felt, he should have rather done it in 1930 when a better deal might have been received from the Labour government which was then in power.

11

These reflections belong to a later date. At the moment Gandhi's failure in London was welcomed with evident glee by the bureaucracy in India where the Gandhi-Irwin Pact had

¹⁸ *The Indian Struggle*, p. 288.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 227-28.

already become a dead letter. The inquiry promised by the government into the police excesses in Bardoli (Gujarat) and elsewhere was being circumvented on one pretext or another and ordinances were again being promulgated to suppress public unrest. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, known as the 'Frontier Gandhi' was arrested on the fantastic ground that he had refused to attend a Durbar held by the Chief Commissioner!

In the Midnapore District of Bengal, untold atrocities were perpetrated to suppress a no-tax campaign. In retaliation a succession of British magistrates were shot dead which, in its turn, provoked further police excesses. A virtual martial law was imposed on Chittagong. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee was compelled under the circumstances to declare that the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was dead. It demanded the revival of the civil disobedience movement.

When Gandhi returned to India on 28 December 1931, he found a complete transformation in the political atmosphere. He was grieved by the new spate of ordinances, shootings and arrests of Congress rank and file. But being a man of peace, he expressed his readiness to call on Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy, to explore all avenues of peace. The request for interview was summarily turned down and Gandhi was arrested on 4 January 1932. Bose had been arrested two days earlier on his way back from Bombay (where he had come to meet Gandhi) to Calcutta. The uneasy truce of the last ten months had ended and the nation went back again to the struggle.

Earlier in the year in his presidential address to the All-India Trade Union Congress, Bose had urged workers to close their ranks and present a united front in their own interest. The Trade Union Congress, he said, was public property. All unions were welcome to join it and make their presence felt. If they had sufficient strength, they could capture the executive and implement their own policies. But this appeal fell on deaf ears and the differences in the workers' ranks widened and grew until the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

movement split into several rival unions. The divisive process continues to this day.

In the same speech, Bose welcomed the Fundamental Rights resolution passed at the Karachi Congress as 'a definite move towards socialism'. The salvation of India, as of the world, observed Bose, "depended on socialism. India should learn from and profit by the experience of other nations, but she should be able to evolve her own methods in keeping with her own needs and her own environment. In applying any theory to practice, you can never rule out history or geography. If you attempt it, you are bound to fail." He further observed, "India, therefore, should evolve her own form of socialism. When the whole world is engaged in socialistic experiments, why should we not do the same? It may be that the form of socialism which India will evolve will have something new and original about it which will be of benefit to the whole world."²⁰

That the arrest of Gandhi, Bose, Nehru and other Congress leaders was no sudden or *ad hoc* decision was evident from the systematic and thorough repression launched all over the country by the government. Benefiting from the experience in 1930, the government had left nothing to chance. A number of Ordinances choked off all political activity and inflicted heavy reprisals on those who dared to transgress them. By and large the people were taken by surprise at this sudden turn of events. Even so, they gave a very good account of themselves. Boycott of British goods, picketing of liquor shops, publication of unauthorised news-sheets called *Congress Bulletins* and *hartals* became the order of the day. Even a token session of the outlawed Congress was held in Delhi in April. More than 50,000 people were arrested and jailed. Even so the civil disobedience movement flourished, belying the Viceroy's hope of crushing it in six months.

²⁰ *Selected Speeches*, p. 60.

The government then started laying its hands even on non-activist sympathisers of the movement. Bhulabhai Desai, Advocate General of Bombay, and Sarat Chandra, elder brother of Bose, were detained without even a charge-sheet being framed against them. Perhaps the most odious aspect of the new policy of repression was the offensive launched on the Indian press. Action was taken against 163 newspapers. Their editors and printers were jailed and their presses were searched, seized or confiscated. Police firing became a frequent occurrence, 34 persons being killed and 91 injured in the Bombay Presidency alone. The leaderless masses gave a very good account of themselves but the unequal fight could not be continued indefinitely.

Suddenly in the third week of September, public attention was diverted to the fast unto death undertaken by Gandhi in the Yeravda prison to protest against the 'Communal Award' of the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald. This was an offshoot of the abortive discussions at the Round Table Conference on franchise rights of the different castes and communities of India. Under his so-called award, MacDonald gave the Depressed Classes (untouchables) separate electorates and also the additional right of contesting seats from the general constituencies.

Gandhi viewed the Award as a subtle attempt to dismember Hindu society and resorted to a fast unto death as he had warned earlier. MacDonald replied that the Award could not be changed unless an alternative was agreed to by all the interests and communities concerned. Frantic attempts were made by friends and admirers of Gandhi to find ways and means to save Gandhi's life. On the fifth day of the fast a formula was evolved which was acceptable both to Gandhi and to Dr. Ambedkar, the leader of the Depressed Classes.

As in 1930, Bose who was behind the prison bars was a detached observer of all these dramatic happenings. In 1930 he was thrilled by the inspiring lead of Gandhi and the heroic res-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

ponse of the people to it. Now in 1932 he was only bewildered and aghast that the civil disobedience movement should be completely side-tracked — and almost forgotten — in the public frenzy to save Gandhi's life. The issue might have loomed large in Gandhi's mind but to Bose it was of relative insignificance compared with the clamant need of achieving freedom.

Brooding over these developments Bose's health, which had been badly affected by his detention in Mandalay, began to deteriorate fast despite his transfer from one jail to another for a change of climate. When he was sent to Madras in July, Bose looked a physical wreck. He sustained himself mainly on tea and water mixed with lime juice. He was irregular about medicines and apparently did not care at all about his health. But mentally he was cheerful. He started a Sunday class for political prisoners and lectured them on a variety of topics. According to the testimony of a fellow-prisoner, the first draft of *The Indian Struggle* was written by Bose in the Madras prison.

During his routine inspection visit to the prison, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Madras asked Bose whether he was comfortable. Promptly came Bose's retort: "You should feel ashamed of yourself and your government to keep me a prisoner without any charge or trial. Don't you see that it is a sheer mockery to ask such a prisoner if he is comfortable? Why don't you put yourself in this position and then get the answer yourself?" As in Mandalay, so in Madras prison, he wrote frequent letters in a philosophic vein to his friend Dilip Kumar Roy. In one of his letters, he expatiated on the need for a *guide* to make one realise one's duty and proper sphere of work. As Bose's health became distinctly worse, the government removed him to a sanatorium in Bhowali in the United Provinces, on the recommendation of a medical board. But as no improvement was noticed even at Bhowali, another medical board was appointed to examine him. It recommended that he should be sent to Europe for treatment and change of climate. The Government

of India offered to release him provided he proceeded straight to Europe, at his own expense. With characteristic vindictiveness Bose was not allowed to meet his parents before his departure. He was escorted by a posse of police from Jabalpur (the last place of his detention) to Bombay and put straight on board the *s.s. Gange* which sailed for Europe on 13 February 1933. Another forced exile — this time in Europe — had begun.

INDIA'S AMBASSADOR ABROAD 1933—1936

LOTHAR FRANK

In the spring of 1933, under the pressure of public opinion, British authorities in India gave permission to Subhas Bose to leave India and proceed to Austria for medical treatment. Like all Indians before independence, he carried a British passport and in his passport his stay in Europe was restricted exclusively to Austria. In Vienna, Bose found very good physicians and received very satisfactory medical treatment. After a few weeks of treatment and rest, he began to recover rapidly. As soon as he felt stronger physically, he began to take active interest in his new surroundings and sought to establish new contacts with people in Europe in the interest of the nationalist movement in India. He found a kindred spirit in another leading Indian politician then convalescing in Europe, Mr. V. J. Patel. Patel not only shared his interest in promoting international goodwill for Indian nationalist aspirations but also his anti-Gandhi political opinions.

Bose began by meeting people in Vienna for the purpose of establishing an Austrian-Indian Society there. He won many friends in influential, cultural and economic circles in Austria and succeeded in establishing many cultural as well as economic ties between Austrians and Indians. He started corresponding with many European writers and scholars such as Romain Rolland and such correspondence alone took a great deal of his time. By personal contacts, correspondence, lectures, writings, etc. he endeavoured to create in the people of the continent of Europe an interest in the Indian national movement and to win their sympathy for the struggle for freedom carried on by the Indian National Congress and moral support against Great

Britain. In Vienna he met diplomatic representatives of many countries at functions organised by the Austrian-Indian Society. While representatives of some other countries were totally indifferent, Bose soon discovered with great satisfaction that the neighbouring countries of Austria, viz. Czechoslovakia and Poland reacted very positively to his efforts and showed a great deal of sincere understanding of the struggle for national independence being carried on by the Indian people. He received without any difficulty from the Consul General of Czechoslovakia a visa to visit that country.

He travelled to Czechoslovakia partly also to continue his treatment at the Spas of Karlovyvary (Kaisbad). While there he often visited Prague where he held political discussions with Dr. Benes, the then Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia. As the people of Czechoslovakia had won their national freedom only after the First World War, Bose and his Czech friends discovered many common interests which united India and Czechoslovakia. He studied the famous Czech Youth Movement, 'Sokol'. He acquainted himself with the history of the Czechoslovakia Legion which was created during the First World War outside Czechoslovakia with the support of Great Britain and Russia to fight for the liberation of that country from Austrian domination. In Prague he also met Prof. Lesny, the well-known Indologist, a friend and biographer of Rabindranath Tagore and one-time Professor at Visva-Bharati. Through his efforts, the Czechoslovak-Indian Association was brought into existence in 1934 with Prof. Lesny as the President. At the inauguration of this Society at the Lubkowitz Palace in Prague, Subhas Bose had the opportunity for the first time in Europe to speak on India's struggle for freedom carried on by the Indian National Congress.¹

¹ See Miloslav Krása, *Looking Towards India*, (Prague 1960) and the same author's *Subhas Chandra Bose and Indo-Czech Relations*, (Calcutta, 1971).

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The Polish Minister in Prague, whom Subhas Bose had come to know in the meantime, showed a great deal of sympathy — like the Czechs — towards India's fight for freedom. And he helped the latter to travel to Poland by giving him a visa to that country. In Prague Bose also came to know the British Vice-Consul who, fortunately for him, became extremely sympathetic and raised no objection to his travel to Poland (although originally the British Government had limited his stay to Austria only). It was curious and noteworthy that although he was able to travel to Poland and Czechoslovakia, his British passport did not entitle him to go to England. The Polish Consul General in Prague, whom Subhas Bose had come to know already in Vienna, gave him personal letters of introduction to important Polish personalities who informed him about the military training of the Polish Legion in Japan during the First World War to liberate their country then under Russian domination.

2

Barely a couple of months after Bose's arrival in Europe, news arrived of the sudden suspension of the civil resistance movement by Mahatma Gandhi. Bose reacted strongly to what he thought to be an ignoble surrender to the British. He issued a public statement from Vienna jointly with Patel denouncing Gandhi's leadership and calling for an alternative radical militant leadership.² Soon thereafter Bose was invited to preside over an Indian Political Conference in London. As he was not allowed to enter England, his presidential speech was read at the meeting in absentia. That speech, which is rightly considered to be one of his fundamental political writings, showed clearly that his own political preparation was already far advanced, both in respect of the strategy of the fight against Britain and

² *The Indian Struggle 1920-1942*, (Calcutta, 1964), p. 357.

the ultimate aim of Indian National Revolution.³ He set out his own messianic faith in India's destiny in the following words:

. . . . In the seventeenth century England made a remarkable contribution to world civilisation through her ideas of constitutional and democratic government. Similarly, in the eighteenth century France made the most wonderful contribution to the culture of the World through her ideas of 'liberty, equality and fraternity.' During the nineteenth century Germany made the most remarkable gift through her Marxian philosophy. During the twentieth century Russia had enriched the culture and civilisation of the world through her achievement in proletarian revolution, proletarian government and proletarian culture. The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilisation of the world, India will be called upon to make.

3

From Warsaw, Subhas travelled to Germany. He felt that it was not enough for him to establish contacts with only Austrian, Czech and Polish politicians. He wanted also to meet and know leaders of Germany and Italy because these countries had at that particular time suddenly become centres of important political movements in Central Europe. What interested him most was how Hitler and Mussolini had succeeded in creating anew such extraordinary national consciousness amongst the German and Italian masses and overpowering them with a new vision of national greatness.

In July 1933 Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Berlin from Warsaw at the railway station of Friedrichstrasse. The German Foreign Office had been alerted by the Indo-German Society in Berlin to receive him at the station and to help him during his

³ Subhas Chandra Bose, *Fundamental Questions of Indian Revolution*, (Calcutta, 1970).

Biography of Nctaji Subhas Chandra Bose

stay in Berlin. This was done in the name of the Indo-German Society by the present writer who was at that time a Scientific Officer in the Technical High School in Berlin-Charlottenburg. As a result of efforts made by Dr. Pruefer who was at that time a Joint Secretary in the German Foreign Office, arrangements were made to bring him to Hamack-Haus which was at that time used as the guest house for foreign visitors to the capital of the Imperial Government of Germany. It was situated in Berlin-Dahlem and it was in this guest house that Rabindranath Tagore had also stayed for a few days in 1926. Subhas Bose did not, however, want to become the guest of the German Government. He only wanted to discuss with them a large number of problems and questions relating to the overall German policy towards India and particularly to her struggle against Great Britain. He, therefore, left the guest house and went to stay in Grand-Hotel-am-Knie in Charlottenburg at his own expense. In Berlin, Subhas Bose wanted to speak to Hitler urgently to convince him of his entirely wrong judgment of the Indian people and the fight for freedom which the Indian people were carrying on to liberate themselves from the British yoke. He particularly wanted to persuade him to change his contemptuous remarks about Indians in the new edition of his book *Mein Kampf*.¹

Subhas Bose sincerely believed that if he succeeded, as a result of a personal discussion with Hitler, in persuading the latter to change the passage, he would then have fulfilled an important mission in Europe and would have won some political advantage for India. He, therefore, tried through the officials of

¹ "England will lose India only if it allows its administrative machinery to be dominated by the Indians or when it will be forced to give up India as a result of attack on India by a more powerful enemy of England. The Indian rebels will never be able to realise this... I, as a German, prefer to see India, in spite of everything, under British domination than under the domination of any other country."

the German Foreign Office and also through the Office of the Chancellor, to meet Hitler. But his efforts remained fruitless as he was given to understand that because of lack of time and many other important engagements, neither Chancellor Hitler nor Mr. Goebbels could see him.

At that time, the spokesmen of the German Foreign Office were Mr. Paeley, Mr. Diekhoff and Mr. Schmidt-Rolke. They refused to intervene and bring about a meeting between Hitler and Bose on the ground that the German government should remain neutral in the fight which the Indian people were carrying on against Great Britain. Nevertheless, they themselves showed some sympathy for the Indian national movement. It will be recalled that the Imperial German Government had taken considerable interest in the Indian revolutionary movement during the First World War and they could not remain completely uninfluenced by the efforts of Subhas Bose to project the current Indian struggle in Germany.⁶ In reality, Bose did not expect too much from Germany at that moment, all that he could do was to write a letter of protest to the well-known daily of the National Socialist Party, the *Volkscher Beobachter* which in an issue in July 1933 wrote that "Germany has no interest whatsoever in the internal affairs of India". This semi-official declaration was no doubt meant to be a sop to the British government, because Subhas Bose had tried, in the meanwhile, to establish contact with the Foreign Policy Section of the National Socialist Party in order to persuade it to arrange a meeting with Hitler.

The present writer was however able to arrange a number of interviews for Bose with the leaders of some of the dissident groups of the National Socialist Party. As a result of such meetings, Bose was able to form an idea as to how those members of the Party were working independently and in an illegal manner while remaining inside the Party. Through such

⁶ J. H. Volpert, *Relations between the Indian National Movement and Germany, 1870-1945*, (Calcutta, 1971).

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

contacts Bose acquired an insight into the methods of the National Socialist Party organisation and the success of the political movement it had set in motion. Within the party itself, there was a secret organisation which played not an unimportant role in undermining the influence of diehards of the party itself. Bose was interested in studying such organisations because he himself was in contact with secret organisations in Bengal. Some of these he himself had created and with some others he had very close personal connections.

He was assured by this secret but dissident group of the National Socialist Party that it would help the revolutionary organisations in Bengal with technical equipment, arms and ammunition as well as instruments for sending secret messages, etc. if a reliable method of transporting these materials from Germany to Bengal could be established. Much later it became known that the Propaganda Minister Goebbels himself had issued a directive to the Party members to create difficulties in India for the British by promoting discontent of the Indian people; but that Goebbels himself was responsible for these directives was kept a strict secret. In order, however, to exchange information between the two secret organisations, a secret code was devised. Basically, it was included within four tiny German-English dictionaries. These secret coded messages were to be carried by people in confidence in merchant ships which called at Indian ports. This complicated system of establishing liaison between secret organisations in Germany and the underground organisations in Bengal, however, failed to produce any positive results.

The other object of Subhas Bose in Berlin was to study the state of affairs of the Indian colony in Berlin. Since the end of the First World War, Indians living in Berlin had been divided into three separate groups and one such group consisted of those political exiles who, during the First World War, had worked together with the German Foreign Office to organise a revolt in India. In this group, the most outstanding persons were

Mr. Champak Raman Pillai and Mr. Viendia Nath Chattopadhyaya, brother of the famous Sarojini Naidu. Whereas this group remained in contact with the conservative elements of the German government, the second group had established contacts with the German Socialist Party which had international connections. The third group, which was composed of newly-arrived young students in Berlin, had as its organiser Mr. A. C. N. Nambiar who had been asked by Jawaharlal Nehru to organise an Indian Information Office in Berlin. The function of this Office was to supply information to German newspapers about the arrival of important Indians in Germany, give advice and help to Indian students and find seats in German universities or apprenticeships in industries for Indian students who were then coming to Germany in large numbers. Nambiar became very well-known as an associate of Subhas Chandra Bose in Germany during the Second World War.

As it has already been mentioned, the conversation which Subhas Bose had with Dr. Pfeifer, Joint Secretary at the Foreign Office, and Fr. Diekhoff and Mr. Schmidt-Rolke, did not lead to any practical results. Thus, even those members of the German Foreign Office who were not enthusiastic members of the National Socialist Party, could not do very much. They eventually asked Bose to get into touch with Dr. Franz Thierfelder who was at that time Director of the German Academy in Munich. Consequently Subhas Bose went down to Munich and met Dr. Thierfelder. Through the latter he was able to send a draft programme for Indo-German collaboration, which he himself had prepared, to some members of the German Foreign Office. Bose and Thierfelder became very good friends and began to correspond with each other. The letters, which have been fortunately preserved, show how greatly these two people came to appreciate each other. Of particular importance is Bose's letter to Thierfelder of 25 March 1936 in which he narrates his experiences in Germany with frankness and lucidity.⁶

⁶ See Appendix.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Thierfelder's communications to the German Foreign Office were treated with much reserve. Because members of the German Foreign Office, in view of Hitler's pronounced anti-Indian views, did not have any illusions about the chances of influencing German foreign policy towards India in a useful manner, they let Subhas Bose know that the way he had presented his case was only partly correct and that the rest was highly exaggerated. It was true that since the National Socialists came to power, there was a certain amount of sympathy shown for India in the German press because of the anti-British stance of the Nazis. But this sympathy did not result in any positive action because of the strongly racist policy which the National Socialist Party had adopted towards the colonial peoples. Nevertheless, Subhas Bose continued to make use of every opportunity to present his point of view in Berlin by refuting the policy which the government was following towards Britain and India. He strongly condemned the new law which was drafted by Minister Frank and which regarded, for instance, a marriage between an Indian and a German as a 'racial scandal'. He also protested against the declaration of Henmann Goering to the effect that Gandhi was an anti-British Bolshevist agent.

As a result of all these efforts and Bose's positive attempts to improve Indo-German relations, anti-Indian reporting in the German press was at least somewhat curtailed. But the constant reference to Indians as 'coloured people' in the German press could not be stopped. This attitude of the National Socialist Party towards the Indians was at variance with its theory of Aryan origin of the Indians and the Germans and led to the rejection of whatever suggestions Subhas Bose and his German friends made to the German government. Goebbels, however, was reported to have said to the Indian journalist Jabbar Rahman (published later in the German press) that the Japanese and the Indians possessed a culture of a high order which mirrored their racial qualities. But even the publication of this statement did not prevent the German press continuing to dis-

cribe Indians as an inferior race. To anyone who had some contact with the problems of the world, it was very clear that official Germany, during this particular period, did not take any interest whatsoever in Indian affairs.

How the Foreign Section of the National Socialist Party looked at the Indian problem and also to Germany's relations with India and Ceylon can be seen from a document available in government archives. In this document, it was asserted that the claim of the German Foreign Office to conduct the relations of the Third Reich with foreign countries independently was not fully accepted by the party. This document also shows how ambivalent was Hitler's attitude towards Britain. That even such ambivalence of Hitler towards Britain did not deter Subhas Bose from trying to persuade the German government to adopt an anti-British attitude and to help the Indian freedom movement shows how mistaken he was in the beginning as to the true nature of the Nazis. And it can be said that in this lay a part of the tragedy of Subhas Bose in so far as his relations with the Germans were concerned.

4

During his long years of exile in Europe, Subhas Bose felt greatly frustrated in some way or other almost every day and could not help feeling that he was not able to understand Europe and the Europeans well enough. Nevertheless, he followed the political events in Europe very closely and read the international press most carefully. He did not see any alternative other than to be patient as long as he lived in Europe, and to prepare in every possible way for his ultimate aim of liberation of India. It is most significant that during this period he wrote his famous book *The Indian Struggle, 1920-34*. He began working on it in Vienna in 1933, continued to do so at Karlovyvary in Czechoslovakia and completed it in 1934 in Bad

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Gastein in Austria. The book was published by a London publisher in January 1935.

It is interesting to recall here that while British reviewers in leading newspapers of England spoke highly of his work, the British government lost no time in banning its entry into India.⁷ In writing the book he was assisted greatly by Miss Emiho Schenkl whom he had come to know shortly after his arrival in Europe and whom he afterwards made his permanent secretary abroad. Miss Schenkl had taken a lively interest in all the work which Subhas Bose had been doing in Europe. And, when he organised the Free India Centre in wartime Germany between 1941 and 1943, she joined him in Berlin. Close comradeship and mutual trust which they developed in the course of their common work during the war years brought them nearer to each other and in February 1942 Subhas Bose married her according to Indian rites. Their daughter Anita was born and grew up in Vienna and eventually took a doctorate from the University of Vienna in 1965.

5

Another task that Bose took upon himself very seriously during this visit to Europe was to study the history and nature of popular revolutionary movements against exploitation of the masses by ruling classes in countries of Western Europe. The ideological colour which different people gave to their struggles for liberation was less important to him than the technique of seizure of power—whether in Europe or other parts of the world. Regardless of ideology, power for a popular cause could be achieved only by disciplined and inspired soldiers. Bose studied objectively how Lenin and Stalin, de Valera and Kamal Ataturk, Hitler and Mussolini succeeded in awakening the

⁷ An enlarged edition of the book under the title *The Indian Struggle 1920-42* and edited by Sisir K. Bose was published by Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, in 1964.

slumbering desires of the masses and in realising their aims. Simultaneously he researched into the causes of the apathy of the Indian masses who had become so indifferent to their misery. He studied ways of awakening and organising them by modern techniques and preparing them for the grim fight for the liberation of their country.

In Berlin, Subhas Bose used to tell his friends often that for the realisation of a national revolution in India the fight would have to be on many fronts simultaneously, because the struggle was not only against the British who were determined to keep India under their domination but also against their Indian allies. Often he spoke bitterly against the 'Moderates' or the 'Reformists' in the Congress Party who believed that by being polite and courteous to the British, they would be able to extract privileges from them but who remained completely passive even when all their petitions were rejected by the ruling power. Bose was therefore of the opinion that a subject people like the Indians could not carry on a real political struggle unless they were properly roused and organised and it was the organised masses whom the British feared most. It was quite clear to him that India would never be able to realise her goal of freedom just because her cause was just. Even if some amongst the ruling class showed some sympathy for India's right to self-determination, he knew that if India employed merely constitutional methods, it would take a very long time for her to attain national sovereignty. It was his view that it was not for the British to give India a constitution. A popular constitution would flow out of a revolutionary struggle against Imperialism.

Because of his very pronounced views on the aims and technique of the struggle, he often came into open conflict with Gandhi and other more moderate elements of the Congress who were prepared for a compromise with Britain on the basis of Dominion Status rather than complete independence outside the British Empire. Bose wanted as early as in the early thirties the question of self-determination of the Indian people to become

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

a world issue and world opinion to be mobilised in favour of Indian independence. In this respect also, Bose's ideas were against those of Gandhi

Further, Subhas Bose considered the struggle against Britain to be merely a stepping stone to a new socio economic order. Already in the thirties he went about in Europe collecting data regarding reconstruction of the future independent India. And the idea of national planning which he later gave expression to as the Congress President in 1938 took shape in his mind during his European exile.⁸ It was clear already that on all economic and social questions, Subhas Bose's ideas were positively left-oriented though his socialism was of a pragmatic nature. To sum up, the first major task for him was a national revolution, a direct confrontation with British colonialism with a militant organised mass movement. From this standpoint he interested himself deeply in all the national liberation movements in foreign countries and especially in Europe. For the post-war task of rebuilding India, he organised his ideas as a pragmatic socialist on the basis of experiments in the socio economic field in different countries of Europe

0

One of the most successful examples of movements for national liberation and national unity of a divided people was Italy. During the years he spent in Europe, Subhas Bose visited Italy — sometimes for short and sometimes for longer periods. One of the subjects of his special interest was the underground organisation known as Carbonari. This Italian secret organisation actually came into existence in South Italy at the time of the Vienna Congress. Its members were recruited from among high officials of government and officers of the army. From their high

Crossroads; The Works of Subhas Chandra Bose, 1938-40 (Calcutta, 1962), pp. 13-15, 51-55.

position they were able to influence the Italian masses in favour of national unity, more or less in the same way as the Bengali nationalists did in Bengal. It may be mentioned here that like the Italians, the Bengali people were deeply emotional and could be roused quickly to action when it concerned their vital problems.

The 'Carbonari' were indeed the pioneers of Italian freedom movement and of Italian 'Risorgimento' and it was their movement which led finally to the establishment of the Italian State. Their method consisted of direct action as well as *attentat* revolt, that is to say, organised popular rebellion together with occasional limited conflicts with the authorities which today, after the Second World War, would be termed as 'guerrilla warfare'. It goes without saying that Subhas Bose was greatly interested in their method of propaganda for national freedom because the political conditions in India and the historical perspective of the Italian freedom movement showed certain similarities, although phased in different centuries. In his conversations with his friends in Europe, he often referred to the writings of Mazzini (1805-1872) who had formed a small group called 'Young Italy' from amongst the members of 'Carbonari' in order to unite, around himself, all the Italians who represented at that time the forces for freedom, who believed in republican ideals of government and who accepted the slogans of the French Revolution — liberty, equality and fraternity. One can say that both Mazzini and Subhas Chandra Bose became in their own time new prophets of nationalism in their respective countries. They can be regarded as the path-finders for their people in their search for nationhood. It is noteworthy what remarkable affinities they showed in their political concepts and ideas.

From his study of the history of Italian freedom movement, Subhas Bose gained an insight into the technique to be employed in the first stage of the national awakening of the Indian people. He came to believe in young trained cadres who would preach to the Indian people and bring national consciousness to them.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Some of the thoughts he shared with his friends in Berlin on the basis of his experiences and studies in Italy related particularly to the training of young cadres for national revolution. He came to believe that the forerunners of a new strong national consciousness could only be youth. They were to be inspired and trained in such a way that they would be ready to sacrifice everything, when the call came, for Mother India. But, fulfilment of this aim — creation of inspired young cadres — could not be achieved in conditions then existing in British India except through secret organisations.

While on the subject, it is worthwhile mentioning a conversation which Subhas Bose had with Mussolini and which he afterwards related to his friends. Mussolini asked Subhas Bose during this conversation: "Do you really and firmly believe that India will be free soon?" When Bose said "yes", Mussolini asked him again: "Are you for reformist or revolutionary methods for achieving Indian independence?" Bose said in reply that he preferred revolutionary to reformist methods. Mussolini said, "Then indeed you have a chance." Continuing the discussion, Mussolini asked him again: "Have you got any plan for such a revolution?" As Bose remained silent, Mussolini told him: "You must immediately prepare a plan for such a revolution and you must work continuously for its realisation."

7

Of all the European countries, Ireland was probably the one most vitally interested in Indian independence. Ireland had, like India, suffered under British domination and had to assert its independence by an open revolt. British oppression and exploitation of the Irish people and of the Indian people looked alike. In Ireland, Subhas Bose could usefully study the practicability of underground organisations as set up by Irish revolutionaries, sometimes with German support as for instance, during the First World War. He was also able to inform himself about the

methods adopted by the Germans during that period to help the Irish against Britain. German friends of Bose considered the underground movement of the Sinn Feins as a successful historical model for India's fight for freedom, particularly because he was facing the same enemy. There was another interesting lesson. As the Sinn Fein movement became stronger and acquired a popular base in Ireland, it became necessary for the new national leaders of that country to put the secret terrorist organisation in the background and bring its activities under control in the interest of post-war administration of the new free state. This Irish experience was not lost on Subhas Bose who did not encourage in practice the formation of too many underground organisations in Bengal or India. Another important historical parallel which appealed to him was the idea of an alliance with Germany as a potential enemy of Britain. The Imperial German Government had declared during the First World War that if Germany won the war, she would immediately concede Ireland's independence.

On comparative study Bose also noticed interestingly similar political trends in pre-independence Ireland and present-day India. The Irish Nationalist Party resembled the Indian Moderate parties and, like the Indian Liberal Federation, was in favour of constitutional methods, its aim being 'home rule' which meant limited autonomy under British domination. The 'United Irishman', which arose out of the Sinn Fein movement, very much resembled the Indian Radicals of whom Bose was one, and this Party wanted to free Ireland completely of British domination and make it an independent state. But until the First World War, the radical elements in Ireland played a very small and unimportant role. They refused to take part in the British Parliament because they wished the liquidation of the British Empire altogether.

During the First World War however the radical elements were able to acquire a certain significance in Irish struggle for freedom. After the failure of the Easter Rebellion in 1916, the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

former leaders of the separatist movement became the recognised leaders of Ireland. And although they were not able to attain complete unification of their country, yet they consoled themselves with the idea that they had achieved at least a partial victory. In order to assess the effectiveness of German help in the freedom struggle of Ireland, Bose took great pains to study how the Easter Rebellion had taken place. From German sources he gathered material to reconstruct the rebellion as a student of history and to find out the avoidable mistakes committed by the leaders. Subhas Bose read in the German archives the decoded telegrams in which the Irish had asked Germany to send arms and the German promise to send 20,000 machine-guns with ammunition as well as hand-grenades to the west coast of Ireland between Good Friday and Easter Monday of 1916.

He had, at the time he was studying Irish-German relations during the First World War, noted with special interest the case of Sir Roger Casement who was a British Consul in Berlin at the beginning of the War and had worked at the same time with the German Foreign Office for the Irish cause. He was later brought by a submarine to the Irish Coast for the Easter Rebellion. Sir Roger Casement had brought with him for the Irish rebels the declaration of the German Government to the effect that the Imperial Government of Germany wished the Irish people the fulfilment of their ambitions and that Germany would, under no circumstances, try to conquer Ireland or change the Irish social and political institutions. This declaration made by the Imperial German Government during the First World War had, no doubt, encouraged Subhas Bose to expect the same sort of declaration from Hitler on Indian freedom during the Second World War. Further, Sir Roger Casement (as in the case of Subhas Bose later) was allowed by the German authorities in 1915 to recruit soldiers for the Irish Legion from among the prisoners of war in Limburg. Sir Roger, how-

ever, drew blank in his efforts to recruit Irish soldiers and, as a result, no Irish Legion was brought into existence.

The failure of the Irish Rebellion during the Easter uprising was largely due to the fact that the German cargo-ship, which was to deliver arms and ammunition to a particular place on the Irish Coast, was unable to do so because of the deciphering of the secret German code by the British Intelligence Service. Thus, the Easter Rebellion of 1916 could not take place, as it was planned, with 16,000 armed men. Only about 900 people took part in it and were even able to occupy six strategic positions in Dublin by making use of hand-grenades against British troops in Dublin. Eventually this spectacular revolt of the Irish people was ruthlessly crushed by the British. Miraculously, however an Irish Professor of Mathematics, Eamon de Valera, who belonged to a group of 100 volunteers and who had also taken part in the Rebellion, was not hanged but was only condemned to life-long imprisonment.

The similarity of the situations between 1916-17 and 1941-45 was really striking. It was in Berlin that Subhas Bose took the first steps to establish personal contact with de Valera in order to win his sympathy, because Bose highly valued de Valera's experience in the fight against the British. His main object in trying to meet de Valera which he did early in 1936 was that he would succeed in popularising the cause of Indian independence in Ireland and, with Irish support, make the cause of the Indian fight for freedom known to the world. He wanted that from Ireland, he would appeal to the conscience of the world. He therefore wrote a number of letters to Irish papers and supplied them with news and articles on the repressive measures of the British imperialists in India.

He also planned to publish a monthly bulletin in Ireland on India in English, French and German languages and to distribute it from there to the international press. He was greatly disappointed when he came to know that the leaders of the All-India Congress had rejected his plan for methodical propaganda

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

in foreign countries on behalf of the Congress. The right wing Congress leaders also denied him the money left to him by his friend and the Indian nationalist leader Vithalbhai Patel. Before his death in Geneva, Patel had in his will left part of his fortune to Subhas Bose to be used to carry on nationalist and anti-British propaganda abroad. The British law courts also gave their verdict against him in this matter. As a result, he did not succeed in building up centres of Indian nationalist propaganda in Ireland and elsewhere.

In January 1936, Subhas Bose travelled in an American steamer through the English Channel to Cobh in Ireland. He had a long discussion with de Valera in Dublin and the Irish press covered the event very favourably. It was described in the press as an interesting conversation and an exchange of ideas and experiences between the two men. Bose expressed his admiration for the national heroes of Ireland and de Valera sent his good wishes through Bose to the freedom fighters of India. Bose's visit to Ireland was welcomed whole-heartedly by all political parties there regardless of their differences in internal matters. It provided a lot of impetus to the activities of the Indian-Irish Independence League which had been doing very good work in the common Indo-Irish cause under the presidency of the legendary first lady of Irish Revolution, Madame Maud Gonne MacBride.

8

During his stay in Berlin, Subhas Bose used all available facilities to inform himself also about developments in Turkey where, since the 'Young Turks' Revolution of 1908, fundamental changes had been brought about. Turkey, thanks to German help, was able to modernise its army, build up an efficient administration and also make itself more independent of other powers. The 'Young Turks' Revolution, it will be recalled, was led by the 'Unity and Progress Party' in which Mustafa Kamal

Pasha played a leading role. Subhas Bose was interested in finding out the experiences of an oriental state in introducing radical social reforms within a short time in order to catch up with the technologically advanced countries of the world. Not without reason, Bose thought that India and Turkey had many problems in common and both needed a great many similar social reforms. He wanted to apply in India some of the cultural, social and administrative solutions which Turkey had found necessary and essential for modernising the country. Such reforms, Bose probably thought, might influence the Muslim population of India towards a new social concept after independence had been achieved.

Subhas Bose immensely admired the founder of modern Turkey, Kamal Atatürk, whom he considered to be one of the greatest creative statesmen of this century and whom he tried to emulate in several ways. Turkey had, after the 'Young Turks' Revolution, used the services of some German advisers who helped Turkey on the Prussian model. Whether this Prussian concept which Subhas Bose studied on the spot in Germany impressed Bose much is difficult to say. But we his friends thought that his study of the problem had made him admire at least some aspects of this system.

During the First World War, as a result of an agreement between the German Military Mission and the Turkish Government, about 700 German officers and more than 8,000 soldiers were put at the disposal of the Turkish army. The Turkish general army staff was also able to make use of the knowledge and experience of a large number of outstanding German Generals — amongst them Liman von Sander, Bronsart von Schellendorf and von Seeckt. In the Turkish War Ministry, there were also highly placed German officers as the heads of departments and there were also many German Inspectors of Railways and Munition Factories. From his conversations with a number of Turkish leaders, Bose found out that in spite of the presence of the German army in Turkey, the Turks were able to reject many

German proposals and act independently. This was evidently one of the reasons why Subhas Bose thought — and it may have been decisive — that Germany could become a good and close partner for India in the fight for national freedom and after the attainment of freedom could help the newly independent state in consolidating its newly-acquired status.

Turkey regarded its political system as a democracy and it often appeared to resemble the Western type of democracy. Subhas Bose found out, however, that the system of government established by Kamal Atatürk had put many restrictions on the people and had not allowed free play to indisciplined liberalism and individualism. Had Kamal Atatürk adopted the typical democratic system of the West *in toto*, the future of a developing nation like Turkey might have been endangered — it might have led to recurring political crises and weakened the foundation of the new state from the very beginning. It may safely be presumed that the experiences of Kamal Atatürk strengthened Bose's belief that the building up of a new nation could only be undertaken by a political party when it embodied the unity and determination of the entire people.

Without in any way compromising his fundamental democratic attitude towards government, Subhas Bose evidently learnt in a pragmatic manner during his exile in Europe that during the transitional period of the first few decades a strong and centralised regime would be desirable in India if India wanted to make a success of the political system it adopted after freedom.⁹ He saw it clearly that the Indian nation, which was composed of different racial and religious groups holding different ethical and moral values could only be integrated fully and assured of a happy future when all these elements could be brought within a free society under a certain authority. Through first-hand study and experience, he learnt that India must break away from many of its immobile traditions which no longer

⁹ See *Fundamental Questions of Indian Revolution*.

served any useful purpose, if she wanted to assert her identity amongst the nations of the world. He also observed how the young Turkish nation created by Kamal Ataturk followed a policy of strict neutrality in foreign affairs so that independence won after great hardship was not in any way jeopardised. He in turn declared on many occasions that when India became independent, she would never get mixed up in the quarrels of the European powers but remain neutral.

9

In a biographical study of Subhas Chandra Bose, it is important to discover what sort of impression he, an unknown young traveller from a distant forgotten country, made on European intellectuals. One such record is fortunately available in the published diaries of the French savant Romain Rolland whom Bose visited in April 1935.¹⁰ Rolland found him "particularly serious and preoccupied" and "intelligent — he has proved this by the book he has just published . . . He has judged events and men with the eye of a true statesman and with a remarkable effort at objectivity . . .". As regards Bose's views on the methods of struggle, Rolland records: ". . . he does not regard terrorism as a healthy policy and he is in favour of organised resistance, not excluding violence (and definitely in favour of it if the struggle makes it necessary) Neither, naively does he hide the hopes he has in a European war, which, by keeping England occupied, will assure India's chances of victory." As regards Bose's socio-economic views, Rolland wrote in his diary: ". . . he also seems to have reached the frontier of Communism, but he does not want to hear it talked about. Probably his antipathy is founded upon personal reasons, concerning the present representatives of the party in India. For

¹⁰ See Romain Rolland, *Indo Journal: 1918-1948* (Paris, 1950), pp. 380-386; also Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle 1920-1942* (Calcutta, 1964), pp. 387-91.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

he declares that he would certainly not see any harm in the U.S.S.R. helping India gain her independence; and his complaint against the U.S.S.R. is, above all, her apparent present lack of interest in world-wide revolution in favour of her national policy."

That Bose was not able to visit the Soviet Union during his sojourn in Europe and that he had no opportunity of making personal contact with the leading men in the Kremlin have left a big question mark in the history of the concluding chapters of India's struggle for independence.

THE ALTERNATIVE LEADERSHIP 1936—1941

N. G. JOG

The police who had put Bose on board the *s.s. Gange* on a forced exile from India in February 1933 were ready to receive him as he disembarked in Bombay on 8 April 1936. Even before he had set his foot on Indian soil he was arrested and sent to Yeravda jail, near Poona. His hope of attending the Congress session at Lucknow was thus aborted. He sent a message to the Congress 'to keep the flag of freedom aloft'. Nehru who presided over the Congress sent back a message of sympathy and made him a member of the Working Committee.

Actually Bose had rushed to India in December 1934 to see his father on death bed in Calcutta. But he arrived a day too late. During his short stay in Calcutta, Bose was kept in virtual detention in his own house, thus rendering his bereavement more poignant. In 1936 he was prepared for arrest since he had left Europe in the teeth of a warning conveyed by the British Consul-General in Vienna. After a few weeks' detention in Yeravda, Bose was taken to Kurseong in the Darjeeling district of Bengal and interned in the house of his own brother.

This vindictive treatment of Bose was widely resented. The issue was raised by an adjournment motion in the Central Legislative Assembly. The government spokesman gave a laboured defence, accusing Bose of having 'a definite terrorist connection' and of entertaining 'a definite idea of violent revolution'. These charges were indignantly repudiated by the Leader of the Opposition who challenged the government to prove them in a court of law. The adjournment motion was carried by 62 votes to 59 though it had no effect on an autocratic regime.

This censure was further rubbed in by a *hartal* observed all

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

over India on 20 May, to protest against Bose's incarceration. It was only ten months later, on 17 March 1937, that Bose was released unconditionally for reasons of health. Dilip Kumar Roy who met him later refers to him in his book *Netaji the Man* "as more spiritual than ever in spite of the rings of shadow round his eyes. His eyes radiated with a lustre that had not been there eight years ago in the heyday of his activism. Years of struggle and disappointment on top of frequent incarceration had mellowed the exterior austerity of the youthful ascetic."

Bose spent five months at Dalhousie, a hill-station in Himachal Pradesh, under the treatment of his friend Dr. Dharmavir. With improvement in his health he picked up the threads of political activity after five years. Meanwhile the Congress had fought the general elections held under the Government of India Act, 1935. Although it was its first attempt as a party at the hustings, it virtually swept the polls. (Congressmen had participated in earlier elections in their individual capacity or as members of the Swaraj Party). The erstwhile rebels had now formed governments in six provinces of British India (Bombay, Madras, Bihar, Orissa, the United Provinces and the Central Provinces). In Assam the Congress formed the largest single party but could not assume power. In Bengal, the cradle of Indian nationalism, however, it could win only sixty out of two hundred and fifty seats as a consequence of the infamous 'Communal Award' imposed by the British and tacitly accepted by the Congress. The 'Award' gave undue and unfair weightage of seats to communalist forces and ensured their victory through 'separate electorates' for different religious communities.

At a meeting of the All-India Congress it was informally decided that Bose should be elected president of the ensuing Congress session at Haripura (Gujarat)—an honour which he fully deserved in view of his long record of service and suffering. Soon after, Bose left for Europe for a short rest and change and stayed for a few weeks at Bad Gastein, his favourite resort in Austria. It was at Bad Gastein that he wrote, in about ten days,

his unfinished autobiography *An Indian Pilgrim*.² News of his unanimous election as the Congress President reached him there. In his first public statement thereafter he declared: "It will be agreed on all hands that we have to bring India before the world more than we have done so far. India's problems, after all, are world problems. On our close contact with the progressive movements will depend not only the salvation of India but also of the suffering humanity as well."

This statement was characteristic of Bose. Like Nehru, he had realised that no country could live in isolation and that the world having shrunk due to the modern means of speedy communication, every national problem must be viewed in the international context. In fact, he had devoted a good part of his exile in Europe to conducting propaganda for Indian freedom and in educating peoples and nations on the real state of affairs in India. He considered that Indian publicity should always have a three-fold objective: (1) to counteract false propaganda about India, (2) to enlighten the world about the true conditions obtaining in India, and (3) to acquaint the world with the positive achievements of the Indian people in every sphere of human activity.

His trip to Britain prior to his return to India to assume the presidency of the Congress was also actuated by this purpose. He met ministers of the government as also the leaders of the Labour and Liberal Party. Of special significance were his two meetings in London with Eamon de Valera. *The Manchester Guardian* wrote: "English people who met Bose for the first time were impressed alike by his pleasant, quiet manner and the decisiveness with which he discussed Indian affairs." Bose returned to Calcutta on 22 January 1938, and busied himself with the preparation of his presidential address. Many observers were surprised that Gandhi should have sponsored the election

² *An Indian Pilgrim: An Unfinished Autobiography and Collected Letters, 1897-1927*, Subhas Chandra Bose (Notaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, 1966).

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

of a born rebel like Bose who never hesitated to criticise him, when he considered it necessary in the national interest. The critical statement which Bose had issued in 1933 from Vienna in collaboration with Vithalbhai Patel especially rankled in the hearts of the faithful. Their doubts about the wisdom of Gandhi's support of Bose were to be justified within a year, but for the present everything was smooth sailing in the Congress. Gandhi, on his part, probably hoped that apart from his action being viewed as a grand gesture of accommodation and compromise, it would take the wind out of the sails of the Leftists at Haripura just as a similar strategy in the case of Nehru had done at Lahore eight years earlier.

2

The Haripura session in 1938 was the 51st annual gathering of the Congress and earnest efforts were made by the Reception Committee to make a thundering success of it. The annual sessions enabled the Congress leaders to undertake periodical stock-taking and policy-making. They also served as spectacular political *tamashas* where hundreds of thousands of people gathered to see the national leaders and hear their message. Like the quadrennial American party conventions but immeasurably bigger, were the spectacular aspects of the Indian National Congress sessions.

Haripura being the 51st Congress session, 51 ornamental gates were erected, 51 Congress flags were hoisted and the President was taken in a procession seated in a chariot drawn by 51 white bullocks to the accompaniment of 51 brass bands. More than 4,000 workers and 7,000 volunteers had laboured for weeks to construct the Congress *mandal*, the exhibition stalls, the bamboo huts for the residence of delegates and special kitchens. The water-supply and sanitary facilities needed for the expected two hundred thousand visitors had been provided. A unique feature of Haripura was that Congress Ministers, who had lately assum-

ed office in six provinces, were attending a session for the first time.

After the presidential procession and the ceremonial hoisting of the Congress flag which precedes every session, the outgoing President (Nehru) made a speech reviewing the events of the previous year and requested the new President to take the chair. Bose was one of the youngest presidents of the Congress, with a long record of service and sacrifice. It was a high watermark in his life of 41 years as he rose to deliver his presidential address to a vast concourse of delegates and visitors.

Bose began in a sombre strain. Empires rise, grow and fall, he said. The British empire has already gone through the first two phases and it would have to go the way of other empires unless it transformed itself into a federation of free nations. It was a hybrid phenomenon in politics. If the internal incongruities were not removed in good time, then quite apart from external pressure, the empire was sure to collapse under its own strain. Recalling Lenin's words that "reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations", Bose observed that a socialist order in Great Britain is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonialism.²

Bose then struck a prophetic note about the partition of India though none except a few Muslim fanatics had visualised it in 1937. "It is a well-known truism," said Bose, "that every empire is based on the policy of divide and rule. But I doubt if any empire in the world has practised this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly as Great Britain." Alluding to the creation of Ulster in Ireland and proposed separation of the Jews from the Arabs in Palestine, Bose noted that the same principle of partition appeared in a different form in the new Indian constitution. "If the new constitution is finally rejected, I have no doubt that British ingenuity will seek some other

² All quotations are from the address as reproduced in *Crossroads*, pp. 8-28.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

constitutional device for partitioning India and thereby neutralising the transfer of power to the Indian people”

These words were to come true within a decade as was the other warning of Bose that “the acceptance of office in the provinces, as an experimental measure, should not lead us to think that our future activity is to be confined within the limits of strict constitutionalism. There is every possibility that a determined opposition to forced inauguration of federation may land us in another big campaign of civil disobedience.” (Bose devoted a considerable part of his speech to a dissection of the federal provisions of the new constitution with their numerous safeguards and reservations and showed how they amounted to a denial of real autonomy to India.)

Bose was staunchly opposed to the suggestion that the Congress should be dissolved after freedom was won. Such a conception, in his view, was entirely erroneous. “The party that wins freedom for India,” he stressed, “should also be the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction. Only those who have won power can handle it properly. If other people are pitchforked into seats of power which they were not responsible for capturing, they will lack that strength, confidence and idealism which is indispensable for revolutionary reconstruction”.

Bose repudiated the belief that a party retaining power in its hands after winning freedom would convert the state into a totalitarian one, if there is only one party, as in countries like Russia, Germany, and Italy. “But there is no reason why other parties should be banned. Moreover, the party will itself have a democratic basis unlike, for instance, the Nazi party which is based on the leader principle. The existence of more than one party and the democratic basis of the Congress party, will prevent the future Indian state becoming a totalitarian one. Further, the democratic basis of the party will ensure that leaders are not thrust on the people from above but are elected from below.”

An Alternative Leadership 1936-1941

Bose was among the few Indian leaders to realise the need of national planning and also to indicate the lines on which planning should proceed. "I have no doubt in my mind," he observed, "that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to scientific production and distribution can be tackled only along socialistic lines. The very first thing that our future national government will have to do is to set up a commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan for reconstruction."

India's principal problem is the eradication of poverty. Bose rightly laid emphasis on agricultural regeneration for that purpose. "That will require a radical reform of our land system, including the abolition of landlordism. Agricultural indebtedness will have to be liquidated and provision made for cheap credit for the rural population. An extension of the co-operative movement will be necessary for the benefit of both producers and consumers." He also foresaw that a "comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state ownership and state control will be indispensable... The state will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socialising our entire agricultural and industrial system, in the sphere of both production and appropriation."

Equally far-sighted was Bose's emphasis on family limitation in any scheme of national planning. Indeed, he was the first Indian leader to raise this issue which has assumed pressing urgency today, and not in India alone: "With regard to the long-term programme for a free India, the first problem to tackle is that of our increasing population... If the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through. It will, therefore, be desirable to restrict our population until we are able to feed, clothe and educate those who already exist."

Bose made a strong plea for a *lingua franca* (which could only be Hindustani, a common script (preferably Roman) and the development of closer cultural ties with our neighbouring

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

countries. Equally significant was his emphasis on mobilising India's phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and directing them along proper lines. "Have we got a well-disciplined volunteer corps for this purpose?" he asked. "Have we got a cadre of officers for our national service? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers?...It will be admitted on all hands that a thorough scientific training is a requisite for our workers."

He referred to institutions like the British Summer Schools and the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis. The latter organisation with suitable modifications, he thought, might prove beneficial to India.

Bose emphasised the need of international propaganda to further the cause of Indian freedom and made an original suggestion that "we should not be influenced by the internal politics of any country or the form of its state. We shall find in every country men and women who will sympathise with Indian freedom, no matter what their own political view might be. In this matter we should take a leaf out of Soviet diplomacy. Though Soviet Russia is a communist state, her diplomats have not hesitated to make alliances with non-socialist states and have not declined sympathy or support coming from any quarter. We should, therefore, aim at developing a nucleus of men and women in every country who feel sympathetic towards India."

Bose concluded his address with a fervent prayer that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many years to come: "We need him to keep us united, we need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness and hatred. We need him for the cause of Indian independence. What is more — we need him for the cause of humanity."

3

Bose's address came as a pleasant surprise to those who considered him to be only a firebrand and an agitator. It revealed

the maturity of a statesman and the vision of a thinker. Many of his suggestions such as national planning and family planning were farsighted and prescient — though few in free India have acknowledged his vision.

The speech was remarkable moreover for Bose's emphasis on socialism and his support for the Congress Socialist Party. A Leftist bloc, he said, could have a *raison d'être* only if it is socialist in character. This candid avowal of socialism should disprove the charge of his leanings towards fascism. Bose's address revealed the reactions of his three years' stay in Europe. He seems to have been impressed then — as many others the world over were — by some of the achievements of Hitler in Germany though he was careful not to lend any approval, implied or otherwise, to the philosophy of Nazism.

President Bose guided the deliberations of the Congress with scrupulous fairness and even cordiality towards all parties and persons and not even an inkling of the storm that he was to unleash within a few months was discernible. For the next few months Bose was busy touring all over the country propagating the message of the Congress and expatiating on his policy pronouncements at Haripura. He tackled the ministerial crisis which had arisen in the Central Provinces with aplomb. His relations with Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee were of the best and he indeed earned a reputation as 'one of the silent presidents of the Congress'.

As Congress president, Bose paid special attention to the appointment of a committee for national planning. Within three months of the conclusion of the Congress session, he convened a conference of Congress Chief Ministers in Delhi and, later, another conference of the Industries Ministers. He dwelt on the pressing need of national planning for a poor country like India and pointed out how Russia, a country which was as backward as India in 1920, had transformed its economic and industrial position within eighteen years on the basis of national planning.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

There could be no conflict, he said, between cottage industries to which the Congress was committed then, and large-scale industries. Priority must be given to the growth and development of basic industries such as steel, power supply, machine and tools manufacture. An infra-structure for industrialisation must also be speedily built.

A National Planning Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru in October but owing to his absence abroad, it could be inaugurated only on 19 December 1938, in Bombay. The noted economist Professor K. T. Shah was the driving force behind the committee, but its labours came to naught as the Congress went into wilderness again within two years. It was left to Nehru 13 years later as the Prime Minister of Free India to appoint a National Planning Commission.

Bose also tried to find a solution for the vexed Hindu-Muslim question and held a series of meetings with M. A. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, towards that end, but his efforts proved unavailing owing to Jinnah's obstinacy. Even at that stage Bose was uneasily conscious that a worsening of Hindu-Muslim differences would lead to a vivisection of India and he tried his best to avert that threatened disaster. "To my mind," he said in an interview with Dr. Moghmad Saha, the famous scientist, "the problem of unity is largely a psychological problem. The people must be educated and drilled to feel that they are a nation. Other factors like language, dress, food, etc. may help unity but cannot create it."⁸

Bose had great faith that a strong and united Congress Party would stand four-square against a division of India. History belied that hope though Bose later launched his freedom movement in South-east Asia on the foundation of communal solidarity. The Hindu-Muslim problem did not simply exist in his Indian National Army. But we are anticipating.

Everything was fair and smiling in the Congress garden when a cloud no bigger than a man's hand was raised with Bose's decl-

⁸ *Crossroads*, p. 54.

sion to stand for election for a second term as President. Till that time, these elections were a formality, the choice being informally made earlier by the Congress Working Committee which, in its turn, was usually guided by Gandhi's directive. Bose's decision to contest the election, therefore, annoyed the Congress High Command, as the Working Committee was popularly known. Gandhi too was personally opposed to Bose's re-election though he did not give explicit expression to his opposition, at least in the beginning.

Though Bose realised that his decision was unusual, he did not consider it improper as it was prompted by ideological considerations rather than personal ambition. He was keen to give a Leftist orientation to the Congress and an open contest, if it was forced on him, would at least help to separate the Leftist goats from the Rightist sheep. In a statement issued on 21 January 1939, he said: "The issue is not a personal one. The progressive sharpening of the anti-imperialist struggle in India has given birth to new ideas, ideologies, problems and programmes. People are consequently veering round to the opinion that, as in other countries, the Congress presidential election in India should be fought on the basis of definite problems and programmes so that the contest may help the clarification of issues and give a clear indication of the working of the public mind."¹ Bose drew particular attention to the prospective fight over the federation issue on which, he felt, certain members of the Congress Working Committee were not as firm as they should be.

This statement started an avalanche of counter-statements, rejoinders, counter-rejoinders, charge-sheets and accusations. The first salvo was fired by seven members of the Congress High Command, who observed that the issues raised by Bose were irrelevant since Congress policies were determined by the Working Committee and not by the President whose position was that of only a chairman of a committee. They therefore

Crossroads, p. 87.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

asked Bose to withdraw in favour of their choice, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who it later turned out, was really Gandhi's nominee.

Bose refused to oblige his colleagues and said that their statement was 'tantamount to moral coercion'. He openly accused some of them of being desirous of a compromise with the British government on the federation issue. That was why they opposed a Leftist like him. He was prepared to withdraw from the contest if a genuine anti-federationist like Acharya Narendra Deva was elected unanimously as the President. This proposal, of course, was not acceptable to the High Command. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, on his part, refused to withdraw in favour of Bose. Members of the Working Committee endorsed his candidature separately and collectively except Nehru who, while advising Bose not to stand for election, refrained from supporting Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

It was all too clear that Gandhi was in full accord with his colleagues, but somehow, in the heat of battle, Bose failed to perceive this. He failed even to read between the lines of Gandhi's editorial in the *Harijan* weekly which, though it avoided to name his choice, warned of "impending anarchy and dead ruin in the country". Bose failed to read even this writing on the wall. If he had bowed to Gandhi's implied wish out of personal regard for the Mahatma or even as a matter of sheer expediency, he could have dissipated the crisis that was soon to engulf him. But, would that have prevented or even delayed the final parting of the ways?

4

That is an unanswered question of history. What actually happened was that he rushed into the fray and won by a majority of over 200 votes to the consternation of his opponents and even to the confusion of his friends. The country was almost stunned by the impact of Bose's victory. Nothing like this had

ever happened in the history of the Congress. Nobody had ever challenged Gandhi as Bose had done and come on top. It was not really Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who was defeated by Bose, not even the High Command but the Mahatma himself. Gandhi confessed as much: "The defeat is more mine than Sitaramayya's," he declared immediately after the election — and proceeded to avenge the defeat. With affected sincerity he advised Bose "to choose a homogeneous cabinet and enforce his (Leftist) programme without let or hindrance". That this advice was really a challenge and threat became all too clear when, in the same breath, he called upon those who felt uncomfortable in the Congress to get out of it. This advice was to be followed before long by almost all members of the Working Committee.

Bose seemed to have belatedly realised the heavy odds he had taken on, but he could hardly anticipate the strategy of the opponents. He declared that it pained him to find that Mahatma Gandhi had taken the result of the presidential election as a personal defeat: "It will always be my aim and object to try and win Gandhi's confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic thing for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man." As events were soon to prove, the Mahatma was not mollified or assuaged by Bose's avowal of respect. He would not rest content unless he had turned the tables on the new President and compelled him to capitulate. Indeed the wrath of the Mahatma (however disguised in suave sentiments) was to result in the virtual expulsion of Bose from the Congress and, some believe, indirectly in his exit from the country itself.

For the time being Bose made prolonged and earnest efforts to make amends to Gandhi and to appease him. He visited Gandhi at Wardha on 15 February. The meeting not only proved infructuous but it had the contrary effect of widening the gulf between them. The controversy centered round the nomination of the New Congress Working Committee. Bose entreated Gandhi to help him by ensuring the cooperation of the Old Guard.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Gandhi only reiterated his advice to Bose to go ahead with the appointment of his own men. Further misunderstanding arose over a telegram sent by Bose to his colleagues on the eve of a scheduled meeting of the Working Committee in Wardha on 22 February, which Bose could not attend owing to a sudden bout of fever. In high dudgeon over the President's request to postpone the meeting, twelve members of the Working Committee resigned leaving Bose's brother Sarat Chandra as his only colleague on the Committee. Bose's later clarification that he had no objection to the Committee transacting routine business was dismissed by them as an afterthought.

The mass resignation was followed soon after by Gandhi betaking himself to Rajkot, a small princely state in Gujarat, to settle a dispute with its ruler. He was there for the next two months during which he also undertook a fast to death to compel the ruler to see the error of his ways. As far as Bose was concerned this meant (1) that the Mahatma would not attend the ensuing plenary session of the Congress at Tripuri, and (2) that prospects of reconciliation with him became more remote and dim. To add to his worry, Bose subsequently found that public attention was diverted from Tripuri, where the Congress session was to be held, to Rajkot a thousand miles away where the Mahatma had commenced a fast.

Taking a dispassionate view of the situation, one cannot but come to the conclusion that Bose had miscalculated the political situation in India at the particular time and had overrated the role he would be able to play alone, in the teeth of opposition from Gandhi and the High Command. He seemed to have come to the conclusion that the Gandhi era had come to an end and that it was his task now to galvanise the nation. Some of his admirers indeed hailed him as "the man of destiny in this crucial hour of India's history". Moreover, his charge that some of the old guard had entered into a conspiracy with the British government to participate in the Federal Government alienated the

sympathies of Nehru and provoked the vindictive retribution of those whom he had offended.

An interesting piece of background information that has since come to light should not go unrecorded.⁶ In November 1938, India's national poet and seer Rabindranath Tagore wrote privately to Gandhi expressing his firm opinion that Bose should be given a second term as Congress President. Tagore wanted 'modernists' to take charge of the Congress and in his view there were only two leaders of modern outlook, Bose and Nehru. Tagore also sought Nehru's support in getting Bose re-elected. It is not known if Bose was aware of Tagore's efforts on his behalf. Bose's impetuosity and clan were to bring him a resounding victory in the opening round. But events soon proved that he could not reap its fruits.

It was a great misfortune that Bose should have taken seriously ill on the very eve of the Congress session at Tripuri (Madhya Pradesh). His doctors advised him against undertaking the long rail journey from Calcutta. But he overruled them and reached Tripuri only to find himself too weak even to read his presidential address, let alone to guide the deliberations or to solve the difficulties confronting him. Gandhi was absent. Nehru was ambivalent, the Working Committee having resigned was ranged against him and even those delegates including the Leftists who had voted for his re-election were having second thoughts about it.

When, as usual, the All-India Congress Committee met on the eve of the plenary session, Bose lay in an invalid's chair on the rostrum with doctors in attendance. A member of the Working Committee moved a resolution expressing the A.I.C.C.'s confidence in the former Working Committee and urging the President to nominate the new Committee according to Gandhi's wishes. Bose held it to be inadmissible but expressed his readi-

⁶ See Jawaharlal Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters* (Bombay, 1960), p. 308.

Biography of Nctaji Subhas Chandra Bose

ness to put it before the Subjects Committee for consideration. Obviously, it was meant to hamstring the President.

5

More than two hundred thousand people were present in the vast amphitheatre when the Tripuri session began on 10 March 1939. The crowds were reminiscent of Haripura and so were the usual trappings and sideshows. But otherwise the Tripuri session proved a complete contrast to its forerunner. The play of Hamlet was indeed being played without the Prince of Denmark. Bose was too ill that day to be present. His place was filled *pro tem* by Maulana Azad and the presidential address — the shortest on record — was read by Subhas's elder brother, Sarat Chandra.⁶

At Haripura Bose had ranged over the entire gamut of the Indian and international situation. At Tripuri he confined himself only to a few important issues. His main emphasis was on an immediate demand for freedom. "The time has come for us to raise the issue of Swaraj and to submit our national demand to the British government in the form of an ultimatum. The time is long past when we could have adopted a passive attitude and waited for the Federal Scheme to be imposed on us. The problem no longer is as to when the Federal Scheme will be forced down our throats. The problem is as to what we should do if the Federal Scheme is conveniently shelved for a few years till peace is stabilised in Europe and Britain will again adopt a strong-Emphic policy.

"In my opinion we should submit our national demand to the British government and give a certain time-limit within which a reply is to be received. If no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received, we should resort to such sanctions as we possess in order to enforce our national

⁶ See Appendix.

demand... What more opportune moment could we find in our national history for a final advance in the direction of Swaraj, particularly when the international situation is favourable to us? Speaking as a cold-blooded realist, I may say that all the facts of the present-day situation are so much to our advantage that one should entertain the highest degree of optimism."

Bose was, of course, a firm believer in the doctrine popularised by Tilak in the 'twenties that Britain's difficulty was India's opportunity.

To Bose's chagrin, his suggestion of an ultimatum did not find a place in the resolution on the national demand which was moved by Jayaprakash Narayan on the following day. This was setback No. 1 for the President. A worse one followed when C. B. Pant moved a resolution expressing confidence in Gandhi and, by implication, conveying lack of confidence in the President. The resolution also included a directive asking the President to nominate the Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi. This resolution, passed by an overwhelming majority, was a direct affront to Bose. And when ill-concealed insinuations were made that the President had feigned illness only to avert a vote of censure, Bose's cup of humiliation was filled to the brim.

He left Tripuri's 'morally sickening atmosphere' with a disgust for politics such as he had never felt before. If such was the consummation of politics, he asked himself, why did he stray from his first love in life — the eternal call of the Himalayas? Had the time come for him to go back to the fountainhead of all life — the life divine? Bose spent days and nights pondering over such questions and praying for light, as he lay recuperating in his brother's house at Jamadoba (Bihar). It took him several days to recover equanimity and to regain faith in his countrymen — the final arbiters of the nation's destinies. After all, Tripuri was not India.

However his hands were tied at Tripuri and he could do nothing without the prior agreement of Gandhi. An early meeting

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

between them was ruled out by Gandhi's preoccupations at Rajkot and his own ill-health. And so began a prolonged correspondence with Gandhi which was to lead nowhere.⁷ Bose pleaded, appealed, entreated, and prayed for reconciliation but Gandhi would not budge from his position. His reiterated suggestion to Bose to nominate his own men on the Working Committee, despite the Tipuna resolution to the contrary, was an obvious trap. Plainly, Gandhi was determined to teach a lesson to Bose — if not to finish him politically. He spurned even the intercession of Poet Tagore on Bose's behalf. He sent him a curt reply: "Dear Gandhi, — I have your letter full of tenderness. The problem you set before me is difficult. I have made certain suggestions to Bose. I see no other way out of the impasse."

Nehru (with whom Bose was conducting a protracted correspondence simultaneously) also lent a hand in pleading with Gandhi. "Bose has numerous failings," he wrote to Gandhi, "but he is susceptible to a friendly approach. I am sure that if you make up your mind to do so, you could find a way out. I realise the importance of Rajkot but I think you will agree with me that the larger Congress issue is infinitely more important and is likely to govern all our activities." He continued, "Therefore, I would beg of you to address yourself to the latter, even at the cost of not attending to Rajkot affairs for a while. The idea that you may not attend the A.I.C.C. session at Calcutta is alarming. That simply means that conditions would go on deteriorating and that the Congress should go to pieces. I wish you could have met Bose. Quit apart from any feasible outcome of this visit, this could have been helpful in many ways."

Nehru's pleading moved Gandhi who agreed to visit Calcutta at the time of the A.I.C.C. session though he flatly refused to attend the session. He advised Sardar Patel not to join him in Calcutta and the advice was heeded. Bose called on Gandhi

⁷ *Chronicles*, pp. 120-170.

immediately on the latter's arrival in Calcutta. They had a long discussion but Gandhi stuck to his guns and refused to suggest any names for the Congress Working Committee. On the other hand, he advised Bose in a letter to discuss the possibility of a settlement with his colleagues who had resigned from the Working Committee.

When the A.I.C.C. session commenced on 29 April, the President read out Gandhi's letter, confessed his failure to reach a settlement and tendered his resignation as President. "I regret very much," he said, "that since the Tripuri Congress I have not been able to announce the personnel of the new Working Committee. But this has been due to circumstances beyond my control. Owing to my illness, I could not proceed to meet Mahatma Gandhi. In lieu thereof, I started correspondence with him. This enabled us to clarify our ideas and viewpoints but could not bring us to a settlement."

Bose added, "After Mahatmaji's arrival in Calcutta we have had prolonged conversations, but unfortunately they did not lead to any solution. Mahatmaji's advice to me is that I should myself form a Working Committee... But this advice I cannot give effect to for several reasons. To mention two of the principal ones, I may say that such a step would be contrary to the directions in Pantji's resolution. . . Moreover my own conviction is that in view of the critical times that are ahead of us in India and abroad, we should have a composite committee commanding the confidence of the largest number of Congressmen..."

"Unfortunately for us, Mahatmaji felt unable to nominate the Working Committee. As a last step, I tried my best to arrive at an informal solution of the above problem. Mahatmaji told me that the prominent members of the former Working Committee and myself should put our heads together and see if we could arrive at an agreement. I concurred and we made the attempt. If we had succeeded in coming to a settlement, we could then have come up before the A.I.C.C. for formal ratification of our informal agreement. Unfortunately, though we spent

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

several hours in discussing the matter, we could not arrive at a settlement. I have, therefore, to report to you with deep regret that I have been unable to announce the personnel of the new Working Committee.*

Bose, therefore, considered it necessary to submit his resignation to the A.I.C.C.: "I feel that my presence as president at this juncture may possibly be a sort of obstacle or handicap in its path — for instance, the A.I.C.C. may feel inclined to appoint a Working Committee in which I shall be a misfit. I feel, further, that it may possibly be easier to settle the matter if it can have a new President. After mature deliberation, therefore, and in an entirely helpful spirit I am placing my resignation in your hands."

Bose probably recalled that his guru C. R. Das had also resigned his presidency of the Congress 11 years earlier though the circumstances were different then and the possibility of his staging a triumphant return, as Das had done, was remote. He turned down Nehru's suggestion to nominate anew the former Committee. He insisted on the infusion of new blood in the Committee every year. The highest executive of the Congress should not be made the closed preserve of a group of individuals. "If we want a strong cabinet with a dynamic urge, it is necessary for us to put representatives of different shades of opinion in the Congress, giving the majority to those who would ensure continuity of policy."

Bose indicated willingness to withdraw his resignation only if his plan to introduce new blood in the Working Committee received favourable consideration. But his views were not approved by his former colleagues. Nehru withdrew his resolution and Bose's resignation became effective. Rajendra Prasad was nominated as the new President and the curtain was rung down on a controversy that had raged bitterly for three months. Naturally, Bose refused to remain a member of the Working Committee. Nehru followed suit though for different reasons.

Bose had discovered too late that Gandhi's position in the Congress was unassailable, that *Gandhi was Congress* and that nothing could be done in the Congress without his support, much less in opposition to him. But why had Gandhi pitted himself so bitterly against Bose? His vindictive attitude was out of character for him. Even a devoted follower of the Mahatma like Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya (Bose's rival in the presidential election) found it difficult to explain Gandhi's attitude. "Why did Gandhi refuse a second term to Bose?" he asked in his *History of the Congress*. "That even after his election Gandhi was not reconciled to it was a fact about which no unnecessary secrecy was maintained. Bose must have valued his second term only to reorganise the Congress on the lines adumbrated by him in Vienna. That alone, if nothing else, would be ground enough for Gandhi to resist such an endeavour. Whether Gandhiji had any further grounds to justify his attitude, he alone would be able one day to say."⁸

There is another surmise that because Gandhi had come to know of Bose's alleged secret talks with the German Consul in Bombay in 1938, he was opposed to Bose's election. Later, Gandhi made up his mind to force his resignation. Whatever might have been the reason, Gandhi did not emerge out of this episode with his Mahatma effulgence untarnished. "It was one of the extremely few occasions," writes Hiren Mukerjee, "when the great man, so cool and collected in his dignity, seemed small and peevish."⁹

Apart from the other far-reaching consequences of the Tripuri crisis, a rather deplorable result was the break it caused in the personal relations between Bose and Nehru. Somehow Bose had entertained the hope if not the belief that Nehru would back him in his tussle with the Congress Working Committee.

⁸ *History of the Congress*, Vol. II, p. 25.

⁹ *The Gentle Colossus*, p. 78.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

When that hope was belied owing to the ambivalent attitude of Nehru, Bose was so hurt and angry that he attributed his defeat entirely to Nehru. "Nobody has done more harm to me personally and our (the Leftist) cause in this crisis", he wrote to his nephew Aniya Nath, "than Pandit Nehru."

This was a sweeping and unjustified indictment. For Nehru's behaviour then and later was true to type. Both Nehru and Bose were Leftists but Nehru's leftism was subordinated to his discipleship of Gandhi. Temperamentally and habitually he was incapable of going against the master's wishes. Justifying his conduct many years later, Nehru observed, "I had realised that, at that stage, whatever one's view might be about the way India should develop, *Gandhi was India*. Anything that weakened Gandhi weakened India. So I subordinated myself to Gandhi, although I was in agreement with what Bose was trying to do."¹⁰

Bose was second to none in his love and respect for Gandhi. But the cause to him was always greater than the person, however great. Bose was a man in a hurry to gain independence and it was that end that mattered, not the means. He valued Gandhi's leadership, but he had no sympathy for Gandhi's tardy techniques, his insistence on non-violence. When the Mahatma sounded the bugle for battle, Bose was in the forefront. But when Gandhi gave his frequent confounding orders for halt or retreat, Bose was indignant. He bitterly criticised him for his weakness and vacillation.

That their mutual regard survived the recurring differences was a tribute to both. Till his last days, Bose revered Gandhi and was the first to address him as "the Father of our Nation" in one of his famous broadcasts from South east Asia. But Bose could never get over his annoyance at Nehru's conduct in the Tripuri crisis. The feeling of bitterness had both a personal and an ideological aspect. For several years Bose had looked upon Nehru as an elder brother and had frankly recognised

¹⁰ *Taya Zinkin Reporting India*, p. 217.

his leadership. At Tripuri, Bose felt, Nehru had let down the cause of Leftism. He had entertained the sneaking hope that together, they were more than a match for the Old Guard and could defeat its machinations. Together, they could speed the march towards freedom and, perhaps, even hustle the Mahatma. This was a tall order, a vain hope, as anybody could have foreseen. Nehru stuck doggedly to his moorings and let down Bose as he frankly confessed to Taya Zinkin. The break between the two at a critical time was a misfortune for them both — and for India.

Those who feared that Bose's political career had suffered an irretrievable blow from which it would be impossible for him to recover were agreeably surprised. Within three days of his resignation from the Congress presidency, he announced the formation of a new party called the Forward Bloc. Its object was "to rally all the radical and anti-imperialist progressive elements in the country on the basis of a minimum programme, representing the greatest common measure of agreement among the radicals of all shades of opinion."

In a statement issued after his resignation, Bose had promised to conduct himself as a loyal soldier of the Congress. The new party, therefore, was not meant to be a rival of the Congress. It was to work 'within the Congress' like the Congress Socialist Party and similar other parties. Membership of the Bloc was open only to primary members of the Congress. That it was soon to be driven out by the inexorable logic of events is another matter. The founder-President was Bose. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar was appointed Vice-President of the new party.

The Forward Bloc, according to its founder, was a product of historical necessity, the expression of the time-spirit. It was meant to give "vocal expression to the vague feelings, hopes and aspirations which stirred the masses". Bose set before the new party the three-fold task of winning over the majority of the Congress to its viewpoint, consolidating the Leftist forces and prevailing on the Congress to resume the national struggle.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The aim of the Bloc was complete political independence and the establishment of a socialist state in India.

No time was lost in holding its first all-India conference in Bombay on 22 June 1939. The main resolution of the conference laid down a programme for the party. Another resolution advocated intensive preparations for the launching of a struggle against British rule so as to take advantage of the rapidly gathering clouds of war. Bose was becoming more and more certain that the onset of the war in Europe could not be long postponed. Ever since Tripuri he was pleading for the synchronisation of an all-out struggle for India's freedom with Britain's involvement in hostilities.

While Bose received an encouraging measure of support for the new party in Bombay, his appeal to the Leftist parties to dissolve their separate identities and merge in the new party was resisted by them. There was so much mutual rivalry and distrust among the various Leftist groups that they did not allow their members to join the new party even in their individual capacity. Like the parent Congress, the Forward Bloc had to function more as a loose platform than as a close-knit party.

The net outcome of the Bombay conference was thus the formation of a Left Consolidation Committee comprising the Forward Bloc, the Congress Socialist Party, the Radical Democratic Party led by M. N. Roy and the National Front as the communists called themselves at that juncture. All these units enjoyed an equal status and the Left Consolidation Committee could act only when there was unanimous agreement amongst all of them. In the event, the Left Consolidation Committee proved more a hindrance than a help to Bose. It was 'a mechanical mixture, not a chemical compound', which carried within it the seeds of its own destruction.

The Left Consolidation Committee made its debut at a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held soon after the Forward Bloc conference but it failed to make any impression on the Rightist forces which were strongly entrenched in the

Congress. The A.I.C.C. indeed passed two resolutions which were expressly meant to combat and contain the Leftist challenge.

Bose called upon the Left Consolidation Committee to observe 9 July as a protest day against the A.I.C.C.'s resolutions as also to assert the inherent democratic right of Congressmen to ventilate their grievances. Despite the Congress President's warning, many protest meetings and demonstrations were held at several places. An explanation was asked from Bose for the defiance of the warning. It was given in a manner which was calculated less to mollify than to incense the Congress bosses. Gandhi promptly drafted a resolution for the Congress Working Committee disqualifying Bose as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (a post which Bose had continued to occupy at that time) and also debarring him from being a member of any elective Committee for three years from August 1939. Gandhi justified this action as 'the mildest possible'

The Mahatma and the Old Guard were evidently not content with merely frustrating Bose's success in the presidential election and forcing his resignation. They knew that he would remain a thorn in their side as long as he was allowed to hold any position of vantage in the Congress organisation. They therefore expelled him from the Congress with bell, book and candle. For that is what their resolution amounted to whatever gloss Gandhi put on it. It was the logical sequel to all that had happened during the previous eight months and also a fateful precursor to what was to follow within the next few years.

As if to offset this petty and petulant vendetta of the Congress bosses, poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote at this very juncture a glowing eulogy of Bose. The concluding paragraph reproduced below provides an insight into the depth of Tagore's regard:

"Long ago at a meeting, I addressed my message to the leader of Bengal who was yet to arrive. After the lapse of many years, I am addressing one who has come into the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

full light of recognition. My days have come to an end. I may not join him in the fight that is to come. I can only bless him and take my leave, knowing that he has made his country's burden of sorrow his own, that his final reward is fast coming in his country's freedom."¹¹

Bose would certainly have been greatly heartened by this spontaneous tribute of the great poet. It was, however, made public only seven years later, in 1916 when neither Tagore nor Bose was on the scene. In any case Bose was unshaken by his expulsion from an organisation to which he had devoted the best years of his life. Far from being defensive or apologetic, he took the offensive against the Working Committee in a rejoinder issued on 19 August. The decision of the Working Committee, he said, "is the logical process of Right Consolidation which has been going on for the last few years and which has been accentuated by the acceptance of ministerial office in the provinces. The action of the Working Committee has served to expose the real character of the majority party in the Congress and the role it has been playing." He asked his Leftist followers to remain calm and collected in the face of provocation and to join the Forward Bloc in their millions so that "we shall be able to convert the rank and file in the Congress to our point of view, secure a reversal of the present policy of constitutionalism and reformism and resume the national struggle for independence with the united strength of the Indian people".

7

As had been long foreseen by Bose, the Second World War broke out with Hitler's invasion of Poland. India was dragged into the war by a special Ordinance of the Governor-General and without so much as a formal consultation with Indian

¹¹ *Netaji*, Ed. Shri Ram Sharma, Agra: 1948, p. vii.

leaders. The Congress was committed by its resolutions to resist the exploitation of India's resources for an imperialist war. For the time being, however, it decided to mark time, merely demanding of the British government a clear enunciation of its war and peace aims and how these aims were to be made applicable to India.

Bose, who was unexpectedly invited to the meeting of the Working Committee, urged the Congress Executive to define the Congress attitude to war. He strongly opposed its passive stand and called upon it to give an immediate ultimatum to the British government, as he had previously done in his presidential address at Tripuri. His plea being disregarded, he convened an Anti-Imperialist Conference in Nagpur in October to bring pressure on the Congress. Britain's difficulty, he reminded the Conference, was India's opportunity and now was the time to launch an all-out struggle for freedom. The Congress, however, remained impervious to these adjurations.

Bose launched a weekly journal in August to popularise the Forward Bloc. Taking its name after the party, the journal stressed week after week, the advisability of an immediate and all-out struggle against the British government. In signed editorials Bose called upon the Congress and the country at large to strike the iron while it was hot. In his very first editorial (8 August 1939) he launched a fierce attack on the Rightist leaders of the Congress. "The slogan of unity at any price and under all circumstances," he wrote, "is a convenient slogan in the mouth of those who have lost dynamism and revolutionary urge. Let us not be led away by its fascinating appeal... The Right wing today wants nothing less than complete surrender on the part of the Left."

In another editorial (19 August) Bose repudiated the charge that the Forward Bloc was drawing into its fold opportunists and fascists; "To accuse the Forward Bloc of opportunism is amusing indeed. A member of the Bloc has to fight on two

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

fronts — British imperialism and Congress bureaucraticism — and has to suffer persecution at the hands of both. From the personal point of view he has nothing to gain but everything to lose. The line of least resistance and the path of opportunism, however, take one straight to the Rightist camp. And as for fascists, if this term indicates those who call themselves Hitlers, Super-Hitlers and budding Hitlers, then these specimens of humanity are to be found in the Rightist camp.”

And so it went on week after week with Bose proving himself a consummate master of polemics. He utilised all the dialectical weapons — attack, repartee, thrust and parry, irony and satire. He was quick to detect the chinks in the opponent's armour. When a proposal was made to hold a constituent assembly under the aegis of the British government to frame a new constitution for India, Bose warned against the pitfalls of such a step. A true constituent assembly, he observed, “could come into existence only after the seizure of power. Only a provisional national government can summon a constituent assembly for framing a detailed constitution for India. This assembly which is now being proposed by the Congress Working Committee may be a glorified all-party conference, but it is certainly not a constituent assembly.” This was a subject he frequently reverted to in the columns of the *Forward Bloc*.

Early in 1940, Bose undertook an extensive tour to popularise his new party. He visited most of the principal cities and towns. Almost everywhere he received an encouraging response although Congressmen kept themselves severely aloof from him. They were stung particularly by Bose's criticism of their ‘sacred cows’ — spinning and prohibition. Whatever their merit they could never become effective instruments of political struggle, he said in a statement. This criticism stung Gandhi to the quick. “The spinning wheel abides,” he retorted in an editorial in the *Hindustan* in which he also expressed his eagerness to have a compromise with Britain if it could be had with honour. There-

fore, he was in no hurry to launch a fight with the British government on which Bose was so keen.

Bose reiterated his demand in his presidential address to the Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh, Bihar.¹² True to its nomenclature, the Conference resolved to begin a country-wide *satyagraha* on 6 April against India's forced participation in the war and to make the final effort for the achievement of independence. Once the struggle began, there was to be no rest, no break, no Chauri Chaura as in 1922, no Delhi Pact as in 1931, no side-tracking of the struggle as happened in 1933 when the Hanjani movement was launched.

This was at once an indictment of Gandhi and an ultimatum to the British government. Ramgarh thus was a milestone for the Forward Bloc. Henceforth it would be on its own. As irony would have it, it also marked a parting of ways with other members of the short-lived Left Consolidation Committee. The Radical Democratic Party had already deserted the Bloc. Its example was now followed by the Congress Socialist Party and the National Front (the Communist Party). The latter group was indeed to turn into an enemy of the Bloc and of Bose personally when Russia was dragged into the war in June 1941. The imperialist war was then suddenly transformed into a People's War!

The government lost no time in arresting the leaders of the Forward Bloc including nine members of its executive. Bose however was left untouched. He organised the second conference of the Forward Bloc in Nagpur in June 1940. It was primarily meant to take stock of the previous year's activities and to rededicate itself to its ideals. "The objective of the Forward Bloc," its main resolution explained, "will be the capture of political power by the Indian masses as early as possible and the reconstruction of India's national economy on a socialist basis." Curiously, however, the resolution reiterated that the Bloc would remain a party within the Congress. Bose gave a

¹² See Appendix.

new slogan to the Forward Bloc at Nagpur: "All power to the Indian people, here and now." June 1940 was a critical month in the world war. Hitler's mechanised columns had overrun Belgium and France and were knocking on the gates of Paris which fell on 13 June. Three days earlier Mussolini had joined the war. The hostilities seemed all but over then and few imagined — or could even hope — that Britain would be able to turn the tide of war on her own. No wonder then that Bose, like most other observers the world over, visualised an imminent defeat for Britain. This doleful prognostication was soon belied by Britain under the heroic leadership of Winston Churchill. This error of judgment, compounded with wishful thinking, was to colour Bose's future plans and must have contributed materially to his decision to escape to Germany seven months later.

Before returning to Calcutta Bose called upon Gandhi at Sevagram to appeal to him once again to assume the leadership of the struggle for freedom for which it was the most opportune time. According to one who was present at the meeting, Gandhi is reported to have replied: "Why do you think we cannot get better opportunities later on? Whether England loses or wins this war, she will be weakened by it; she will not have the strength to shoulder the responsibilities of administering the country and with some slight effort on our part she will have no alternative but to recognise India's independence. Both politically and morally, I feel, we should not be hasty in launching a movement at the present juncture. My conscience tells me to wait for better times."

Bose told Gandhi that if he but gave the call, the whole nation would respond to it. When Gandhi stuck to his view, Bose requested him at least to bless the movement to be launched by him (Bose). Gandhi again remarked that a movement at that juncture would be politically inopportune and morally unjustifiable. "But if your conscience tells you that this is the best time for striking out, go ahead and do your best. If you come out successful, I shall be the first to congratulate you."

A poignant interest attaches to this meeting which was to prove the last between them

8

After bidding goodbye to Gandhi Bose returned to Calcutta. Bengal was suffering the full rigour of the Ordinance rule, the most obnoxious feature of which was the ban on public meetings. Bose had taken the earliest opportunity to defy this ban on 31 January 1940, at the Shradhhananda Park, Calcutta, but surprisingly he was left alone. He then turned his attention to the demolition of British monuments which then dotted the length and breadth of the country. (Many of them have been removed since the attainment of freedom). Public attention was focused on the demolition of the Holwell monument, which had stood in Calcutta for 150 years as a reminder of the nation's slavery. The Chief Minister of Bengal declared that the government itself was contemplating the early removal of the Holwell statue. This announcement was not taken seriously and Bose declared his intention to march on 3 July at the head of the first batch of volunteers to demolish it. But he was arrested on the previous day under Section 129 of the Defence of India Rules, which made its mere intention as culpable as the actual offence.

This was Bose's eleventh term of imprisonment. It was also to prove his last because within six months he put himself beyond the reach of the British government, which meanwhile had charged Bose under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules instead of Section 129 under which he was originally arrested. The reason was that the former Section provided for permanent imprisonment while the latter enabled only a temporary detention. Actually those who were arrested along with Bose were released when the Bengal government finally decided to remove the Holwell monument.

Simultaneously with this change in the original order came

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the government's decision to launch a prosecution against Bose under Section 38 of the Defence of India Rules for speeches delivered by him months earlier and an article written in the *Toward Blue*. A further twist was given by launching the cases before two separate magistrates. While Bose was under permanent detention under one section of the Defence of India Rules, he was tried in two different courts under another Section of the same Rules. Mockery of justice could go no further. When bail was applied for in one case it was granted with the frank confession of the magistrate that his permission would necessarily remain ineffective so long as Bose was detained under Section 28! The government refused to release Bose even when he was elected a member of the Central Legislative Assembly during his detention. The analogy of a British M.P.'s right to attend a session of Parliament had, of course, no validity in India. Although these vindictive and omnibus prosecutions of Bose were condemned all over the country, neither the Congress Working Committee nor Gandhi had a word to say against it on the specious ground that he had not taken the permission of the Working Committee to defy the law.

His usual equanimity was absent when Bose tried to settle down in Calcutta's Presidency Jail. He was bitter against the British government as also against the so-called popular ministry in Bengal. Bitterness, above all, welled in his bosom against the Congress High Command for the petty rancour it had exhibited towards him. "The more I think of Congress politics," he wrote to his brother Sarat Chandra on 31 October, "the more convinced I feel that in future we should devote more energy and time to fight the High Command. If power goes into the hands of such mean, vindictive, unscrupulous persons when Swaraj is won, what will happen to the country?"

But, naturally, he felt more concerned with the immediate prospects before India — and before himself. As far as he could see there would be no early end to his detention. It was likely to drag on indefinitely and at any rate till the end of the war.

He was accustomed to prolonged incarcerations and exiles, but the times were now different. Britain was involved in a life-and-death struggle and opportunity was knocking on India's door. Should *she* not seize it? Should *he* not seize it instead of allowing himself to be buried behind prison walls? The ideological scruples over the war which had initially assailed Gandhi and Nehru left him cold. Action was his middle name.

While waging a war ostensibly for freedom and democracy, Britain was holding India in fetters. Should he not — could he not — help to break the fetters by escaping from the jail, by escaping from India itself and joining hands with the enemies of Britain? As the saying goes, an enemy's enemy is one's friend and whatever may be the background and professions of the German and Italian governments, they would surely lend him a helping hand to strike a blow against a common enemy. Had not Germany already helped the Indian revolutionaries during the First World War, though their efforts had come to naught? Even during this war, the German radio had referred appreciatively to the Forward Bloc. He might also approach Soviet Russia (which had not yet been dragged into the war) which was the proclaimed enemy of imperialist and colonial regimes.

Why not? If the dream was dazzling, the difficulties that lay in its translation into reality were staggering. Apart from the stupendous difficulties in the way of his own escape from the Presidency Jail and the larger jail that was India, Bose must have recalled Hitler's reference (in *Mein Kampf*) to "a few Asiatic mountebanks who put themselves as the champions of Indian freedom". He must also have heard of the soft corner in the German Führer's heart for the British Empire and of his repeated attempts to come to terms with it. Would then the gamble be worth the risk, the candle worth the game? All such thoughts must have revolved in his mind for several days and nights. When at last his mind was made up he regained his customary composure. He would make the effort regardless of its prospects or consequences. For aught he knew, he would

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

have to become a martyr for the great cause of India's freedom. He was ready for it.

His first task was to get himself released from the jail and this could be possible only if he undertook a fast to death against his arbitrary detention. Gandhi had given a political validity to such a course of action, though he must have remembered that Terence McSweeney had perished in the attempt and so had Jatin Das only a few years earlier. Similar was the fate of many other unknown patriots banished to the Andamans for life.

It took Bose three long months of cogitation and prayer to decide if he had strength enough to face death in fulfilling his duty. By undergoing a fast unto death alone could he ensure his release from jail — and eventual escape from India. The logic was simple, yet inescapable. He had convinced himself that he had a historic role to fulfil abroad and the only way to discharge it lay through martyrdom — a fast to death. His mind was finally made up and he wrote to the Superintendent of the Presidency jail: "There is no other alternative for me but to register a moral protest against an unjust act and as a proof of that protest, to undertake a voluntary fast."

He had taken a solemn vow to this effect and nothing would be allowed to come in the way. The fast would begin on 29 November, he declared. Three days earlier on 26 November, he sent letters to the Governor of Bengal and the Chief Minister recounting all the injustices and illegalities that had been heaped upon him and informing them of his determination to fast to death.¹³

When the fast began on 29 November, as planned, the jail authorities seemed to have thought of feeding Bose forcibly. Getting an inkling of this, he warned them on 5 December that in the event of forcible feeding, he would have to think of some other way of committing suicide. For one who had turned his back on life, there were a hundred ways of reaching death. The responsibility for this would rest squarely on the government.

¹³ See Appendix for full text.

which should allow him to meet his end peacefully in case it was bent on not releasing him. Fearing the nation-wide commotion that would erupt in the event of Bose's death in jail, the government released him that very day (5 December), but it did not show the grace of withdrawing the two prosecutions pending against him.

9

As was usually the case after his release from previous incarcerations and return home, on this occasion too, Bose looked a ghost of his former self. This time he had spent only five months in jail, but they were months of great mental anguish which were followed by seven days of hunger strike. He was greatly emaciated. He felt terribly weak. Much concerned about his health, doctors advised his friends and relatives not to disturb him. Consequently Bose met only a few people but the story that he completely secluded himself immediately on his arrival at his home at 38-2 Elgin Road is not correct. Nor is the similar story that Bose was under house arrest and that his house was guarded by a large posse of policemen. Bose was then a free man, no conditions having been attached to his release. So if at all there were any policemen about, they were in plain clothes and kept themselves at a discreet distance.

Such stories, however, naturally gathered round Bose's escape so as to heighten the drama. It could safely be pointed out now that there was really no mystery about Bose's disappearance except that the secret was very well kept. The actual escape was planned to the smallest detail and carried out with a cool daring and smoothness which seems hard to believe at this distance of time. But we are anticipating.

Far from cloistering himself from any social contacts or political controversy, Bose was dragged into it soon after his return. To begin with, he issued a courteous retort to Gandhi who refused to accede to the public clamour to withdraw the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

disciplinary action against Bose unless he (Bose) tendered his apology for his indiscipline. Prompt came Bose's rejoinder: "At school I once read a poem on William Tell, the greatest hero of Switzerland: It ran

*My knee shall bend, he calmly said
To God and God alone;
My life is in the Austrians' hand
My conscience is my own.*

"I am not aware of any wrong that I have committed in my political career. Consequently my reply to the Mahatma will be on the above lines with a few verbal changes."

Bose had to issue a number of statements between 10 and 24 December on the Bengal Congress tangle, his chief target being Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was foisted on the Congress as its President by the High Command. He once again appealed to Gandhi to give a call to the nation for a fight though he knew that his appeal would fare no better than the earlier ones. Bose was busy as in the past in conducting his normal activities and meeting people. Under the orders of his doctors the meetings were held only in the morning.

The cases against Bose were due for hearing and his counsel made a plea for postponement on the ground of ill-health. When the court asked how, if Bose was so ill, he could give interviews to so many people, the counsel gave an apposite reply: "Granting interviews, Sir, is part of my client's treatment. How can he improve if these interviews are refused? They are of the very life-blood of his existence. For a politician there could be no greater punishment than to be deprived of such discussions." Needless to add, postponement was granted. By the beginning of January 1911 the *modus operandi* of his get-away from Calcutta seems to have been finalised. Naturally very few persons were taken into confidence about it. Bose cut down his interviews and meetings. A story was spread that Bose had decided to turn his back on mundane affairs and to follow the

example of Anubindo Ghosh, who, in similar circumstances, had retired to an *ashram* in Pondicherry, thirty years earlier. This story was thoroughly plausible in view of Bose's spiritual inclinations. Had he not run away from home and gone to the Himalayas while he was yet in his teens?

The day fixed for the Great Escape dawned like any other day and few even in his house were aware of the dramatic event that was to take place that night. Nor did Bose's behaviour in any way appear unusual or peculiar. There were the usual callers — relations, friends and political workers. During the past one month Sarat Bose's son Sisir had been a regular night caller and his long confabulations with his uncle did not somehow rouse serious suspicions in any quarter. Bose's personal effects had quietly been shifted to Sarat Bose's house round the corner where the particular nephew lived. Sarat Chandra himself had visited his brother the previous evening for the last time when the final touches were given to the grand plan. Around 9 o'clock on 18 January a car drove in chauffeured by Sisir and was parked near the rear staircase in a routine manner. Bose partook of some sort of ritualistic dinner, ostensibly on the eve of going into what was announced as a self-imposed 'seclusion' in the presence of his mother, sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews, including Sisir. A long and anxious wait followed as members of the family retired one by one and until the coast was clear. It was well past 1 o'clock when Bose, dressed like an upcountry Muslim, came down the rear staircase, sat in the back seat and was driven away without the world getting wise about it. The sheer effrontery of the escape seems hard to believe as Sisir Bose (then twenty years old, now a well-known Calcutta paediatrician and Executive Director of Netaji Research Bureau) recounts it. But the hearts of both uncle and nephew must have been pounding wildly at that fateful hour. From Elgin Road they at first took a somewhat circuitous route, eventually joined the Grand Trunk Road and drove the whole night until they reached Bararee, near Dhanbad, the next morning. There Bose

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

spent the day in the guise of a 'guest on insurance business' at the bungalow of Dr Ashoke Nath Bose, Sarat Bose's eldest son and a chemical engineer. After nightfall, Bose made a demonstration of bidding goodbye to his nephews and left the house. A little later he was picked up by Sisir and Asoke from the road and driven to Gomoh, the next railway station from where he caught a train for northern India. His last words to Sisir were, "I am off, you go back."

The escape was kept a closely guarded secret for ten days and during this time the bluff of his being in seclusion was carried on by a niece (Ila) and two nephews living in the premises. On 25 January, Sarat Bose gave instructions to all concerned on the manner of the disclosure of the disappearance and left for the week-end for his garden house outside the city. Bose's departure was ostensibly revealed by the discovery on the morning of 26 January that his food plate was left untouched. On receipt of the 'news', Sarat Bose rushed back to the city driven in the same historic car by Sisir. Among the many diversionary tactics, Bose had left a number of post-dated letters to be despatched in the days following his departure, as a cover for his safe journey.

The news of the escape was deliberately broadcast to the world on 26 January, because his case was coming up for hearing the following day, so as to prevent the initiative passing into the hands of the British police. A hue and cry was raised by his own people and a frantic hunt was on even before enemy intelligence could gather its wits and start operations. Wild rumours spread throughout Calcutta about the disappearance, one of them being that he had been secretly done away with by government agents. Another reaction was that in a mood of disgust and frustration Bose had left for the Himalayas.

This impression was sought to be supported by members of the Bose family. Sarat Bose himself sent messengers on enquiries in search of him to various pilgrimage centres. Replying to an enquiry by Mahatma Gandhi, for instance, Sarat Chandra wired

him. "We as much in the dark as the public about Subhas's whereabouts and intentions and even the exact time of leaving. No news in spite of best efforts for the last three days. Circumstances indicate renunciation."

It was widely suspected, of course, that Bose had left India to ally himself with foreign powers in his quest for freedom. Japan was not at war then and it was surmised that he might have boarded a Japanese steamer which had left the Calcutta docks about that time. The mystery over Bose's disappearance was maintained for over a year until he began his broadcasts over the Azad Hind Radio though even then his exact whereabouts were not disclosed. To add further piquancy to the situation Reuters reported on 28 March 1942 that Bose had been killed in an air-crash near the coast of Japan. The news was contradicted soon after by the news agency and speculations over his whereabouts became rife again. For nearly sixteen months, like the elusive Scarlet Pimpernel, Bose was reported to be here, there and everywhere.

10

The mystery of Bose's disappearance has been resolved to a considerable extent by the reports submitted to Netaji Research Bureau by among others, Sisir K. Bose, who played the key role in his escape from Calcutta, Bhagat Ram Talwar, his escort from Peshawar to Kabul, Alberto Quaroni, the then Italian Minister in Kabul, by the recollections published by Uttam Chand Malhotra who sheltered him for about a month in Kabul, and by the continued researches of the Bureau on the subject. The arrangements for Bose's stay in Peshawar and subsequent journey to Kabul were made through the good offices of Mian Akbar Shah, Forward Bloc leader of North West Frontier Province. Akbar Shah had met Bose in this connection in Calcutta in December and January. He and Sisir had even done some shopping together for Bose's disguise.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Bose alighted from the Frontier Mail at Peshawar Cantonment station on January 19 in his disguise as Mohd Ziauddin, an insurance man, clad in a long coat buttoned up to the neck, an astrakhan cap and baggy pyjamas. According to previous arrangement he took a tonga¹¹ to the Taj Mahal Hotel, watched by Akbar Shah following him in another *tonga*. He was shifted to a rented house the next morning. There Bhagat Ram Tulwar (who then belonged to the Kirti Kisan Party and also to the NWFP Forward Bloc) called upon him to discuss the plans of his journey to Kabul.

Bose was held up in Peshawar for seven days of acute anxiety and suspense as it was decided just before his arrival to change his route to Afghanistan. The new route chosen was the shortest but the stiffest and a very reliable guide was necessary. At last in the early morning of 26 January — the very day on which the news of his disappearance was disclosed in Calcutta — he left Peshawar in a car accompanied by Bhagat Ram, Abad Khan and the guide. Bhagat Ram passed as Rahmat Khan and Bose as Ziauddin, his sick uncle whom the former was taking to the shrine at Adda Sharif in Afghanistan. The first halt for the customary police check was made at the Jannud barrier, after which the party drove to Khajuri Maidan Military Camp — altogether about 11 miles. Beyond this point lay the tribal area that served as a buffer between British India and Afghanistan. Bose, Bhagat Ram and the guide got off at a point from where a track goes towards the mountains and which was a furlong away from the actual tribal border. Abad Khan was asked to return to Peshawar after an interval.

The party trudged on for nearly two hours during which they could cover only one and a half miles of steep ascent. Bose was visibly fatigued and lay down for rest. But he quickly recovered when told that they had crossed the border and were now safe in the tribal area. With frequent stops for rest — Bose was not accustomed to mountain climbing — they reached the

¹¹ Horse drawn carriage.

top of the pass at about 8 p.m. and reached the village of Pishkan Maina at the foot of the other side of the mountain at midnight. Resting there that night, they resumed their trek the next morning and reached the next village about 12 noon.

Bose was now visibly tired and asked Bhagat Ram to procure a mule for him. This was done and the party managed to reach the first village in Afghan territory at about 1 a.m. on 28 January. The guide was sent back from this point. During this 12 hours ride they had to cross another pass covered with snow and Bose suffered a fall. Resuming the journey after a night's rest, they reached the village of Gardi situated on the Peshawar-Kabul highway. It had taken them two days of cross-country walk to cover a distance which could normally be done in a few hours by bus. The rustic Pathans they had encountered in these two days and were to encounter subsequently, were naturally suspicious of these two strange travellers, but somehow they managed to bluff their way. Nevertheless, one of them insisted on feeling Bose's tongue to satisfy himself that he was really dumb. They were now on the highway and as they walked along they tried to hitch-hike on passing trucks. Eventually they got one loaded with tea chests and reached Jelalabad at about 10 p.m. on 28 January. In the bitter cold of January they made themselves as comfortable as they could on the top of piled tea chests.

To lend credence to their pretence, they spent 29 January at the shrine of Adda Shah and performed the customary rituals. Bhagat Ram's real purpose in going there, however, was to contact one Haji Mohammad Amin, a political worker who was once Bhagat Ram's fellow-prisoner in Peshawar jail. He gave them a number of useful tips for their travels ahead and particularly asked them to be very cautious when they reached the Bud Khak check-post, which was 13 miles to the east of Kabul. Everybody going to the Afghan capital had to disclose his identity and other particulars there. Fortunately in those

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

days there were no formal passports for travellers between India and Afghanistan.

The next morning, 30 January, they set out in a *tonga* on the road to Kabul. They changed the *tonga* on the way and ultimately reached a place called Minla in the late afternoon. The truck reached Bud Khak the next morning, 31 January, at 5 a.m. It was still dark and there was plenty of snow. After a short rest they hired a *tonga* for the last time and reached Kabul at 11 a.m. Both Bose and Bhagat Ram were utter strangers to the Afghan capital. They had neither friends nor reliable contacts there. Though Bhagat Ram could speak fluent Persian, he was not quite at home with the local language — Pushtu. They searched for a *serai* and were guided to one near the Lahori Gate, which was scarcely fit for human habitation. But they had hardly any alternative and in the plight they were in, any kind of shelter was welcome to rest their weary limbs and to protect themselves from the biting cold winds that raged that day. All they had for food was bread dipped in cloying sweet tea.

Bose had reached Kabul, the first safe haven on his adventurous journey but as he was soon to discover, his ordeal had only begun rather than ended. In fact, it really began the next morning, 1 February 1941, when Bose and Bhagat Ram began to seek contacts with foreign embassies in Kabul for his journey to Europe. They first sought to contact the Russians; understandably because the Soviet Union lay next on Bose's route to Europe and taking advantage of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was his major political tactic in his fight against Britain. There is no reason to doubt that Bose's destination was Germany, the major opponent of his enemy. But a rapport with the Soviets would naturally be welcome to a political realist like Bose.

It is clear that the intermediaries, through whom Bose had sought to establish contact and come to definite or tentative arrangements with the Russians before he embarked on his journey, had failed to achieve anything. Why they failed is yet

a closed book. The result was that when Bose actually arrived in Kabul, nothing was ready for him and everything was left to luck and improvisation. The delays and dangers inherent in such a situation began to chafe Bose. It was of the utmost importance that he should leave Kabul as speedily as possible. If by any mischance the Afghan government had come to know of his presence there it would have unceremoniously handed him over to the British. The repeated efforts of Bose and Bhagat Ram to establish contact with the Soviet Embassy proved unavailing. In desperation the latter even tried to accost the Russian Ambassador while his car had halted at a road crossing, with Bose standing about seven yards away, but the Ambassador refused to oblige.

While Bose's vain attempts for contacts with foreign embassies thus dragged on, his stay at the *serai* was becoming more and more risky. He and Bhagat Ram came under the suspicion of an Afghan plain clothes policeman who began to harass and question them or rather Bhagat Ram since Bose's deaf and dumb show was still on. Bhagat Ram tried to fob him off with the offer of a few rupees, but the policeman's eyes were firmly fixed on the gold watch on Bhagat Ram's wrist, which really belonged to Bose. One day when the policeman insisted on taking Bose and Ram for questioning to the *kotwali* (police station), he had to be placated with the gold watch!

Further stay at the *serai* was obviously dangerous and so Bose shifted to the house of Uttam Chand on the afternoon of 13 February. Uttam Chand was a former acquaintance of Bhagat Ram whom the latter had located after some effort. Uttam, who had a radio and crockery shop in Kabul, was taken aback when he was apprised by Bhagat Ram of Bose's identity and the purpose of his presence in Kabul but he readily agreed to shelter him and help him in whatever other way he could.

Bose had already managed to establish contact with the

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

German Legation On 6 February he had practically gate-crashed into the Legation alone. He succeeded in meeting the Minister Herr Pilger who, however, chose to be extra-cautious thinking that Bose might well be an agent provocateur. Bose was asked to keep in touch with them through Herr Thomas, a representative of Siemens in Kabul. The Minister had promised to get in touch with Berlin immediately for instructions. Bose had to return reluctantly to the *caravanseraï* at the time.

Till 15 February, when Bose had already shifted to Uttam Chand's house, there was nothing encouraging from the German side. While Uttam Chand and Bhagat Ram were busy with their rounds of foreign embassies and legations, Bose had mostly to shut himself up within the four walls of his room in the former's house. He could not expose himself to the risk of recognition. Any Indian might be a British agent, any Afghan a police informer. The suspicious behaviour of a neighbour of Uttam Chand's had actually compelled him to remove himself to a new *serai* once again for a few days. But as he fell ill there, he had to return to the friendly shelter of Uttam Chand's house. He could make no personal approaches to any foreigner any longer for he had nothing more than his word to establish his identity or bona fides. The Russians remained unapproachable and the Germans lukewarm.

Bose was getting disgusted with his unending stay in Kabul. So, about the middle of February, the possibility of Bose and his escort crossing into the Soviet Union on their own was explored and considered. The help of a man from Peshawar who had absconded to Kabul years ago on account of a murder charge and that of his dacoit brother-in-law living on the frontier were to be requisitioned for this purpose. However, on 23 February word came from Herr Thomas that they were to get in touch with the Italian Minister Alberto Quaroni for further arrangements. Bhagat Ram met Quaroni first and then a meeting with Bose was arranged. Their first interview lasted

a whole night. Bose was already quite clear in his mind as to the technique of his future struggle. He told Quaroni of his intention to go to Europe in order to create a Free India Government and to form out of Indian prisoners of war in Germany and Italy an Indian liberation army. He also told Quaroni that he wanted a wireless station at his disposal to carry on propaganda for Indian independence.¹⁵ Quaroni was sceptical about the reception that Bose's revolutionary programme would receive in Berlin or Rome, but as he felt that Bose had already burnt his boats behind him, he did not wish to discourage him. Arrangements were made that Mrs. Quaroni would call at Uttam Chand's shop regularly for passing messages to and from Bose.

During this time, the German and Italian governments jointly took up the question of Bose's transit through Russia with the Soviet government. Bose utilised the time in arranging reliable contacts for future work in Afghanistan and the tribal territories. He also wrote at this time his well-known thesis 'Forward Bloc — Its Justification'.¹⁶ Contact with the Italians was maintained in two ways — Mrs. Quaroni visiting Uttam Chand's shop and Bhagat Ram visiting Signor Crescini of the Italian Legation at his private residence.

The Soviet answer came after nearly four weeks. The agreed formula among the three governments was that Bose would travel across Russia on an Italian diplomatic passport impersonating a clerk at the Italian Legation in Kabul, Orlando Mazzotta. The Afghan government was asked to issue a courier visa. About a week before Bose's actual departure from Kabul, Mrs. Quaroni brought the important message to Uttam's shop. Arrangements were made to take Bose's photograph which was to replace Mazzotta's on the original passport and to get his clothing ready. The Italians collected Bose's suitcase on 16

¹⁵ See *The Indian Struggle 1920-42*, pp. 415-18.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 305-414.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

March and Bose himself shifted to Crescini's residence the next day. He handed over to Bhagat Ram a number of documents which he was to carry back to India according to instructions. It was arranged with the Italians that Bhagat Ram would be the link between India and Kabul and that they would provide the means of communication between Bose and Kabul.

On 18 March early in the morning Bose left in a car for the Soviet frontier accompanied by a German engineer of the Todt organisation and two others. It was arranged that he would spend two nights on the way in German houses. They travelled through the high passes of the Hindu Kush and the dead expanse of the Afghan steppes and crossed the Oxus at the Afghan frontier post at Pata Kisar until they reached the fabled city of Samarkand. About 20 March they left Samarkand by rail for Moscow from where they flew to Berlin arriving there in the beginning of April 1941. It took some time for the Afghan government to realise that Signor Orlando Mazzotta, reported as having crossed the border into the Soviet Union, was still in Kabul. But by then Bose was a long way from Central Asia.

On the evening of 31 March, 1941, a visitor from the frontier arrived at the Calcutta residence of Sant Chandra Bose at 1, Woodburn Park and asked to see Sisir. The latter immediately fetched his father who received from Bhagat Ram three documents — a personal letter from his brother in Bengali, the thesis 'Forward Bloc — Its Justification' and a 'Message to My Countrymen' from 'Somewhere in Europe' dated 22 March 1941. The next morning Bhagat Ram joined Sant Bose for his morning walk at the Victoria Memorial Gardens and related to him the whole story of Bose's journey from Peshawar to the Russian frontier. Sant Chandra put Bhagat Ram in touch with Satya Ranjan Baski, a trusted lieutenant of Bose and leader of the underground Bengal Volunteer Group. It is now known that the Bose brothers maintained contact with each other till November 1941 by means of wireless messages exchanged via Tokyo with

An Alternative Leadership 1936—1941

the secret assistance of the Japanese Consulate General in Calcutta.

After two months and eleven days of adventure, suspense and anxiety since leaving home, Bose arrived safely in Berlin in his new *Avatar* as 'Signor Orlando Mazzotta'.

Bose's journey from Calcutta to Berlin through a dragnet of British policemen, spies and informers ranks among the most sensational escapes of history.

CHAPTER
FOUR

**PLANNING FOR
REVOLUTION 1941—1943**

ALEXANDER WERTH

Under the assumed name of Orlando Mazzotta and in possession of an Italian diplomatic passport, Subhas Chandra Bose left Kabul on 18 March 1941. He arrived by train in Moscow and flew from there on 28 March 1941 towards Germany. He arrived in Berlin on 3 April. About his journey from Kabul to Berlin, there had already been an understanding between the Soviet government on the one hand and the German and Italian governments on the other. About his identity, only a very small circle of people were informed. It is worth mentioning here that his arrival in Berlin did not rouse much enthusiasm amongst the members of the German Government.

It was, however, different with the members of the newly established Information Section of the German Foreign Office brought into existence soon after the outbreak of the war. In this office, there were, in addition to a few career diplomats, many who were specialists in their respective fields and who, in spite of their limited official functions, enjoyed a great deal of power within the sphere of their particular kind of work. This department was directed by Dr. Adam von Trott with the assistance of Dr. Alexander Werth, and they were assigned the task of looking after Subhas Chandra Bose after his arrival in Germany. Both of them belonged to the desk in the German Foreign Office in Wilhelmstrasse which dealt with Britain, the British Empire as well as the United States and South-East Asia. Later, these facts were to assume considerable significance because it saved Bose from falling into the hands of members of the National Socialist Party. For Bose, this particular coincidence was certainly very favourable because when he arrived in Berlin,

he was completely unaware of the tensions which existed within the Ministries. He was therefore very lucky to have come into contact immediately after his arrival with a group of men who were sincere and sympathetic and who also possessed a certain amount of knowledge about the developments in India and the various problems which faced the Indian National Congress at that time. Bose, as everyone who has worked with him knows so well, was in a way a very difficult person in that it was not easy to make him open up. During his first days in Germany, he certainly did not realise how poor the knowledge about India was amongst the higher officials of German Government at that time. On the other hand, amongst the leaders of the Nazi Party there existed, as is well known, a great deal of racial prejudice against Indians, to which Bose would have reacted violently because of his sensitive nature if he had come into contact in the first instance with such members of the Nazi Party.

The group of people of the Information Department of the Foreign Office who took charge of him took pains in the first place to acquire for him a rank and position which his personality and prestige demanded. They also tried as far as possible, to protect him against unpleasant contacts with the Nazis. It will be clear later that this decisive action would not have been possible had not the members of the Information Department worked in the way they did. They knew that Hitler himself did not have the least understanding either of India or of the Indians. Even during the War, Hitler looked at the Indian problem through English eyes and, although he hated the British greatly, still this hatred did not efface his racial judgment in any way. It was, therefore, a very difficult task for those who took charge of Bose from the beginning; and this task consisted in creating a field of action for him in such a manner as not to make him lose sympathy for Germany. They had also to see that he was not looked after by the highest officials of the German government, most of whom were Nazis. This was possible because, although it was generally believed that the Third

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Reich was a monolithic state and described as such by some authors, yet those who functioned in the Government knew later that there were many possibilities of helping a man like Subhas Chandra Bose in spite of the fact that men in higher echelons held different views on India and Indians. Some of the functionaries of the Nazi Party held political views diametrically opposed to those of the members of the Information Department and they could have easily sabotaged Bose's work if not tactfully defended by the members of the Information Department. In course of time, when more friendly relations had developed between Bose and his German colleagues, it was possible to explain the position to him — and they did explain to him — how they had in several instances acted in order to push the cause which Bose had in mind without taking into consideration various objections and difficulties which the party bosses would have raised against his plans and against him. On the whole, however, Bose's German colleagues succeeded in making him feel that the work he was doing had the support of the Government.

Bose often realised the ambivalence of his position in Berlin and the particularly embarrassing situations in which he was placed, specially because of the lack of clarity of the attitude of the German government towards him and the cause he wanted to espouse. Later, in Tokyo also Subhas Bose had to overcome similar difficulties, and a great many people, who worked with him in East Asia, have already written extensively about the problem. It should also be mentioned that the decision which he arrived at later to continue his fight from Japan was connected with this peculiar position in which he found himself in relation to the German government. Nevertheless, there is no doubt whatsoever that those Germans who worked with him in Berlin and tried to remove the difficulties from his way so that he could function properly, won Bose's friendship and trust and this feeling of friendship and trust remained with Bose till the end. Even from Japan he often wrote letters to them and

expressed feelings of gratitude towards his German colleagues who had helped him so much to organise India's freedom movement in spite of the feeling of suspicion and indifference of the Nazi Government towards him.

2

The question has often been asked why did Bose come to Berlin at all in 1941? We all know that his first visit to the German capital in 1933 was a total failure. At that time, the Italian government had offered him hospitality under very favourable conditions and the Italian government had also shown readiness to help him carry on his political activities in Europe. During Subhas Bose's stay in Europe, Mussolini had received him on several occasions whereas Hitler refused to have any conversations with him. Nevertheless, in 1941 Bose preferred to come to Berlin. He did so because he was a pragmatist who looked at problems realistically. It appeared to him to be important that he should seek asylum in the country of greater military importance among the Axis Powers. He could have lived more comfortably and have had an easy life in Italy. Yet, from the very beginning he wanted to go to a place where he could find the best possible opportunities of working for Indian independence. Perhaps, Bose would have gone even to Moscow if the world situation were different and if the Soviet authorities had shown some eagerness to help him in his work when he contacted them in Kabul.

3

In Germany, as Bose knew well since a very long time, there had been a great deal of sympathy for the struggle for freedom of the people of India. This sympathy had not diminished in spite of the racial ideology of the Nazis which had, no doubt, influenced many people in Germany. At the beginning of 1941, anyhow,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

there were quite a few reasons why official Berlin should have been intensely interested in Indian affairs. An increasing number of Indian exiles had been drifting into Germany and a large number of Indian war prisoners from North Africa were being brought to Germany. The Germans soon realised that these people were extremely, and fundamentally, anti-British in their attitudes.

In spite of these facts, neither in the prisoner of war camps in North Africa nor in India, had the Germans taken either any military or psychological steps to utilise this situation in their favour until the spring of 1941. Then, as a result of the sudden appearance of Bose in Kabul and soon afterwards in Germany, the German military leaders and specially the high officials in the German Foreign Office, began to be aware of a new situation and a new duty which awaited them. After the arrival of Bose, in addition to the Information Department of the German Foreign Office, the Press and the Radio Departments as well as the High Command of the Wehrmacht began to study this problem. Very soon a 'Working Group, India' was established in the Information Department of the Foreign Office. This became in reality the fore-runner of the 'Special Department for India' which was, as we have already said, placed under the control of von Trott and Worth. Sometime later a German Trade Union leader and also an India specialist, Mr. F. J. Furtwaengler, joined this department. At the outset, very few members of the Foreign Office belonged to the organisation set up to help Subhas Chandra Bose in his particular mission.

4

Being an activist, Bose wanted to get things going as soon as he had established his temporary headquarters at the Hotel Excelsior. He had realised from the very beginning that the German Government as well as the Chief of Staff of the German Army had too many other serious worries to take very great

interest in his problem, i.e. the problem of India's fight for freedom. A week after his arrival in Germany, on 9 April 1941, he had already submitted a memorandum¹ to the German Government on the possibilities of co-operation between Germany and India. This memorandum provided the guidelines for his German colleagues as far as their work in connection with India was concerned. In this memorandum Bose laid down the most important items of work which the Special India Department of the German Foreign Office was to take up later. In the first place, he proposed the establishment of a Free India Centre, secondly, the creation of an Indian Legion in Germany, and thirdly, close co-operation between the High Commands of the Wehrmacht and the Indian Legion for creating disturbances and sabotage against the British Army in the tribal areas between Afghanistan and India. Finally, he requested the German government that radio broadcasts should be directed towards India in order to make the Indian people more and more conscious of the brutal nature of British domination of India. This memorandum put forward in clear-cut terms the problems that India faced in her struggle against Britain and the German Government was not left in any doubt as to what Bose wanted them to do. It may be mentioned in this connection that this memorandum described in greater detail the suggestions which Subhas Bose had already made to the Italian Minister in Kabul, Sgr. Quaroni. The Italian Minister had already on 2 April 1941, in a report to the Italian Foreign Ministry in Rome, described the conversation he had with Bose.²

The German co-workers and friends of Bose in the Foreign Office and in the High Command of the Wehrmacht slowly began to understand him and esteem him. They realised that he possessed an extraordinarily strong will and that his sincerity was beyond any doubt. The impression he made on his German acquaintances was one of absolute integrity. He also knew well

¹ See Appendix

² See *The Indian Struggle 1920-42*, pp. 415-18.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

how to convince all those who came into contact with him about the rightness of the steps he was taking. He made them see that he himself was ready to make the greatest possible sacrifice to realise his object of India's freedom. His German friends came to know also very soon that Bose would never submit to the whims or bad manners of the highly placed leaders of the Nazi Party, because it was clearly not in his nature to capitulate to people for whom he had no respect.

A supplementary note^a to his original memorandum of 9 April was submitted to the German Government on 3 May 1941 in which he clarified some of the points which needed detailed explanation. In both the memoranda, however, Bose pointed out the great importance of a frank and open declaration of the German government on the question of India's independence. He pointed out simultaneously the need of the Indian and the entire Arab problem to be co-ordinated and to be taken up as one problem by the German government. In the higher echelons of German officialdom these two memoranda produced a far-reaching effect. As a result, the Information Department of the German Foreign Office, to which also belonged the 'Working Group, India', was able, with the consent and co-operation of Bose, to carry out their part of the work with the full support of the Political Department of the German Foreign Office.

The Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Office at that time was Dr. Wilhelm Melekers who became, after the war, the Head of the Personnel Department of the German Foreign Office and later, the German Ambassador to India. Together with Bose, the 'Working Group, India', then began to look for Indian co-workers in Germany and in the neighbouring countries as well as in the prisoner of war camps scattered all over Europe. It was necessary also that the German specialists on India should be recruited for this work. This could be done only if they could be, with the permission of the Army Headquarters, freed from their military duties. Further,

^a See *The Indian Struggle*, pp. 431-33.

it became necessary to establish contacts with different Government Departments. Thus, the 'Working Group, India' was able to lay the foundation of the 'Special Department, India' which afterwards took up the entire responsibility of helping Subhas Chandra Bose in realising his objectives.

5

The work proceeded slowly. Bose's German colleagues found in the last week of May that he had become extremely agitated over the indifference and reserve shown by the German government towards the two memoranda he had submitted. He decided as a result to travel to Rome and from there to Vienna in July 1941. In the meantime, however, his newly-won friends under the leadership of Herr von Trott had succeeded in making a breakthrough. The 'Special Department, India' of the Foreign Office was solidly established and von Trott became its official Director. In addition to Dr. Werth who was his deputy, the other persons who were recruited were, as we have already mentioned, F. J. Furtwaengler, A. F. Richter and H. T. Leipoldt. This Department was then put under the direct control of the Secretary of State, Mr. Wilhelm Kepler. This new arrangement made the work of the Special Department more easy and smooth. Because Kepler, as Secretary of State, had access to the German Foreign Minister and also to the highest members of the Party and their offices, he could always iron out many administrative difficulties which arose with these authorities from time to time. This also helped the Special Department to eliminate unwanted party influences on the organisation as well as to protect the organisation founded by Bose from interferences by other Government Departments and agencies. It was realised almost immediately that the Special Department, India, should have a scientific section for documentation and assessment of information and literature. For this purpose, in addition to the persons who had already been mentioned,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

scholars like Prof. Dr. Alsdorf, Mrs. Kuno and Miss Dr. Klotzschmar (who was later to be Mrs. Mookerjee) were also recruited. Further, in addition to the above-mentioned workers, Baron von Zitzewitz, Baron von Lewinski, Mr. Assmann and Mr. Trump were also recruited in order to help the Information Department and to carry out various assignments allotted to them. Herr von Trott, the Director, succeeded also at that time in recruiting the well-known writer Dr. Gisela Wirsing for this Section.

Thus, when Bose returned to Berlin on 14 July 1941, from his trips to Rome and Vienna, he was glad to find that a well-organised office had already been set up for him by his German colleagues. From then onward, his German colleagues tried their best to fulfil his wishes in every possible manner. In the beginning of August, he had the first detailed conversation with the Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, Mr. Kepler. The latter had, in the meantime, been able to obtain sanction from the German Foreign Minister, Herr von Ribbentrop, about necessary funds for the organisation and maintenance of work in connection with the Free India Centre. Bose had to wait patiently for another four months until he could have a personal interview with the German Foreign Minister on 29 November 1941.

Bose took this opportunity to thank the German Foreign Minister for the help he had extended to him to make it possible for him to work in Germany for Indian freedom. He also, at the same time, put forward his desire very forcefully, so often expressed in writing, for a clear enunciation of the war aims of the German Government as far as Indian independence was concerned. He also expressed his desire to von Ribbentrop to speak to Hitler and request the latter to strike out the passage in his *Mein Kampf* in which, with reference to India, Hitler had written: "All efforts of the Indians to rebel against the British yoke will most likely never succeed. It is only when Britain will be defeated by the military power of a more powerful enemy

that India can expect to be free. States which are politically and militarily weak can never be in a position to overcome the political and military power of a well-organised nation.”

The conversation, which Bose had with von Ribbentrop, was not at all satisfactory as far as Bose was concerned, although the German Foreign Minister was not completely indifferent to Bose's requests. Nevertheless, Bose did have the opportunity of finding out for himself that the question of liberation of India, which was his only and sole concern, did not evoke the right sort of echo or sympathy from amongst the highest officials and leaders of the Third Reich. They simply did not see eye to eye with Bose in the matter. The India Division of the Foreign Office, however, in spite of these and other setbacks, was not deterred from carrying on effectively with its part of the task. Its work, together with that of the Free India Centre, could thus be carried on without any interference on the basis of the programme of action laid down after joint discussions among the parties concerned. The peculiar relationship which existed between the German Foreign Office and its head also helped the situation. The German Foreign Minister Herr von Ribbentrop usually allowed the Foreign Office to act independently without ever trying to control or dictate its activities all the time. Contact between the officials of the Foreign Office of the India Division and the Foreign Minister was actually more or less restricted to a teletypewriter message once a year from the Foreign Minister who usually had his headquarters on a special train in Westphalia. The Foreign Minister never gave any regular or definite instructions to his officers, who worked in the India Division, because Ribbentrop had no personal contact with them and he remained always very distrustful and sceptical about the civil servants who worked for him.

At any rate, however, after the long and useful conversation which Bose had with Secretary of State Koplör, he could devote himself more freely to the work according to his own wish and give it the shape he wanted to. The Provisional Government

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

of Free India, which was originally known in Europe as the Free India Centre, received at this time regular advances in the form of loans from the German government which were to be repaid when the Provisional Government of India would be installed in Delhi. In fact, Subhas Chandra Bose took these loans very seriously. In 1944, through the German Ambassador in Tokyo and with the knowledge of the Japanese government, he sent half a million yen as the first instalment in repayment of the loans which the Germans had advanced to the Free India Centre in Berlin. This amount was part of the subscriptions which he had collected from Indians living in South and East Asia.

Bose received at this time an assurance through the German Foreign Office and the High Command of the German Army that he would receive personnel and technical aid from the various sections of the Army to a considerable extent. As a result, a Special India Division was installed in No. 75, Wilhelmstrasse and they maintained another office for the assistance of the Information Section of the Foreign Office in Kurfürstenstrasse. As regards the Free India Centre which had been accorded the status of a diplomatic mission, it had its office in Lichtensteiner Allee, No. 2A, directly opposite the Spanish Embassy in the Tiergarten Quarter which was well-known as the diplomatic quarter of Berlin. Bose, after staying in Hotels Excelsior, Esplanado and Kaiserhof could eventually move into a house in Charlottenburg area of Berlin. It was interesting that the house into which he moved was the one where the American Military Attache used to live until the outbreak of war between Germany and the United States.

This villa in Sophienstrasse very soon became the centre of all Indian activities in Berlin. Here in this house Bose discussed and developed his ideas and his plans together with his Indian and German colleagues and laid down directives about the way in which the Free India Centre was to function. Also it was in this house that Bose often settled many personal problems of

those who worked at the Centre and it was here that he took the important decision to organise an Indian Legion. He deputed Indians who enjoyed his confidence to the High Command of the German Wehrmacht after discussing and arranging with them the details of training officers and staff of the Indian Legion, problems regarding their lodging, clothing, food, etc. In fact, the work he carried on from this house was so intensive and far-reaching that when he eventually went to Japan in 1943, he could take with him a well-conceived and well-planned programme for the setting up of the Provisional Government of Free India in South-East Asia. The preparatory work had made such tremendous progress and all the details had been so methodically and carefully worked out that had Bose been able to come to India, he could have immediately taken up the threads of legislative and executive functions of the liberated Indian government, which he had so meticulously planned and perfected.

Those who observed Bose during these years were all greatly impressed by the fact that he succeeded so well in convincing all his co-workers — both Indian and German — about the great importance of the work they were doing and inspiring them with a sense of mission, common objectives and mutual co-operation. Whenever there were differences of opinion or misunderstandings or even quarrels amongst his colleagues, he knew how to settle them without difficulty. He showed his remarkable capacity of keeping the thread of all the activities of his political, military and technical co-workers in his hands so that the overall control of the whole organisation remained with him. He was the driving spirit behind all the activities of the Free India Centre. He succeeded in doing so much in spite of the fact that the organisation he built up was something between an official mission, a provisional government and not so fully recognised association of a group of exiles from India. But for one or two exceptions, viz. the case of F. J. Furtwaengler, the work between the Germans and the Indians functioned as

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

smoothly as one could have expected under the stress and strain of the raging war. Bose also maintained very good and friendly contacts with the Japanese and the Italian Embassies. He often travelled to Paris, Rome, Brussels, Vienna and Prague and held conversations with the heads of states of these countries as well as with the German missions stationed there and the representatives of the German Foreign Office. And as soon as the work in the military sector was found to have completed its first phase, he went on tours of inspection and visits to the regiments of the Indian Legion in Brandenburg where they were stationed. He often travelled also to different places in Germany where certain groups of the Indian Legion were stationed.

6

All this work was centralised at the Free India Centre in Berlin. The Centre had started, in fact, with only a handful of Indian workers, among whom were Mr. Habibur Rahman, Mr. N. G. Ganpuley, Mr. N. G. Swamy and Mr. M. R. Vyas. But already in the late summer of 1942, the number of active workers of the Free India Centre had increased to 35, the majority amongst them being Indian students. The workers of the Free India Centre received the status of members of a foreign diplomatic mission with corresponding privileges. They were attributed different functions, such as those of technical experts, and planners. The following activities were undertaken and co-ordinated from the Centre :—

- (1) Editing of all the broadcasts of 'Azad Hind Radio', the 'National Congress Radio' and the 'Azad Muslim Radio';
- (2) Assessment of German news materials for radio broadcasts;
- (3) Editing the periodical *Azad Hind* which appeared regularly and had a circulation of 5,000 copies;
- (4) Looking after the entire Indian community in Germany;
- (5) Co-ordination of activities of all the branches of the Free

India Centre outside Germany, i.e. in France and Italy; and, above all,

- (6) Creating a centre of co-ordination with the massive organisation of overseas Indians in Southeast Asia. (This work acquired special significance after the declaration of Premier General Tojo of 16 February 1942, offering Japanese support to the Indian independence movement).

The Free India Centre also took up the work of planning for social and economic reorganisation of India after attainment of freedom. For this purpose, a Planning Commission was established. In addition to this work, the Free India Centre took part in all the political and social functions of international significance in Germany and developed contacts with all such diplomatic missions which were friendly to the Indian cause. On 2 November 1941, the Centre was ceremonially inaugurated and all the workers of the organisation gathered together to participate in its official opening. The Azad Hind movement received its own insignia, viz. the Congress tricolour with the outline of the springing tiger embossed on it. The Centre also adopted Rabindranath Tagore's 'Jana Gana Mana' as the national anthem. And for the first time in modern Indian history, a common and universal Indian form of greeting, '*Jai Hind*', was introduced. It may be mentioned here that when India became free, Jawaharlal Nehru as the Prime Minister, adopted '*Jai Hind*' as the national form of greeting. Bose received the appellation of 'Netaji' which combined a sense of both affection and honour, — more or less on par with the appellation of 'Mahatma', which the Indian people had given to Gandhi. Officially, Hindustani in Roman script was declared to be the national language of India.

Gradually, Bose and the Free India Centre began to develop and expand daily radio broadcasts to India as the main function of the organisation. Having been provided with all the technical facilities of the German Radio through the efforts of Special India Division of the German Foreign Office, a group of

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

young students — and some Indian journalists — was put together and gradually trained for broadcasting work. The work of this group was not very easy, it had to select the most important and essential news material from an unceasing flow of reports and news which came to it. The selected material had afterwards to be processed and translated into several languages and broadcast in a form suitable for Indian listeners. In November 1941, there was a team of only 10 well-qualified workers who actually began the work of the Azad Hind Radio. The Indians were helped by Germans on the technical side, but all the editing of the broadcasts was done by the Indians.

The broadcasts towards India were projected through the most powerful radio centre of Huizen in Holland. The texts written by the Indians for broadcasting were neither censored before they were broadcast nor were these censored by the Germans after copies of the texts had been received by the latter. Bose had obtained this privilege from the German authorities on his assurance to the German government that as the secret Azad Hind broadcasts would be concerned chiefly with Indo-British relations, there was no case for any censoring by the Germans. On the day Singapore fell, Subhas Chandra Bose spoke for the first time since his escape from India over the Azad Hind Radio and thus made his presence known to the Indian public. Till then, he had not spoken personally over the radio although he had worked together with his Indian colleagues in preparing the programmes. These radio broadcasts were done in such a way as to give the Indian people the impression that they were being broadcast from some secret station in or near India. In all the broadcasts, appeals were made to the Indian people to continue and intensify the fight for freedom in the face of the increasingly repressive measures of the British. The broadcasts were, to begin with, only for 15 minutes; but eventually they were extended up to three hours and fifty minutes. As Bose could not, on account of his other activities, directly work for the broadcasts for long, his

work was taken over in due course by his Indian colleagues. He was thus freed from some of the routine work which he was doing in the preparatory phase. Programmes were broadcast daily in seven languages, viz English, Hindustani, Bengali, Pushto, Telugu, Tamil and in Gujarati or Marathi. These broadcasts were sent out on short-wave, — microlength 1820. In order to make the programme attractive for Indian listeners, Indian music broadcast by the B.B.C. was recorded and re-broadcast. The broadcasts were made daily from 11 to 15 hours, Central European Time, from records previously made, at 2 o'clock in the morning.

When, however, a new situation arose following the visit of Sir Stafford Cripps and the Indian National Congress launched the 'Quit India Movement', it was found necessary to organise a second secret radio station with the title 'National Congress Radio'. The idea behind this was to give expression to the new militant point of view of the Indian National Congress. Again, towards the end of 1942, when new tensions developed between the Hindus and the Muslims in India as a result of the activities of the Muslim League, an Azad Muslim Radio was brought into being in order to represent the views of the nationalist Muslims of India and to counteract those of the separatists. From the reports received by the Free India Centre from Kabul and from India, one was able to ascertain that the broadcasts of the Azad Hind Radio and the National Congress Radio were widely listened to by the people in India, although one could not find out how much the Azad Muslim Radio was being listened to in the Frontier Province and the Punjab, the areas for which it was specially meant.

Amongst the close colleagues of Bose at the Free India Centre the following worked for the Radio from 1941 onward:

- (1) Dr. Girija K. Mookerjee — speaker in English for Azad Hind Radio and co-ordinator of the broadcasts of the National Congress Radio; also wrote talks for both the Radios.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- (2) Dr. M. R. Vyas — spoke in Gujarati and collected and edited all the news material daily.
- (3) Mr. P. B. Sharma — spoke in English and also wrote talks on daily events.
- (4) Mr. R. L. Kem — edited texts and processed the subjects to be broadcast on the day.
- (5) Mr. Promode Sengupta — assisted other staff in collecting material and writing talks.
- (6) Dr. J. K. Banerjee — worked as Editor of news and wrote talks on daily subjects.
- (7) Dr. Ambique Majumdar — spoke in Bengali and also translated texts from English into Bengali. He died in the air bombardment of Dresden.
- (8) Mr. Sultan — the main speaker of the Azad Muslim Radio.
- (9) Dr. Suresh Chandra — spoke in Hindi on the National Congress Radio.
- (10) Mr. Veeram Jhewry — translated texts and prepared news material.
- (11) Mr. Alawanta Naidu — was the speaker in Tamil; also translated texts from English into Tamil.
- (12) Mr. B. Moorthy — used to translate and speak in Telugu.
- (13) Dr. Kalyan Bose — speaker in Bengali, also translated texts from English into Bengali.
- (14) Mr. A. Hakim — speaker in Persian.
- (15) Mr. Guru Lal — speaker in Hindustani; also translated texts from English into Hindustani.
- (16) Dr. A. N. Ahuja — speaker in Hindustani.

Practically all the members of this team were obliged to move from place to place owing to allied bombardments of towns where they lived and later the allied invasion of the continent. They were in Tillyersum in the summer of 1943, in Helmstedt in August 1944, and in Leisnitz in Saxony in 1945. In spite of all the difficulties and continuous movement, they remained strongly attached to one another and continued to function like a team. That showed how well Bose had succeeded, during his contact with them during 1941-43, in inspiring these young intellectuals. In fact, Bose had succeeded in achieving in a miniature form in Europe what he did in a bigger way

later in South-east Asia with the Indian National Army, namely, to inspire every member with the idea of national unity irrespective of any consideration for race, caste, religious and regional beliefs. In Hilversum, all of them regardless of their provincial origin or caste, lived together under one roof, ate the same food under the same conditions — Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis all together — and worked for one, united and free India.

7

With the creation of the Indian Legion, Subhas Chandra Bose moved forward fast to establish official and personal contacts with the German Army. He worked tirelessly in the face of many difficulties. But he never lost courage or patience. This new and historic development was built around the German-Indian Commando troops. The decision to organise this force was taken originally in 1940 by the High Command of the German Army with the idea of employing it in the disturbed regions of North-West Frontier Province of India. They were also trained specially for this purpose. They were one of the many special army groups of the Brandenburg Regiment placed directly under the High Command of the Wehrmacht. Under the personal command of Cavalry Officer, Walter Harbich, this Indo-German special unit of about 100 men was lodged in the barracks of Meseritz known as Regenwurm. Regenwurm was one of the biggest centres of army manoeuvres in the area of Frankfurt-on-Oder.

As desired by Bose, Harbich had already had a long and detailed conversation with him at the Hotel Excelsior as the first German officer of the Commando Unit. He has described this meeting with Bose in a book published in India in 1970⁴ and explained his training methods and his experiences as to

⁴ *Netaji in Germany*, Alexander Worth and Walter Harbich, Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, 1970.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the system of recruitment of German and Indian members of the Legion. Bose saw in this Indo-German Commando Group the possibility of new and different kinds of military training for Indian soldiers, such as radio transmission, sabotage techniques, parachute landing, mountain warfare, collection of military intelligence, etc. He was deeply impressed with the excellent personal relationship that existed between the Indian and the German officers. Thanks to this relationship, it became very soon the nucleus of a strongly organised commando group. Bose visited Meseritz very often and was pleased with the progress made in the training of the personnel of the Legion. In it, he visualised the beginning of a bigger Indian Legion in Germany. In this connection he met Dr. Adalbert Seifritz with whom he very soon established a very friendly relationship. Bose greatly appreciated the efforts made by Seifritz in defending the interests of the Indian Legion and in carrying out his instructions. After the war, Seifritz founded the Indo-German Society which in certain ways resumed the work of the Indian Information Bureau established in 1929 in Berlin by the Indian National Congress at the initiative of Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Special Indian Commando Group, later incorporated in the Indian Legion, was sent in December 1942 to Koenigsbrueck near Dresden. After the defeat of the German army in Stalingrad and El Alamein, all plans of sending these commando troops to the North West Frontier Provinces of India had to be abandoned. It should be recalled here that the recruitment for the Indian Legion in the prisoner of war camps in Germany and North Africa had begun already in 1941. In fact, in December 1941 Bose visited the Annaberg Camp where practically all the Indian prisoners of war were put together by the German military authorities. His visits, together with the already recruited members from Meseritz, led to some success. But as the Indian Junior Officers were very critical of the Indian Legion, Bose's hopes of recruitment of officers were not fulfilled to the extent he desired.

During his visits, Bose tried first to speak individually to the prisoners of war. In the course of a speech on the second day, he would invite them to volunteer to fight and sacrifice their lives to make India free. Although many of the Junior Officers were sceptical about what Bose was doing, hundreds of prisoners of war volunteered to join the Legion. Thus he was able to take the first important step towards his cherished goal of organising a revolutionary army. The volunteers were first registered and ultimately brought to the barracks of Koenigsbrueck to be given proper training. This immense military establishment, which was one of the most important centres of training of German troops, saw more and more Indian volunteers in 1942. Very soon, the Legion reached the size of a regiment. The contribution that Subhas Chandra Bose made to the success of the Indian Legion, has been very well described by Seifritz in his preface to the book by N. C. Ganpuley called *Netaji in Germany*.

It must be emphasised that Bose's principle that preferment and advancement within the Legion should only depend on ability and proof of aptitude, independent of birth or former grade, was recognised and esteemed by the Legionaries. It can be said that the experiment to form Hindus, Sikhs, Moslems, Punjabis, Mahrattas and Bengalees and members of other religious communities into a close military unit and to form an efficient fighting force, was crowned with success. . . . The intellectual basis for the growth and success of the Legion was created by Subhas Bose. Repeatedly he explained to his compatriots and the German personnel his ideas about the Legion and its future task in free India. He was very anxious to see preserved in the Legion traditions of the cultural and political past of his country. With a feeling, fine and noble, he did his utmost to banish the danger of losing the cultural roots of his Legionaries. To many a man Subhas Bose seemed to be a reserved and contemplative personality.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

But when he stood in front of the Legion and expressed his idea for a free India in detail, then the fire of a fighter and a revolutionary could be felt. He was never too tired to inspire trust and confidence in various discussions. He was the great idol of the Legion. . . A meeting with Subhas was a special event for the German training staff. We spent many evenings with him, discussing the future of India. He lives in the minds of the training staff members as an idealistic and fighting personality, never sparing himself in the service of his people and his country. . . .

In the autumn of 1942, a military exercise by the Indian Legion was organised in honour of Bose. The Military Attache of the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, Col. Satoshi Yamamoto, a good friend of Bose, was present. At the end of the manoeuvre, all the members of the Indian Legion, i.e. about 3,000 men, in the presence of Bose and Yamamoto, were made to take their oath as soldiers of Free India by Lt. General Kruppe under the Indian tricolour which had the springing tiger embossed on it. Later, when Bose was leading the movement in East Asia, he adopted many of the forms and military practices he had known in Germany and utilised many of his experiences there. About the fate of the Indian Legion in Germany, Holland and France after the war, much cannot be said here. That would require a very detailed description of the conditions under which they were repatriated to India. This much, however, can be mentioned that all the members of the Indian Legion, like the members of the Indian National Army who had fought in Burma and Malaysia for Indian freedom, were placed on the same footing and declared free at the end of the Red Fort trials in India. It is known that more than 1,000 Indian prisoners of war and also some Indians, who had lived in Germany since before the war, were able to survive the hardships of the war and were able to return to India. If the Indian Legion had not been established in Germany, all the Indians, like other prisoners of war, would

have been probably interned in concentration camps. This view was expressed by A. C. N. Nambiar in his introduction to the book *Netaji in Germany*, by N. G. Ganpuley :

In one way the Indian Legion is responsible for the great body of the Indian prisoners of war being taken back to India at the conclusion of the war. It is perhaps not so well known that towards the middle of 1944, when the war in Europe reached a crucial stage, there was a strong move to use the prisoners who had not enrolled in the Legion for physical labour in distant regions where severe conditions prevailed. The possible unfavourable effects of such a step, particularly on the Legion, contributed to the war prisoners not being employed for such a purpose. They were thus saved from a hard fate which otherwise might have befallen them. And their return to India was also facilitated. One very important aspect of the new status that India has gained is that her troops will now be used only in accordance with the nation's will. A soldier discharges his duty all the better when he feels that he is carrying out the national will.

8

To return to Bose's many-sided efforts for Indian independence, it should be recorded here that ever since his arrival in Germany he ceaselessly tried to persuade the German, Italian and Japanese Governments to make official declaration on the question of Indian independence. In this he always received the support of his German friends. The Special India Division often tried in a big way to make the Government in Berlin agree to Bose's suggestion. Until May 1942, the progress he was able to make in this matter was very limited. In fact, though Mussolini had declared his readiness to issue such a declaration and although the Japanese Prime Minister Tojo had let it be known that Japan would be ready to support a German-Italian

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

declaration to this effect, yet Hitler did not agree to make such a declaration, probably because he did not want the end of British domination in India on racial grounds.

As long as Bose was in Germany, the Italian and the Japanese Governments could not act otherwise, for that would have been an act of discourtesy towards the German government. It had gone, however, so far that when in May 1941 Bose went to Rome and asked for an interview with Mussolini, the latter refused to meet him. But his son-in-law, Count Ciano, the Foreign Minister, received Bose twice. After about a whole year, Subhas Bose's position in the eyes of Mussolini had improved. And, although Mussolini had told Hitler in April in Salzburg that he would not support Bose's demand for a declaration on India's right of independence, yet on 5 May, 1942 he expressed his willingness to receive Bose. During this interview Bose was able to convince Mussolini of the need of a declaration by the Italian Government in favour of the independence of India. The German Government was informed that Mussolini, in spite of what he had said to Hitler, had expressed his readiness to Bose to accord recognition to the movement for Indian independence. As a result, it appears, relations between Hitler and Mussolini worsened to a certain extent. On 29 May 1942, Bose met Hitler at his headquarters. After this interview, Bose related to his colleagues of the Free India Centre the substance of his conversation with him. The main points of this conversation, generally speaking, were as follows⁶ :—

First, Bose requested Hitler to explain what exactly he meant by the insulting remarks he had made about India in his book *Mein Kampf*. Hitler, it seems, refused point-blank to discuss this question. After this rather bad beginning, Bose put the question of whether the German government would be ready to make the declaration so often asked for by him on the question of India's independence after the war. To this question

⁶ This version of the interview varies materially from that given by M. R. Vyas: *Bulletin of Netaji Research Bureau*, No. 4, 1963.

also, Hitler replied by saying that according to him India would not be able to rule herself for another 150 years. He then led Bose to a map of the world and pointed out to him how far the German war front was from the Indian frontier. It was because of this, Hitler said, that an immediate declaration of India's right to self-determination could not be of any practical value. The interview ended, in fact, in a total failure. It also ended almost dramatically. For, as it was reported by Adam von Trott who acted as the interpreter for Bose, at the end of the conversation Hitler asked Bose how and what practical action he would take when the situation seemed to be so desperately unfavourable for India. On hearing this remark, Subhas Bose lost his patience and told von Trott in English: "Please tell His Excellency that I have been in politics all my life and that I do not need advice from anyone."

The total failure of the meeting between Hitler and Bose was known, however, only to the closest circle of his colleagues. All the activities of the Free India Centre in Berlin and those of the Indian Legion would have become totally fruitless if it had been known at that time how badly Hitler had behaved towards Bose. For Bose, of course, 29 May 1942 was a turning point in his plans. He realised finally that all his efforts for many years to convince Hitler about the importance of his political mission had failed. He concluded that neither the German Government nor the war it conducted in Europe had any direct bearing on his plans for the future. All the troubles he had taken and all the hardships he had gone through after his flights from India to Germany must have appeared to him to be as good as meaningless. After having lived in Germany for a year, he now clearly recognised that he must now move out of Germany in order to play any useful role in the fight for India's freedom.

The question why Hitler behaved in this manner cannot be explained easily. The fact of the matter was that Hitler knew practically nothing about India. Nevertheless, it seems that, as

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

we have already mentioned, his racial ideas played an important role in his attitude towards India. In spite of his openly expressed bitterness and enmity for the British, Hitler was in reality an Anglophile and the total destruction of the British Empire was to him not at all a desirable prospect for the future. Only on one point, however, did Bose's interview with Hitler have some favourable reaction. As Bose told Hitler that he would like to go to East Asia, Hitler agreed that it was the right thing for him to do and promised to do everything in his power to help him to do this, so that in spite of all the existing war-time difficulties, this journey could take place.

Looking back, one may probably and rightly speculate that had the war in East Asia developed in a different way and if Bose had at once gone to Japan, things would have probably become different from what they became afterwards. At least, he could have advanced his plans by at least a year if he had already been in East Asia in the summer of 1942. Thus the time wasted in Germany would have been used for more useful purposes.

8

At this point, a few observations may be made about the impression that Subhas Bose made on the small circle of his German co-workers with whom he had remained in contact practically every day while he was in Germany. Those Germans who knew him only superficially might probably have considered him to be a fire-brand revolutionary without any constructive ideas. In reality, however, he already visualised, in a positive and exact manner, the free India of the future. In Berlin, he very often openly discussed with his friends and colleagues — both German and Indian — the future form of government which free India would or should adopt. He had studied many different forms of government with a view to discovering the one that would be most suitable for India. It may be said in this

connection that Bose was not over-enthusiastic about the British parliamentary system. In this respect he certainly differed from Nehru and other leading politicians of the Indian National Congress. Hen von Trott and Dr. Weith, in many discussions with Bose, had often suggested that the British form of government might become a good model for free India. But almost always, Bose pointed out the difficulties of planting such a foreign system on Indian soil. He conceived a form of government, not on the British model of liberalism and *laissez faire*, but one with a strong socialistic character. It appeared that he was strongly influenced by the form of government which Kemal Atatürk had established in Turkey after the First World War. He wanted the Indian nation to become a real unified community in which there should be no differences of religion, caste, language and customs. In this respect, his views were in no way different from the secular conception of government of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nevertheless, he conceived of the future government of India to be more centralised and authoritarian. And, above all, he thought that at least for a short period, in order to strengthen the central government and national unity and in order to get the work of reconstruction going, the Army should play a pioneering and constructive role. He already saw in Berlin the practical and useful role which the Army could play in future.

When one reads the speeches he made to the Indian National Army in East Asia, one sees clearly how such thoughts had taken deep roots within him. Many of his ideas reminded us of the early Prussian socialism which had been formulated, for example, by writers like Oswald Spengler. Bose not only considered nationalisation a necessity but he also thought that the state should also own, control and direct the key industries. The means of production, specially in respect of heavy industries and of capital goods, must, according to him, be in the hands of the State. Further, for scientific and planned development of agriculture he thought it was essential that concerted

efforts were made by the State itself. Thus, there is no doubt that Subhas Chandra Bose was a true socialist. There is no doubt also that in many respects he had been influenced by the Soviet experiment. As to individual freedom, in his view, freedom enjoyed by a citizen must be in keeping with the interest of the country as a whole and for this reason, it might have to be limited to a certain extent. The type of liberalism which was practised in England and which, to a certain extent, found place in the socialist thinking of Nehru, was not wholly acceptable to Bose.

10

An objective assessment of the European situation in the middle of 1942 convinced Bose that extending his sojourn in Germany would no longer serve any useful purpose. Accordingly, by exploiting his direct and indirect links with Japan and Indians in the Far East, he began preparing systematically for his appearance on the political stage in East Asia. It would be his historic task, he felt, to unite all Indians in the Far East and South Asia and mount a major assault on the British power in India, — an operation that would be similar in character to his experiment in Europe but on a more massive scale. Three million Indians in East Asia were already getting organised under the leadership of Rash Behari Bose. From the Bangkok conference of the Indian Independence League in East Asia held in June 1942, an invitation was sent to Bose, with the concurrence of the Japanese Government, to come over to East Asia and assume the leadership of the freedom movement.

The first great problem to be solved was how Bose could reach East Asia safely. During the summer and autumn of 1942 discussions were held in Berlin and Rome on whether this trip could be carried out by an Italian long distance plane. An Italian plane had succeeded some time ago in reaching East Asia in a non-stop flight. But after a very critical examination of the

pros and cons of such an undertaking, a repetition of the experiment did not seem advisable. The alternative was a journey by the sea. Netaji declared that he was prepared to travel even by a surface ship despite the risks involved. From the German side it was said that the hazards in travelling by a surface steamer were much too great and that plans should be made to enable him to travel by submarine.

After long and complicated discussions with the respective Military Attaches at the Italian and Japanese Embassies in Berlin and Rome, the following was agreed upon: Netaji, accompanied by only one friend, should be taken by a German submarine by way of the English Channel, Bay of Biscay, then down the Atlantic Ocean along West Africa to the Indian Ocean below South Africa and finally to the south of Madagascar where he should be transferred to a Japanese submarine. The latter would take him to the nearest Japanese base in East Asia. This plan was successfully carried out, thanks to the joint efforts of Netaji and the Special India Division, the initiative of General Oshima, Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, his Military Attache Mr. Yamamoto and other members of Japanese Embassies in Berlin and Rome and the co-operation of competent German military authorities. An interesting anecdote related to this historic journey may perhaps be mentioned here: Shortly before Bose's departure the Japanese Naval Command raised objections because of an internal Japanese regulation not permitting civilians to travel on a warship in war-time. When Adam von Trott received this message by cable from the German Ambassador in Tokyo, he sent the following reply: "Subhas Chandra Bose is by no means a private person but Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Liberation Army." Thus the bureaucratic interference was overcome.

While Netaji was preparing to leave Europe he gave detailed instructions concerning all activities of the Free India Centre to his successor A. C. N. Nambiar. The exact date of his departure was given only a few days in advance and even so was

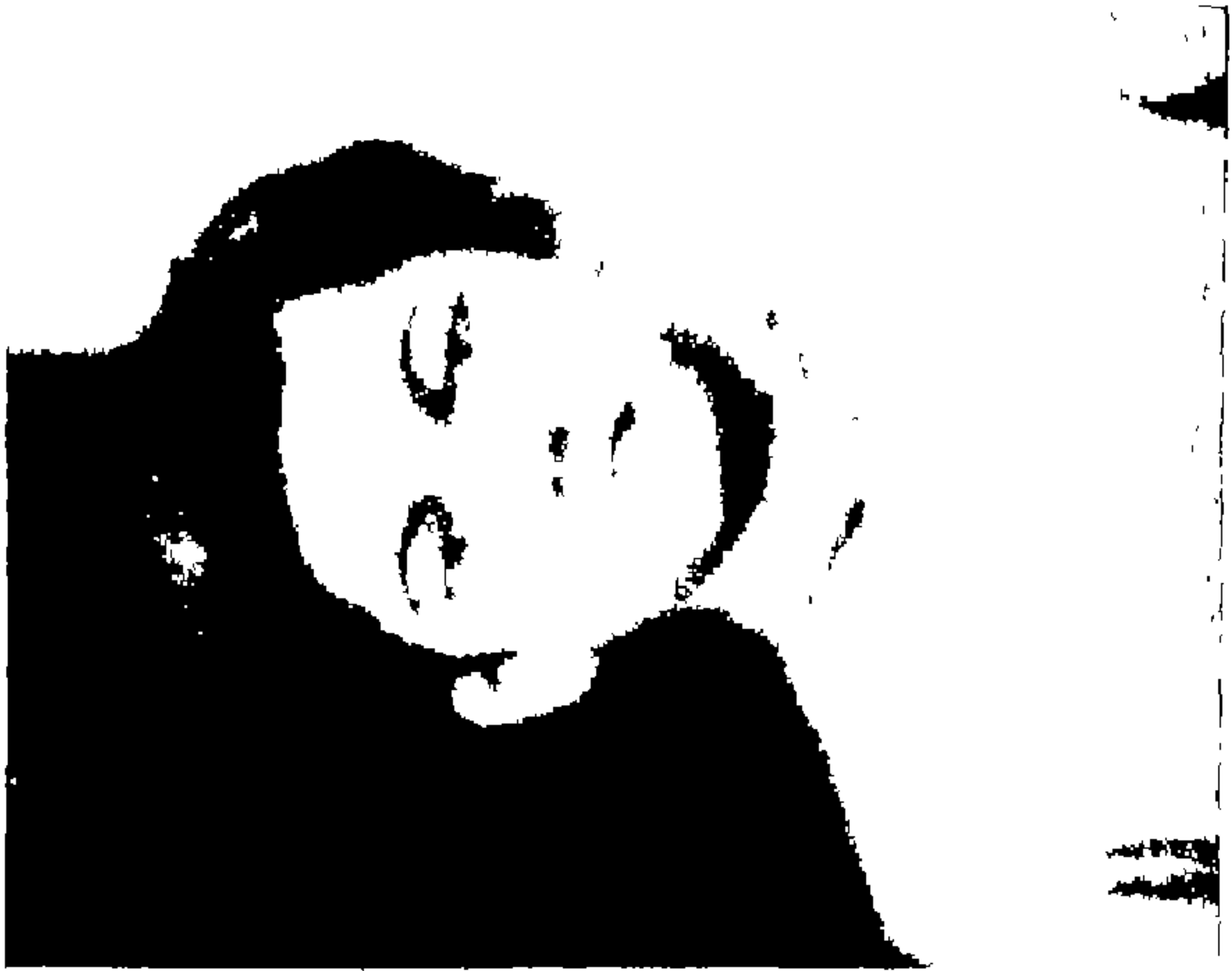
Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

a closely guarded secret among a very few persons. On 26 January 1943, Indian Independence Day, a meeting attended by six hundred people was arranged in Berlin and addressed by Netaji. Two days later he delivered his last speech before the Indian Legion. His voice was recorded for purposes of camouflage — to be broadcast by the Azad Hind Radio after his departure.

Nobody of the Free India Centre with the exception of A. C. N. Nambiar of the Indian Legion know details of Netaji's itinerary or the date of departure. On 8 February 1943 Bose left Germany on board the submarine that had been waiting for him at the port of Kiel. Keppler, A. C. N. Nambiar and Weeth accompanied him to Kiel. Abid Hassan travelled in a special compartment to Kiel on the night of 7-8 February without knowing his destination. Only after he had started on his journey was he officially informed about the itinerary.

At dawn on 8 February 1943, Bose and Hassan were received by Commander Werner Musenberg of the submarine of type IX with a speed of 18 knots on the surface and 7.5 knots under water. On 28 April 1943, after a heroic struggle against the surging waves of the Indian Ocean, Netaji and Hassan were transhipped in a rubber boat to a Japanese submarine which had arrived at the chosen spot according to plan to receive them.

The final phase of India's battle for freedom had begun.



As a boy



Cambridge, 1929



As Mayor of Calcutta 1931



Calcutta Congress 1928

Calcutta Congress 1923



With V. J. Patel in Grachovskaya, 1933

As Mayor of Calcutta 19



At the Haripore Congress, 1938



Sick President on his way to the Third Congress with
brother Sarat Chandra, 1939



On arrival in
Bedin as "Orlando
Mazzotta" 1941



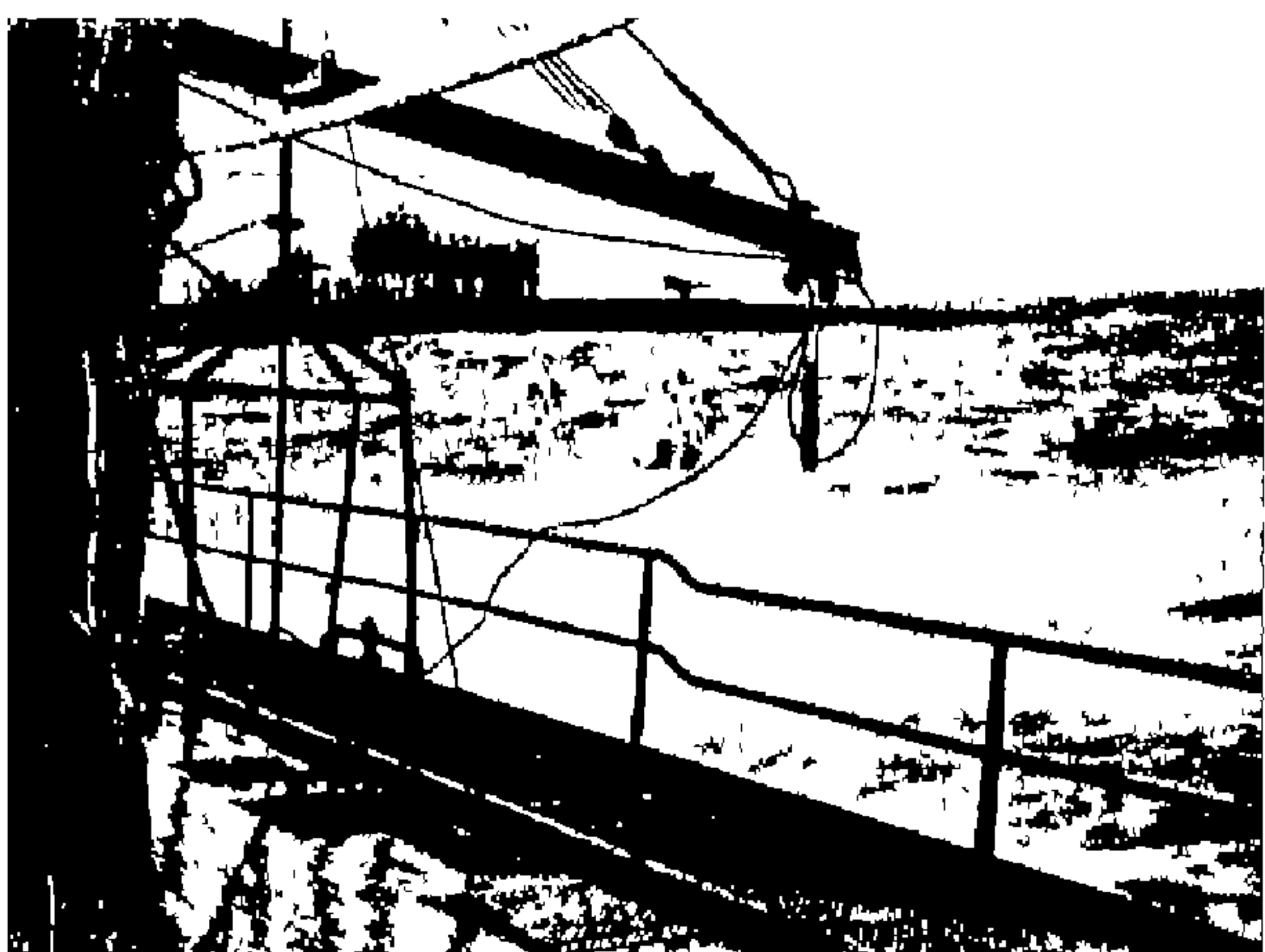
With Tagore and Sarat Bose in Calcutta, 1939



Addressing the Indian Independence Day meeting
in Berlin, 28 January 1947



On the German submarine with Abid Hasan

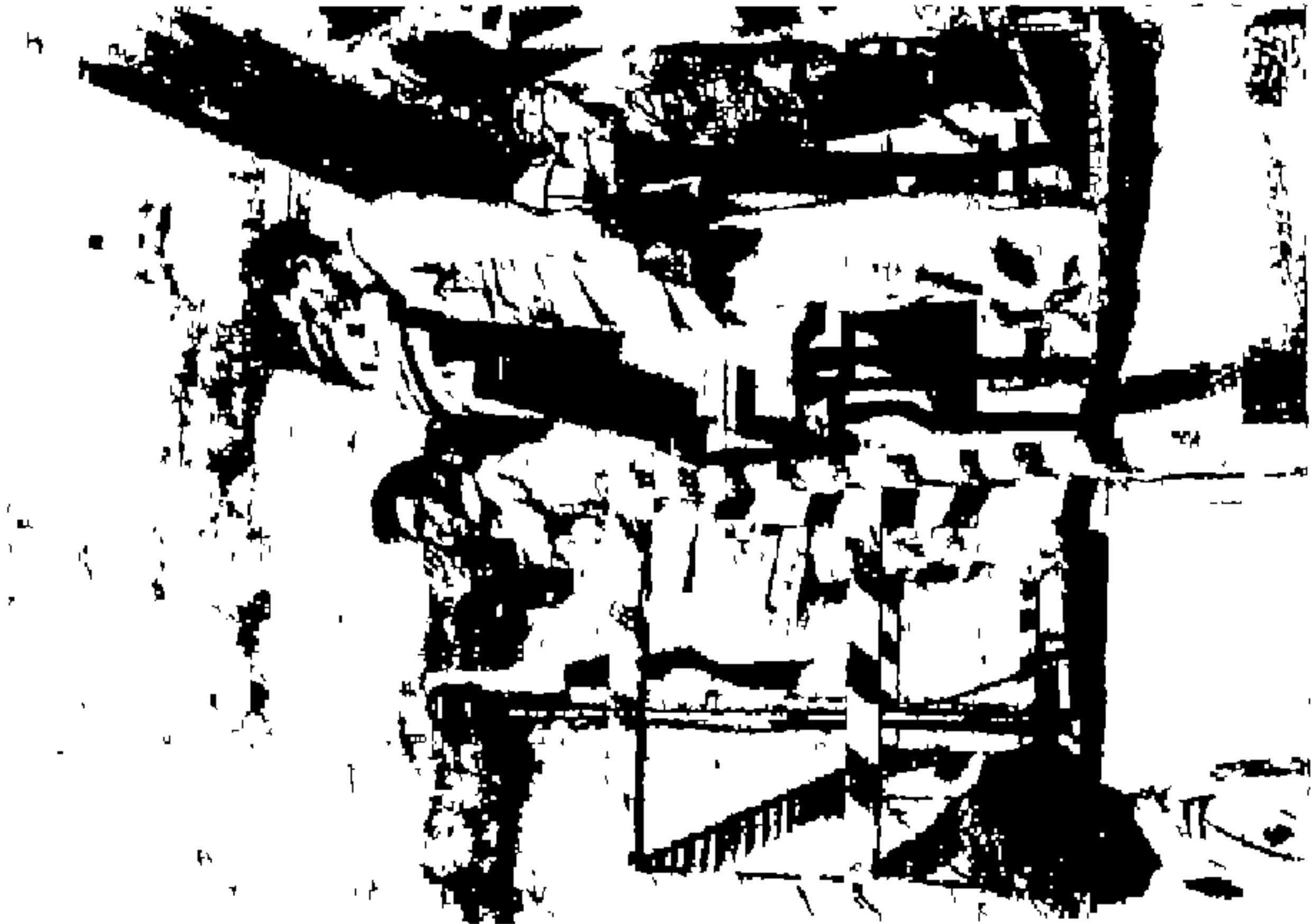


**Transhipment from the German to the Japanese submarine
in progress in the Indian Ocean, 28 April 1943**



Proclaiming the Provisional Government of Azad Hind,
Singapore, October 1943

Taking the salute
of his Army in Singapore,
July 1943



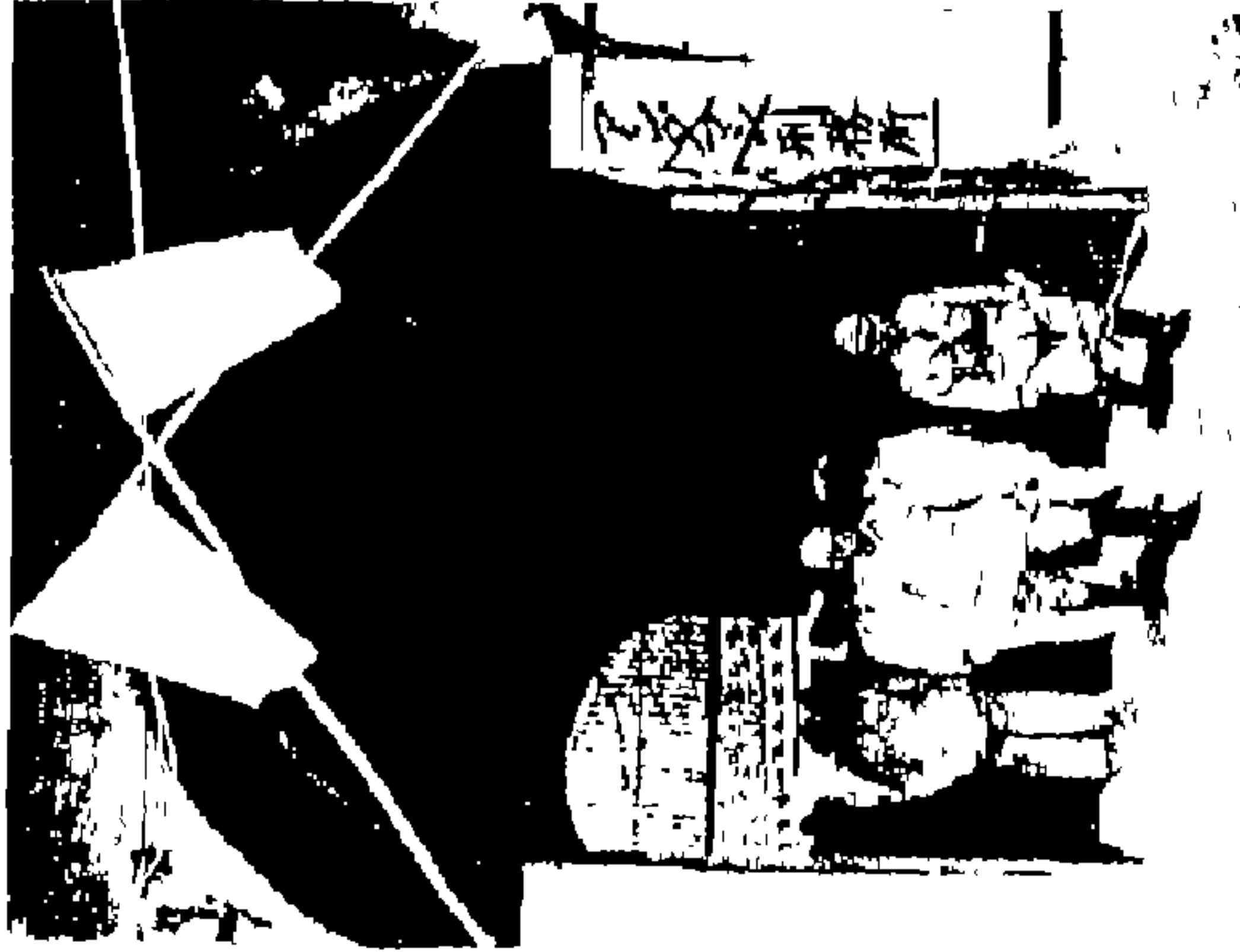


Addressing the Asian Leaders' Conference in
Tokyo, November 1943



Visiting the Sun Yat Sen Memorial in Nanking,
China, 1943

Addressing the Asian Leaders' Conference in
Tokyo, November 1943

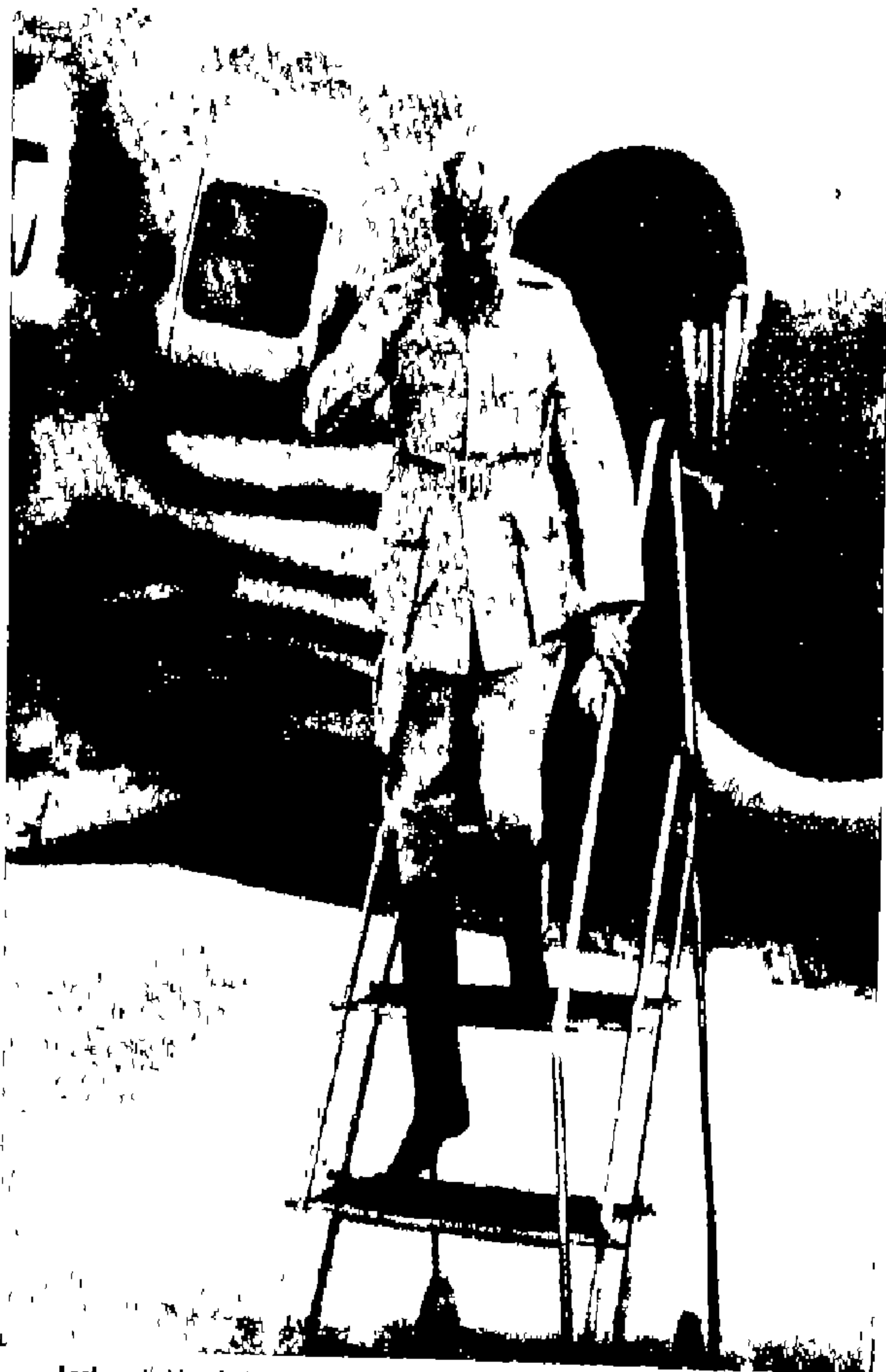


Visiting Cellular Jail in Port Blair, Andaman
Islands, December 1943

Visiting the Swa Yat San Memorial in Nanyang,
China, 1943



At the Indo-Burma front, 1944



Last available photograph, Saigon Airport, 17 August 1945

CHAPTER
FIVE

TO DELHI | TO DELHI |
1943—1945

FRED SAITO
TATSUO HAYASHIDA

In November 1935 the Japanese Minister to Belgium, Toshio Shiratori, stated in a personal letter to his friend, Hachiro Arita, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo:

The most serious menace to Japan comes from the Soviet Union. Numerous European countries will eventually embrace Communism. So will China and India if we just watch them with folded arms.

Although his position was not high, Shiratori was considered to be the leader of the 'new wave' in the Japanese foreign service. He later became Ambassador to Italy.

One year later, Takeo Nimiya, a theorist of the 'new wave' wrote a book entitled, *Basic Guidelines of the New Japanese Foreign Policy*. The book, though distributed to a limited circle, exercised a strong influence on future policy. Nimiya stated in substance that Japan's mission was to help liberate fellow-Asiatics from Western colonialism and declared: "Japanese expansion may be justified if it fulfils that mission." Nimiya defined the so-called Manchurian Incident as an 'economic failure'. He stated that this case of Japanese expansion might be justified only if five different races *viz.* Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, White Russians and Japanese, of Manchukuo exercised full self-determination for co-existence in peace with freedom and justice.

The Manchurian Incident eventually spread into China proper and the Japanese armed forces gradually bogged down in the vast continent. Japanese leaders blamed the Comintern for

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

War II on the false assumption that Britain's fall was a matter of time. The Japanese military also over-estimated the potential strength of the Indian resistance movement inside India. Evidently Japanese military leaders did not agree with Hitler's views on this question as expressed in the 26th chapter of *Mein Kampf* :

“It is not likely that Indian rebellion will liberate India from the British yoke. Only when Britain is struck down by the military might of a powerful enemy or when British racial decadence begins, will Britain lose India. . . ”

On 18 January 1942 an agreement among the Axis Powers was concluded to establish a demarcation at East Longitude 70 as the extreme ends of German and Italian military operations from the West and the Japanese advance from the East. The demarcation made a large part of India into a zone of Japanese activities. However, the agreement was academic and it was in fact promoted by some Japanese officers who feared that Germans would overrun the Indian sub-continent before Japan reached it. Some Japanese strategists expressed apprehensions, saying that such a demarcation might imply a Japanese wish to conquer India and thus antagonise Indians. German officers agreed and proposed to issue a joint declaration denying any territorial designs on India on the part of Germany, Italy and Japan. Japan agreed and began to draft the declaration.

One must bear in mind all these developments in interpreting Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo's statement in the Diet of 16 February 1942, a day after the fall of Singapore. Tojo declared :

It is a golden opportunity for India having, as it does, several thousand years of history and splendid cultural traditions, 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 as India for the Indians.

Overtly, this statement might read as if Tojo broadened the definition of the Sphere and included India in it. But the statement, if read more carefully, sounds ambiguous and can also mean that Indians might only help in its establishment. Tojo repeated this ambiguous statement on 12 March 1942, when he learnt that Sir Stafford Cripps had begun appeasement efforts in India.

After the Japanese Navy attacked the British naval forces in Ceylon, Tojo issued still another statement that clarified the ambiguity of the earlier statements. In the new statement, Tojo said:

I must express my profoundest sympathy with the Indian people who might suffer from attacks likely to be inflicted by the Japanese forces on the British. As I stated earlier, I believe that now is the best chance for the Indian people to rise and re-establish India for Indians.

Nowhere did Tojo again use the phrase 'Co-Prosperity Sphere'. Thus he defined the Sphere to be without India.

The drafting of the joint Axis Declaration with regard to the status of India and Arab nations was completed by the Japanese on 11 April 1942. But Germany and Italy were no longer enthusiastic about the idea and the draft was shelved for good after Japanese Ambassador Oshima discussed the matter with the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop on 3 May 1942. The draft stated that Japan, Germany and Italy had no intention of replacing Britain as the masters of these colonized nations and only wished to see early realisation of 'India for Indians' and 'Arab countries for Arabs'. This draft did not refer to the Co-Prosperity Sphere anywhere. Von Ribbentrop explained that Germany and Italy felt that such a declaration was premature

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

and might backfire in exposing Axis strategy and disadvantageously alerting Turkey, Syria and Egypt.

2

In Berlin Subhas Chandra Bose welcomed the news of Japan's entry into the war against Britain. He immediately contacted the Japanese Embassy and expressed his desire to go over to the Far East to spearhead the liberation campaign into India. Japanese Ambassador Oshima and military attache Col. Satoshi Yamamoto passed on Bose's wishes with their affirmative recommendations to the Tokyo government. But no favourable replies other than 'under consideration' came from Tokyo for months because the basic Japanese policy did not contemplate such a liberation campaign. Netaji, of course, was not a man to be sitting idly while waiting for a Japanese decision. In March 1942 he went over the radio more than once to endorse Tojo's statement in stronger language:

... In British decline alone lies the hope of India's independence. Every Indian who works to strengthen British hands betrays the cause of his motherland. Such a man is a traitor to India.....

....People in India know full well that the much-advertised and so-called dissensions are an artificial creation and that as long as the British remain in India they will continue their nefarious policy of 'divide and rule'. Mr. Churchill and his Cabinet will soon realise that political promises thrown at the Indian people from Westminster will not bring them over to the British side. The British empire is going the way of all other empires of the past and out of its ashes will rise a free and united India¹

- Arun, *Testament of Subhas Bose*, Delhi: 1946, pp. 3-4.

In his radio speeches he went further than Tojo with his affirmation to "fight not only against the British but also against their henchmen". Among the Japanese High Command, however, even the attack on British naval forces in Ceylon was disapproved by some Army staff officers. The High Command was least inclined at that time to invade India and fight Indians serving the British.

The Japanese invitation to Subhas Chandra Bose was delayed also because of other factors that had to be smoothed out for co-ordination of the Japanese policy towards India. Shortly before Japan entered the war, Japanese military attache Col. Tsutomu Tamura at the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok befriended two young Indian revolutionaries, Pritam Singh and Amar Singh. After meeting and discussing matters of common interest with them many times, Tamura was fascinated by the young Indians' disinterested patriotism. He eventually overstepped his authority and exchanged a note with the Indian Independence League (IIL) led by the two. Tamura's stand was endorsed by the 'F' organ, a group of disguised Japanese Army psychological warfare and intelligence officers, who had begun underground operations in Thailand in September 1941. This group also overstepped its authority by committing itself to an act which did not exactly conform to the basic Indian policy of the High Command.

Today's readers might wonder why such overstepping was countenanced by Tokyo authorities. In fact, special services of the Japanese Army were far smaller and weaker than the CIA of America of the present time. Nevertheless, lower echelons or the commanding officers of special groups based far away from Tokyo from time to time acted on their own discretion out of genuine enthusiasm. That was one of the shortcomings of the structure of the Imperial Japanese Army. The Manchurian Incident of 1931 was started in fact by Army officers based in Manchuria by defying countermanning directives from Tokyo.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

After the warfare spread, Tokyo had no other alternative but to defend Japanese troops under fire and support the local decision.

The note exchanged between Tamura and Pritam Singh is historically important, because it set the basis for the later collaboration between Japan and Subhas Chandra Bose. The full text of the note is therefore quoted below :—

We hereby pledge to devote ourselves to the task of realising the spirit of the following statement which will serve as the basis for our movement.

(1) Our co-operation should be carried on for the ultimate purpose of bringing peace, freedom and prosperity to Greater East Asia on the basis of the collaboration between the completely independent, free and equal countries, Japan and India.

(2) The I.I.L. will carry on anti-British struggle, resorting to force, to win prompt and complete independence. Towards that end, it will welcome the comprehensive support of Japan. However, Japan will guarantee that it has no territorial, military, political, economic, cultural and religious designs and demands whatsoever on India.

(3) The I.I.L. embraces all the Indian people transcending racial, religious and political differences and they agree to fight for independence from Britain.

In accordance with the spirit of Article 1 of this note, every effort will be made to fraternise and co-operate with all the people of the areas involved in our strategical operations.

(4) In the event of an outbreak of Anglo-Japanese War, the I.I.L. will embark on the following activities:

(a) The I.I.L. will advance, along with the Japanese Army, to Southern Thailand and Malaya to try to extend its influence over the areas and persuade Indians residing in these areas or serving with the British-Indian Army to join in the anti-British movement. Every effort will be made to create pro-Japanese feeling among those Indians.

(b) The I.I.L. will lose no time in organising those Indians who are now serving with the British-Indian Army or residing in the Malayan area into an Indian Independence Volunteer Army in preparation for the forthcoming battle for independence.

(c) Every effort will be made to extend the aforesaid activities to all other areas in East Asia.

(5) (a) The Japanese Army will facilitate the activities of the I.I.L. so that the latter can develop its autonomous and free operations within the areas of Japanese military operations.

(b) The Japanese Army will put the 'F' Organ, headed by Major Fujiwara, in charge of liaison between the Japanese Army and the I.I.L. and in charge of direct assistance, thus facilitating the activities of the I.I.L.

(c) The Japanese Army will not regard as enemies those Indians who are residing in the areas of its military operations, including those who have surrendered (including POW's), but will treat them as friends and protect their lives, properties, freedom and honour. The Japanese Army will also protect temples and refrain from using temples for military purposes to guarantee freedom of religion. The Japanese Army will see that all the men and officers fully understand the meaning of these measures and never fail to live up to them.

(d) The Japanese Army will co-operate in making it possible for the I.I.L. to use the Tokyo Broadcasting Station, Bangkok Broadcasting Station and other stations in the areas occupied by the Japanese Army to facilitate the publicity programme of the I.I.L. The Japanese Army will also make aeroplanes available to the I.I.L. to drop publicity materials in the areas occupied by the enemy.

(e) The Japanese Army will facilitate liaison between the I.I.L. and Subhas Chandra Bose in Berlin.

(f) The Japanese Army will make available at the request of Pritam Singh whatever materials and funds are needed to carry on I.I.L. activities. The I.I.L. will be at liberty to receive

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

donations offered voluntarily by those Indians residing in the areas of Japanese military operations.

Tokyo approved the note — not without certain apprehensions — by interpreting the role of the Indian Independence Volunteer Army as a support to Japanese actions in the Co-Prosperity Sphere, not necessarily for liberating India from British rule. Developments in the initial stages of the war strengthened that interpretation. Marching side by side with the rapidly advancing Japanese, the Indian Independence Volunteer Army continued to win innumerable converts from the British ranks. The Volunteer Army was reorganised by Capt. Mohan Singh, one of the British-trained converted officers, into the Indian National Army early in 1942 with the support of the 'F' Organ. As many as 45,000 Indian prisoners of war assembled on 17 February 1942 to join the new Indian Army.

But the movement received a setback in March 1942 when the first conference of Indian revolutionaries from every region of South-east Asia was held in Tokyo. As at most such conferences, a leader residing in Tokyo was elected the Chairman. He was Rash Behari Bose, who had been living in exile in Japan for some 30 years and had married into a well-known Japanese family. Discussions at the conference revealed divergence of views and opinions between the Japan-based Indians who were largely businessmen and the younger radicals from the south. Aging Rash Behari Bose and his followers tended to regard their young comrades from the south as basically new converts and the latter felt that the former were largely pro-Japanese opportunists. Japanese officers felt frustrated as the divergence grew only wider. In fact this divergence was not bridged until the end of World War II.

If Tokyo hesitated to invite Subhas Chandra Bose from Berlin, Japanese officers were not sure at all whether the arrival of a new powerful leader would not cause further complications. The situation worsened after the return to the south of young

officers, all with a bad taste in the mouth. And very unfortunately Pitam Singh met with an untimely death in an airplane accident. Major Fujiwara, head of the 'F' Organ, was replaced by Col. Hideo Iwakuro, a U.S.-trained intelligence officer, in March 1942.

Iwakuro hardly had time to cultivate friendship or promote mutual understanding with his Indian friends before the second conference of Indian revolutionary leaders took place at Bangkok's Silver Coin Royal Theatre on 15 May 1942. Rash Behari Bose again chaired the conference attended by two thousand delegates. Among the many congratulatory messages read at the conference, the most impressive was the one sent by Subhas Chandra Bose in Berlin. He said, *Inter alia* :

...The experience I have gained during the last eighteen months has convinced me that in our fight against British Imperialism, the Tripartite Powers are our best friends and allies outside India . . . But the emancipation of India must be the work primarily of Indians themselves . . . 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....

India's liberation will mean the expulsion of Anglo-American Imperialism, the goal of the victorious Japanese Army. 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 milestone in our march towards victory.²

Japanese Army observers felt uneasy by Netaji's insistence that the Japanese Army should expel the British from India. But later developments at the conference were even more disturbing and unnerving for the Japanese military. After the spectacular

² K. S. Giani, *Indian Independence Movement in East Asia*, Part II, Lahore: 1947, p. 78.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

opening ceremony, the two thousand Indian delegates debated behind closed doors for three days, and adopted a sixty-point charter for the Japanese government. There was no question that local Indian leaders took the initiative in producing the proposals which almost amounted to demands. The proposals were submitted to the Japanese government with a request that they be answered in writing. The proposals included, among others, a request for loan of funds for the establishment of a provisional Indian government and for the recognition of an equal status for the INA with that of the Japanese Army.

Prime Minister General Tojo and other High Command officers in Tokyo were bewildered when they read the strongly worded proposals. They did not think that the Japanese government was ready to consider them. The timing was also rather unfortunate in that the matter came up shortly after Germany had backed down from its earlier stand and had refused to join Japan in proclaiming the basic Axis policy towards Indians and Arabs. The request for granting an equal status to the INA sounded academic to Japanese generals in Tokyo. Tojo and other generals were disappointed in Rash Behari Bose's leadership in the formulation of the premature proposals and also in Japanese officers including both Fujiwara and Iwakuro "who seemed to have spoilt the Indians".

After thinking hard and long, the Japanese government answered the proposals in general and abstract terms, saying in short that Japan greatly appreciated the sincerity with which the Indian people were fighting for independence and that Japan would do its utmost to cooperate with them. The 60-point charter was not replied to point by point. The Japanese answer vexed quite a few officers of the Indian National Army. The Japanese Government for the first time seriously considered bringing Subhas Chandra Bose to South-east Asia because "only a man of his calibre may be able to control this unruly crowd of Indians." About this time Radio Delhi, which was the voice of the British administration, broadcast repeatedly that Japan was trying to

instal Rash Behari Bose as the leader of a puppet government of exiled Indians. Evidently Radio Delhi did not know that the Japanese military were already beginning to write him off: Nevertheless, it took several more months before Netaji moved from Berlin to the Far East.

Even though aging and weakening in health, Rash Behari Bose was a good and respected friend of many Japanese leaders. The Japanese government leaders decided to be extremely tactful in handling him. Lt Gen. Seizo Arisue, second in Command of the Army General Staff, invited Rash Behari Bose for a friendly chat. After awhile, the one-time military attache in Rome, who was a very witty conversationalist, discreetly asked: "Netaji is desirous of coming over here and I wonder how you would treat him." The old revolutionary quietly replied: "Netaji is a born leader of leaders. I shall of course be quite pleased to ask him to take over from me."

Other government offices got busy to screen Netaji's background and thoughts. The Foreign Office began negotiating with the German government for the transfer of the Indian leader. It took more than two months to cut bureaucratic barriers. The Japanese government's instruction to the Ambassador in Berlin saying Japan was agreeable 'in principle' to Netaji's visit to Japan was filed in August 1942 — in virtual synchronisation with a massive rally of 25,000 Indians at Singapore on August 12 that impressed some Japanese officers that the Indian independence issue was getting too hot to handle.

The situation with the INA got worse steadily while Japanese and German officials taxed their minds in trying to establish a safe and sure method of transportation from Berlin to Tokyo across a very long distance under Allied air and naval supremacy. Several months were spent in the solution of the transportation problem. At the end of November, Mohan Singh staged a somewhat abortive rebellion that was quickly put down by the Japanese. A sweeping reform was carried out and Lt. Col. Bhonsle became the commanding general of the INA. It was

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

not exactly clear why Mohan Singh revolted. Perhaps he realised that the tide of the Pacific War had changed after Japan took a shattering defeat at Midway in June 1942 and perhaps he was taken in by persuasive propaganda of pro-British elements. His pent-up dissatisfaction with the Japanese understandably exploded. As a result, Colonel Iwakuro was relieved of his post as advisor to the INA. As his replacement, the high command brought Col. Yamamoto, military attache in Berlin who was taking care of Netaji. Because of his diplomatic status, Yamamoto came home via the Soviet Union, at war with Germany but not with Japan. Such a route was closed to Netaji this time. Major Fujiwara, co-founder of the INA, was reassigned to the Supreme Command of Japanese Armies in the South at Singapore as liaison officer with INA officers. Thus the stage was set at last for the emergence of Subhas Chandra Bose in Greater East Asia.

3

The voyage from Berlin to Tokyo of Subhas Chandra Bose and his *aide-de-camp* was a top secret project that succeeded beautifully, thanks to the superb teamwork of the German and Japanese navies. In the jet age of 1970's, a flight from Berlin to Tokyo takes hardly twenty hours. For Netaji and his adjutant, the voyage from Germany to Japan was a tremendously perilous one that took more than ninety days. Navy experts of many nations have termed their success as a near miracle. In fact, it was not repeated for any one else throughout World War II.

German and Japanese authorities secretly and most carefully studied various possibilities of transportation for several months after Japan agreed to receive Subhas Chandra Bose in August 1942. The overland formula was ruled out first. Germany was fighting the Soviet Union on one side and Britain and its allies on the other. Serious consideration was given to the air-lift idea, since an Italian plane successfully flew from Turkey to Portou,

Inner Mongolia, about 650 kilometres west of Peking on 2 July 1942. After drafting many plans, German authorities ultimately discarded the idea of a trans-continental flight as too risky in view of the intensified patrolling activity of Allied fighters over the wide areas which had to be flown over. The only remaining possibility was in the seas — not by surface ships, but by submarines. The Japanese submarine I-30 refueled from other ships near Madagascar on 20 June 1942 and went some 10,000 nautical miles via Cape Horn, reaching Lorient, France on 2 August. It returned to Singapore two months later, but hit a mine and sank at the mouth of the port on 13 October 1942. Many of the crew members were rescued, but the submarine was lost with very important cargo of most advanced German instruments and weapons donated to Japan. I-30 displacing 1,950 tons, cruised on the surface at 16 knots (maximum 24 knots) for a 16,000-mile range of a 90-day operation. The costly loss made the Japanese Navy hesitant about sending another submarine to Europe. The German Navy was also wary, because most of the German U-boats were small and short in range.

Transshipment of passengers midway was the final compromise formula agreed upon by the two navies. But many problems had to be solved before the plan could be implemented. Submarine-to-submarine transshipment is an extremely difficult performance any time, anywhere. Especially in wartime it is very dangerous since submarines which have surfaced are helpless once spotted and attacked by enemy planes or warships. The whole project was classified by both the nations as a top secret project. Once any information about the plan leaked, all aboard the submarine were doomed. The German Navy deserve to be particularly commended for guarding the secret so successfully. The embarkation point was Kiel in north Germany.

The ciphered 'go ahead' message from Tokyo reached the Embassy in Berlin early in February 1943. The message outlined the dangerous transshipment formula and concluded with this none-too-encouraging remark: "The Ambassador is requested

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

to tell the passengers that they will be travelling at their own risk and unconditionally." Told of the contents, Netaji smiled quietly and said: "That's perfectly all right with me and my *aide-de-camp*. I am grateful to the two Governments for their extraordinary efforts." Subhas Chandra Bose and one adjutant disappeared from Berlin at the beginning of February after telling a few close friends that they were going to make a one-month trip to Vienna. The two secretly headed in an opposite direction to the U-boat base at Kiel.

Thus began Netaji's long, perilous voyage aboard a U-boat, probably of Type IX, which could make 18 knots on the surface and 7.3 to 7.7 knots when submerged. Such speeds were almost academic when U-boats operated in high seas, eluding enemy patrol ships and airplanes day and night. On 20 April 1943 Japanese submarine I-29, a sister boat identical to I-30, slipped out of Penang, Malaya, on a purportedly routine mission of hunting enemy vessels in the Indian Ocean. Certain Indian port workers were, however, intrigued to see Captain Masao Teraoka, submarine flotilla commander, going aboard the boat. A Japanese submarine on a lone wolf mission seldom carried a flotilla commander. Soon afterwards, words spread fast among Penang's large Indian community that the boat's cooks had bought a lot of supplies for making Indian meals. Next day Indian residents were murmuring to one another: "Netaji is coming here!" If any capable British spy had heard the rumours and alerted the British navy, it could easily have bagged two birds.

I-29 sped its way towards the rendezvous point in the Mozambique Channel, a comparatively safe zone near the neutral Portuguese territory. The Japanese submarine reached the position about 400 nautical miles south-south-west of Madagascar on 26 April, more than 10 hours ahead of schedule. Crew members were then told for the first time of the real mission of the sortie. All of them braced themselves up for the forthcoming ordeal. I-29, skippered by Commander Juichi Izu, roamed around the area for several hours until at last Izu and his

men spotted a small submarine emerging out of the gathering darkness. From the silhouette, they could tell that it was unmistakably a German U-boat. But the dangerous transshipment could not be handled in darkness. All aboard the Japanese boat sweated it out for many hours until the sun rose again. Then they looked around and their hearts sank. The sea was quite rough. It was out of the question for the two boats to get near, still less tranship passengers. There was no way to discuss matters because conversation by radio could be intercepted by the enemy at once. The crew of either boat at wit's end, I-29 began sailing to the north-east while the German U-boat joined the movement alongside. They could not switch off their engines for saving fuel because surfaced submarines must be prepared to dive at any moment, once spotted by the enemy.

The bizarre twin-formation manoeuvre of two surfaced submarines went on for several hours. "It was like eternity for all aboard the two boats", said Captain Teraoka who survived the war. It was a miracle that no enemy planes came swooping down to the easy targets for so many hours. "Or perhaps they saw us, but refused to take us to be enemy boats," Teraoka added, "because our manoeuvre was so fantastically naive and audacious."

The sun was setting again. Japanese officers on the surfaced deck spluttered, "Oh, No!" when they saw two men jumping overboard from the German U-boat and swimming energetically towards the Japanese. When they got near, Japanese sailors threw ropes and hauled up the two dare-devil swimmers. They were Germans — one officer and one signal-man. The officer told the Japanese that the U-boat with low fuel could not continue the voyage in that fashion. Teraoka replied that he was waiting for the rough waves to subside. The German officer heaved a sigh of relief and the signal-man began sending messages with his hands.

The two submarines continued the north-easterly voyage for

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

another 12 hours or so and April 28 dawned on the horizon. Waves were still high but neither the Japanese nor the Germans were inclined to hold on to the dangerous surfaced operation any longer. The decision was made. The two Germans rode a rubber raft dragging a strong manila hemp rope back to their boat. Then Netaji and his adjutant rode the raft and clung to the rope, inching their way amid kicking waves and lurking sharks. Netaji and his aide, both drenched to the skin, at last climbed onto the Japanese submarine. Captain Teraoka and Commander Izu personally and very warmly welcomed them aboard. The indomitable Indian leader stammered thanks as he was ushered into the narrow vessel. The German U-boat turned round and went away while Japanese officers and men waved them "*auf wiedersehen!*"

Through the entire annals of World War II, this was the only known submarine-to-submarine transfer of passengers in an area dominated by enemy air and naval strength. One other rare transshipment success was scored by the Japanese submarine I-8 to the south of the Azores in the Atlantic from a German U-boat. In this case, a radar and not passengers was transhipped. Incidentally I-8, which left Penang on 6 July 1943, became the lone submarine that safely returned to Japan in late December 1943. From the German side, one U-boat, IXC, reached Japan as a gift to the Japanese government in that year, but no German U-boat made a return trip of the 30,000-nautical-mile voyage.

So War Der U-Boot Krieg (U-boats at War) written by Harold Busch in 1955 failed to mention the historic transfer evidently because this top secret affair was not declassified by that time, but stated:

"In May 1943, the first four U-boats (U.177, U.178, U.181 and U.198, all of Type IX, 740 tons) to be sent to the Far East took on fuel and supplies from the Charlotte Schliemann at a rendezvous south-east of Madagascar and then proceeded to

Penang, where they became known as the Monsoon Group. The first to arrive was the U 178 in the following August" This decision of the German Navy obviously followed the great success in the transshipment that took place on 28 April 1943 near Madagascar.

A day after the transfer, on 29 April 1943, the crew of I-29 held a celebration party on double count — welcoming the Indian guests aboard and observing the Japanese Emperor's birthday. At the party even some *sake* (rice wine) was served. The boat's cooks did their utmost to prepare Indian meals with material acquired at Penang. The Indian guests showed no fatigue after their long, gruelling and often hair-raising voyage from Europe and at the special dinner chatted cheerfully with the Japanese hosts.

On 30 April the ship embarked on a monotonous return trip with four meals a day, — the wartime standard of the Japanese Navy. The flotilla commander's cabin was vacated for Netaji. The Indian leader tried to take exercise by moving around the narrow interior of the submarine but that was not enough to build up an appetite. From the third day, he quipped with a shy grin when the chow arrived: "Do we have to eat again, Captain Teraoka?"

After the submarine had left the British patrolling radius, it picked up a radio message for the first time from Penang. It instructed the ship to divert and land the passengers at Sabang, an isolated offshore islet north of Sumatra, because of the widespread rumours which were accurately telling of the arrival of Netaji. I-29 reached Sabang on 6 May 1943. Shortly before disembarkation, a photograph was taken of the passengers with the crew on the surfaced deck. To a print Netaji autographed, he added this note in his own hand:

It was a great pleasure to sail aboard this submarine. I am deeply grateful to the Japanese Imperial Government for

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

having made it possible. The Captain has always treated me and my *aide-de-camp* so nicely that we felt quite at home during the voyage. I hereby express my sincere thanks for the kindness shown us by all the crew members from Captain downwards. The voyage I had aboard this ship will evoke pleasant memories for the rest of my life. I believe that this will mark a milestone in our fight for victory and peace.

As I-29 readied itself for its final leg of the voyage back to its base at Penang, Netaji shook hands with Teraoka, Izu and practically all of 100 crew members, wishing them continued victories in the fight. Netaji did not know that he was looking at many of them, including Commander Izu, for the last time. Commander Izu soon was transferred as skipper of I-11 that was reported missing in the Central Pacific in January 1944. I-29 with a new skipper left Penang again in November 1943, reached Brest, France, and returned to Penang. But it was sunk by an American submarine near the Philippines on 26 July 1944 on its way to Japan. Only Teraoka and a few others survived the war.

As Netaji reached the pier, he was greeted — to his joyful surprise — by his close friend, Colonel Yamamoto, former Japanese military attache in Berlin. Netaji was more than delighted when Yamamoto introduced himself as the new head of *Hikari Kikan*, an organ of psychological warfare, which was also to function as an advisory group to the INA. Subhas Chandra Bose and his aide were taken to quarters arranged by the Navy and advised complete rest before departing again for Tokyo. "No, sir, I am not tired at all", Netaji mildly protested. "I am ready to leave any moment." His hosts smiled and bowed without saying anything more. Japan had to withdraw from Guadalcanal in the Central Pacific in February that year and was losing one bastion after another in the southern region. It was difficult to make even one aeroplane available for even very important guests.

A plane came to Sabang to pick up Netaji and his aide five days later. A short-range combat plane, it landed at numerous places for refuelling and had a one-night stop-over each at Penang, Saigon, Manila, Taipei, and Hamamatsu before reaching Tokyo on 16 May 1943. The guests were taken immediately to the Imperial Hotel, very near the Imperial Palace and the Prime Minister's office. All through the trip, the identity of Netaji and his adjutant was kept secret for security reasons. Bose was supposed to be a Japanese VIP named Matsuda.

From 17 May onwards, Netaji met Japanese Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff, Navy Minister and Foreign Minister in rapid succession. But these meetings were no more than courtesy calls for none elected to talk shop. When he asked for a meeting with Prime Minister Tojo, who was concurrently War Minister, Netaji was politely turned down. "General Tojo regrets he cannot see anyone for the time being because of pressure of work," the protocol officer of the Foreign Office stated with an embarrassed face. Subhas Chandra Bose had to wait twenty days before Tojo finally agreed to see him. Because Tojo never explained why he was so rude to the Indian leader who took enormous risks to visit Japan, many speculations have been made by authors of a number of books about Netaji but none seems to be plausible enough. That pressure of work delayed the meeting was not a mere excuse. Tojo was in fact a hurried man in those days in the midst of an aggravating and adverse war situation. The German and Italian collapse on the African front gave him a rude shock just as the German withdrawal from Stalingrad had done six months earlier.

It was an excruciating exercise in self-criticism for Tojo, a German-educated officer, to discover whether he had overestimated German strength when he decided upon Japan's entry into World War II. He was getting nervous to expressions of growing disappointment and dissatisfaction among the Japanese

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

public. And, as a matter of fact, Tojo did not know what exactly to talk to Netaji about.

Just eight days prior to Netaji's arrival in Tokyo, the Independence Preparatory Committee for Burma was organised after many months of dispute between the local Army Command and Tokyo local army officers in Burma. The latter wished to postpone the independence of Burma for tactical reasons. Tojo finally overruled their objections. He was quite unwilling to face repetitions of similar disputes with regard to the Indian issue. Moreover the Indian National Army till then hardly appeared to be an asset. It appeared to the Tokyo high command to be an ill-disciplined, overgrown outfit likely to cause trouble again. Tojo also understood that Netaji's intention was to lead the INA for an operation against India and that was quite a question to be settled by Japan. Prodded repeatedly by the Army Chief of Staff and the Foreign Minister, Tojo finally decided to see Netaji on 10 June 1943, with an open mind, or rather with a blank paper before him. Actually the meeting opened with Tojo's distinct reservations.

The long wait forced on Subhas Chandra Bose was not without its merits. During the twenty days of waiting Bose studied hard and made himself familiar with the delicate political situation in Japan. He also learned a lot about Tojo's background and personality. A few days prior to the meeting with Tojo, Rash Behari Bose visited Netaji at his hotel and cheerfully handed over to him the leadership of the Indian independence movement in the Far East. The long-time resident of Japan also delivered an elaborate briefing about Tojo and the Japanese military.

In the meeting with Tojo, Netaji conducted himself quite discreetly, watching his language and studying Tojo's reactions at every turn. Gradually he became passionate and dynamic as he dwelt on his determination to liberate India. By the time, Tojo was already enchanted by the tall, dignified and sincere Indian visitor. Netaji won Tojo's heart or rather conquered him

personally. At the first meeting, the two leaders did not go into detailed discussions. But Tojo offered to meet Netaji again four days later.

At the second meeting, Tojo took time to outline the basic concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and his policy of encouraging India to become independent. Netaji produced his trump card and asked in a straightforward manner: "Have you, sir, considered the question of sending the Japanese Army into India for the liberation campaign, if it is deemed necessary?" Tojo clamped his mouth, gulped, turned around and watched the clouded faces of the Foreign Minister and the Chief of Staff who were also present at the meeting held at his spacious office. After a long pause, the Prime Minister cleared his throat before speaking up softly: "My dear friend, I cannot answer that question offhand. You see, it involves a lot of tactical, logistic and political problems." Netaji nodded, saying, "Very well, sir." He would not pursue the subject. But the second meeting was another great success for the Indian leader. After he left, Tojo turned to Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu, saying: "He is a great Indian, fully qualified to command the INA." Shigemitsu quietly replied: "Yes, sir, I fully agree with your appraisal"

Two days later on 18 June, Subhas Chandra Bose was invited to visit the Diet (Japanese Parliament) where an unexpected but great and pleasant surprise awaited him. At the plenary assembly of Japanese legislators, Tojo declared in the course of a long speech:

We are indignant about the fact that India is still under the ruthless suppression of Britain and are in full sympathy with her desperate struggle for independence. We are determined to extend every possible assistance to the cause of India's independence. It is our belief that the day is not far off when India will enjoy freedom and prosperity after winning independence.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Tojo's assurance of extending "every possible assistance" was his answer to Netaji's important question which had been withheld at their second meeting. It was for the first time that Tojo indicated the possibility of an extension of Japanese military operations into India. Netaji's moral victory scored during his very first visit to Japan was something unparalleled. It may be pertinent to screen Tojo's background and inclinations here. Unlike Hitler and Mussolini, both self-made politicians who rose from grassroot levels, the Japanese dictator was a career military officer who never headed a political party. Tojo's status was substantially different from that of Hitler or Mussolini. It was only after he became provost-marshal of Manchukuo in 1936 that he began to shine as a sharp and stern officer. Basically a cynic, Tojo proved to be very efficient in commanding military police. His rapid rise to power thereafter, however, was largely due to accident and luck resulting from his superiors and rivals knocking each other out in personal feuds or undermining themselves with their own mistakes and blunders. Throughout his long career, Tojo never commanded a division. His only war-front experience was acquired with a brigade during a brief action in Manchukuo. His qualification to command the whole Army was challengeable. However, when he was made War Minister in 1941 he ruthlessly carried out a 'house cleaning' of the Army and successfully shunted or retired any potential rivals. Later that year, he became Prime Minister and picked only stooges for his cabinet.

Hitler and Mussolini got together from time to time, but Tojo never met them. The Japanese Prime Minister saw only leaders of Greater East Asia. None of them compared in calibre to Subhas Chandra Bose; a great personality with magnetic and almost hypnotic charm. Netaji evidently possessed such rare assets if he won over Tojo so easily in just two meetings. By June 1943, Tojo was beginning to show signs of cracking under the strain. He was becoming unsure of himself and shaky at heart. That was a mentality receptive to the influence of a

magnetic personality. That such a man of questionable quality ran Japan as a dictator must sound ridiculous and incredible to today's readers. The consensus among Japanese historians is to regard Tojo as a jockey clinging to, without controlling, a wild horse, *viz.* the military, which went its own way until it collapsed.

After attending the Japanese parliament session, Netaji dropped his veil and held a news conference in his real name on 19 June for about 60 Japanese and foreign newsmen. He said in part.

For many long years, British jails in India and Burma had been my residence. But the fact that today I am standing before you in the heart of Nippon instead of sitting idly in a prison house in India is symbolic of the new movement that is now sweeping over my country.

.. British Imperialism meant for India moral degradation, cultural ruin, economic impoverishment and political enslavement.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that the Indian people have at last solemnly resolved to end the British yoke ?

The Tripartite Powers have rendered the greatest help to India's struggle by waging war against our eternal foe. And they have earned our lasting gratitude by offering us not only sympathy but active support and assistance.

Nevertheless, it is our duty to pay for our liberty with our own blood. The freedom that we shall win, through our sacrifice and exertions, we shall be able to preserve with our own strength.

We, therefore, feel strongly that we should actively participate in the war against the common foe.

The enemy that has drawn the sword must be fought with the sword. Civil disobedience must develop into armed struggle. And only when the Indian people receive the baptism of fire on a large scale, will they qualify for their freedom.⁸

⁸ Ghanl, pp. 45

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

On the eve of his departure from Tokyo for Singapore on 23 June 1943 to take over the leadership of the independence movement, Subhas Chandra Bose received a telegram from Dr. Ba Maw, Chief of State-designate of Burma. It read :

I sincerely congratulate you on your return to the East. Your first statement issued in Tokyo deeply impressed the Indian people here and gave them courage and hope. Both Indian and Burmese peoples have long awaited this opportunity. The time has come for us to rise. Burma hereby pledges herself to fight on your side in your fight for national honour and independence.

Netaji was greatly moved by this message from a fellow-independence leader. He was quite elated to learn from Japanese friends that Burma was going to be independent soon and that Ba Maw would become its Chief of State. He eagerly looked forward to joining his Burmese comrade at the forthcoming festive occasion.

5

There were indeed many a striking resemblance between the Indian and Burmese independence leaders, but also gaping dissimilarities. Both were tall and dignified men, highly educated, famed for their passionate eloquence, with a more or less similar background of struggle against the British. But similarities end there. Bose and most other Greater East Asia leaders disappeared from the scene during or soon after the end of World War II. Ba Maw and Indonesia's Sukarno were rare exceptions who were alive in 1970. In its early stage, the Burmese independence movement followed a pattern very much like that of Netaji and the INA. Before World War II broke out, the Burmese movement was led by Dobama Asatayone or the so-called Thakin Party born in 1939 and a supra-partisan front was organised by the Freedom Bloc to which both Thakins and Ba Maw's

Sinyetha (Poor People's Party) belonged. Ba Maw, who was premier under the British governor from March 1937 to February 1939, became the Bloc's President and Aung San, the young revolutionary representing the Thakins, Secretary-General.

When the Freedom Bloc rejected the British governor's appeal for collaboration with the British war effort in 1940, the British reacted with the imprisonment of Ba Maw and about 30 other leaders. Aung San escaped and sought political asylum in Japan where he received military training. When Japan declared war against Britain, Aung San returned to Burma and with Japanese support organised the Burmese Independence Army (BIA). Col. Keiji Suzuki, head of Minami Organ, another special service unit of the Japanese Army, at his own discretion promised Aung San the grant of independence to Burma as soon as the British were ousted. Suzuki's act was another overstepping of his authority in line with what his colleagues did in Thailand *vis-a-vis* the Indian revolutionaries.

Aung San's BIA achieved much in helping the swift advance of the Japanese into Burma. The British fled so hastily that all the Burmese political prisoners were left unmolested for liberation by BIA and Japanese troops. However, Colonel Suzuki fared worse than his colleagues in Thailand. The 15th Army (actually a corps of three divisions) repudiated his note exchanged with Aung San as soon as it established its headquarters in Rangoon on 15 March 1942. The 15th Army held that independence must wait until the end of the Greater East Asia War because military tactics superseded politics. Lt. Gen. Shojito Iida, commanding general of the 15th, and his successor, Lt. Gen. Renya Mutaguchi, were generals of mediocrity, devoid of any political acumen, still less statesmanship. Their staff officers were no more capable or imaginative and were responsible for most of the mistakes and maladministration which embittered Aung San, other leaders and the Burmese people in general.

At the end of May, political officers of the 15th Army conferred with the liberated leaders of Burma and selected Ba Maw

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

as the chief executive of the Burmese government that was to function under the Japanese military administration. A majority of the Burmese leaders at the conference recommended Ba Maw for the post in view of his seniority and background. But a minority of two among them expressed strong opposition while Aung San had certain reservations. The BIA was reorganised on 31 July 1942 into the Burma Defence Army (BDA) of three battalions and Maj. Gen Aung San was appointed its commander. Another three battalions were added in April in 1943, and 15 companies on 15 July 1943 to make the BDA barely a division strong. Throughout the war, the BDA functioned as Aung San's Army. Ba Maw never succeeded in controlling, still less taking it over. Ba Maw did not receive full support from the Burmese people either, marking a contrast to the status of Netaji who was worshipped with religious fervour not only by the INA men and officers but all Indians in South-east Asia during his campaign.

Ba Maw wrote a number of lengthy articles and a voluminous memoir after the war. Here in this book, however, we should dwell more on objective accounts furnished by impartial observers rather than on his own defence. Ba Maw's party, Sinyetha, was in a minority devoid of grassroot level organisation. As a result, the Burmese leader found himself outnumbered in his cabinet by those representing the majority party of Thakins. Ba Maw picked adjutants and key officials from among his relatives, not exactly from Sinyetha. Such actions appeared to his critics and opposition as outright nepotism. Japanese observers agree that Ba Maw was a patriot in his own right. But in the eyes of the Burmese people, he often appeared to be a puppet who consolidated his position behind the shield of the Japanese military. His wife contributed to his unpopularity by emerging too often in public affairs. Two of Ba Maw's cabinet ministers were arrested, deported and imprisoned in Sumatra. Ba Maw stated that he defended them, but certain surviving Japanese officers testify that the two were ousted by the Japanese military at the instance of Ba Maw.

Japanese military officers had no infatuation for Ba Maw. Nor did they deliberately ignore the growing resentment of the Burmese people against him. But they failed to find any other Burmese personality who might command universal support. On the other hand Tokyo could no longer countenance the restive and shaky situation in Burma especially at a time when the Allies were known to be planning to stage a massive operation to wrest Burma back. Independence was the only trump card for Tokyo in the effort to appease the Burmese. Heedless of the local officers' objections, Tokyo decided upon the granting of independence early in 1943. Ba Maw, Aung San and two other cabinet ministers visited Tokyo in March 1943, and conferred with Tojo with regard to steps that should be taken in the direction of independence. During this visit, Ba Maw was decorated with the First Order of the Rising Sun, one of the highest decorations in Japan.

The long-awaited independence came at last on 1 August 1943. It was unquestionably a very memorable historical event. Burmese people forgot all dissatisfaction and personal rivalries in celebrating the occasion wholeheartedly. In the Declaration of Independence, the Burmese government acknowledged its membership of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and severance from Britain and the British empire. Ba Maw took the oath as the Chief of State, wearing traditional Burmese costume decked with the huge Japanese medal. Then Burma declared war against the Allies and concluded a treaty of alliance with Japan.

Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the guests of honour at the independence ceremony. Commemorating the occasion, Netaji addressed the Indian people and stated *inter alia* :

The independence of Burma in this momentous crisis in world history has a two-fold significance for us. It shows, in the first place, what a nation can achieve if it knows how to seize an opportunity which history has offered. Secondly, just

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

as the conquest of India supplied the British with a jumping-off ground for their attack on Burma in the nineteenth century – similarly, the emancipation of Burma has supplied the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia with a springboard for its attack on Britain's army of occupation in India during the twentieth century.

Friends, you are aware of the many promises which the British government has given to the Indian people during the course of their rule in India – promises which have always proved to be mere scraps of paper. . . . As against this example we now see that right in the midst of war, the promise of liberty made by the Prime Minister of Japan, His Excellency General Tojo, on behalf of his government and nation, has been fully redeemed. Where there is a will there is a way

The liberation of Asia cannot be complete until India is free. The Indian people must therefore rise and liberate themselves and thereby help the emancipation of other Asian nations. . . .

Meanwhile in the Philippines, which was also getting restive and troublesome, Jose P. Laurel became President on 25 September and proclaimed independence on 14 October 1943. With regard to Hong Kong, Malaya and Singapore, the Japanese military made it clear that these areas, long-time bases of the British imperialistic designs in the Far East, would stay under the Japanese military administration until the end of the Greater East Asia War. The Japanese were also reluctant to grant independence to Indonesia for tactical reasons. But in September 1944 Prime Minister Kuniaki Koiso, who succeeded Tojo, promised to make Indonesia also independent. But the Independence Preparatory Committee of Indonesia was organised as late as 9 August 1945. After the Japanese surrendered to the Allies six days later, Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed independence on 17 August 1945 by taking over the Japanese administration.

6

Accompanied by Rash Behari Bose, Netaji landed in Singapore on 27 June 1943 and began a continuous, tireless and trail-blazing campaign for organising and consolidating the Indian Independence Movement.

A week later, on 4 July, they attended a general assembly of the Indian Independence League held at a theatre in Singapore. The meeting opened with a chorus of the Indian national anthem attended by 2,000 delegates representing Indian revolutionaries from all over Greater East Asia. Then a bevy of seven young girls, beaming with pleasure, emerged on the platform and presented the two Boses with bouquets of flowers amid the thunderous applause of the enthusiastic audience. An Indian songstress, Miss Saraswati, rose and sang a newly composed impassioned song 'Subhasji ! Subhasji !' Presently Rash Behari Bose rose and reached the podium. The aged, ailing leader announced his resignation as President, marking the beginning of a new era in the history of the Indian Independence League and recommended Subhas Chandra Bose as his successor. The whole audience stood up and seconded the proposal with cheers and an ovation.

The new President of the League addressed the audience, and declared, *inter alia* :

Friends ! The time has now come for freedom-loving Indians to act. Action in a war-crisis demands, above all, military discipline as well as unflinching loyalty to the cause. I therefore call upon all my countrymen in East Asia to line up in one solid phalanx under one leadership and prepare for the grim fight that is ahead of us.....

....In the history of India's struggle, August 1942 will therefore remain an unforgettable landmark, indicating the psychological transition from passive to active resistance.....

The time has therefore come to pass on to the next phase

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

of our campaign . The aim and purpose of this organisation would be to take up arms against British Imperialism.

In order to mobilise all our forces effectively, I intend organising a Provisional Government of Free India. It will be the task of this Provisional Government to lead the Indian Revolution to a successful conclusion. When the revolution succeeds and Anglo-American Imperialism is expelled from India, the task of the Provisional Government will be over. It will then make room for a permanent Government to be set up inside India in accordance with the will of the Indian people.

Netaji also made the following remarkable point :

By shedding our blood in a sacred cause, we shall be paying the price of liberty and, at the same time, we shall be laying the only enduring foundation for our national unity. And last but not the least, by winning freedom through our own efforts and sacrifice we shall be acquiring the strength whereby we shall preserve our liberty for all time.

He concluded his speech by enunciating :

.... We have a grim fight ahead of us — for the enemy is powerful, unscrupulous and ruthless. In the final march to freedom — you will have to face hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death. Only when you pass this test, will freedom be yours. I am confident that you will do so and thereby bring freedom and prosperity to your enslaved and impoverished land⁴

The audience was captivated by Netaji's fighting speech, brimming with passion and sincerity.

After the general assembly was over, Netaji and Rash Behari Bose paid a courtesy call to General Count Juichi Terauchi,

⁴ Giani, pp. 15-19.

Commander-in-Chief, Supreme Command of Japanese Armies in the South, at his headquarters in Singapore. Terauchi was in good humour, notwithstanding adversities on the war fronts under his command, when he received the two Indian leaders. The aristocratic general, who had also studied in Germany after graduation from the Japanese War College, conversed with Netaji in German. It was evident that Terauchi came to like Netaji at once. Terauchi's friendly feelings towards Netaji continued unchanged until his death from illness shortly after the Japanese surrender. This is important to note, because Terauchi was widely recognised as a man of calibre. One time War Minister and potential candidate for the Prime Minister's post, Terauchi was one of the few exceptional generals who could talk to Tojo on an equal footing.

Next day Netaji took over the command of the Indian National Army and reviewed 13,000 officers and men who lined up under the scorching tropical sun at the city square. In a stirring and historic speech delivered on the occasion, Bose adequately expressed his philosophy. Because this speech seems to hold answers to questions which are bound to arise with regard to later developments, the full text is quoted below :

Soldiers of India's Army of Liberation! Today is the proudest day of my life. Today it has pleased Providence to give me the unique privilege and honour of announcing to the whole world that India's army of liberation has come into being. This army has now been drawn up in military formation on the battlefield of Singapore — which was once the bulwark of the British empire. This is not only the army that will emancipate India from the British yoke, it is also the army that will, hereafter, create the future national army of Free India. Every Indian must feel proud that this army — his own army — has been organised entirely under Indian leadership and that when the historic moment arrives, under Indian leadership it will go to battle.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

There are people who thought at one time that the empire on which the sun did not set, was an everlasting empire. No such thought ever troubled me. History had taught me that every empire has its inevitable decline and collapse. Moreover, I had seen with my own eyes, cities and fortresses that were once the bulwarks, but which became the graveyards, of bygone empires. But standing today on the graveyard of the British empire, even a child is convinced that the almighty British empire is already a thing of the past.

When France declared war on Germany in 1939 and the campaign began, there was but one cry which rose from the lips of German soldiers — 'To Paris, To Paris!' When the brave soldiers of Nippon set out on their march in December 1941, there was but one cry which rose from their lips — 'To Singapore, To Singapore!' Comrades! My soldiers! Let your battle-cry be — 'To Delhi, To Delhi!' How many of us will individually survive this war of freedom, I do not know. But I do know this, that we shall ultimately win and our task will not end until our surviving heroes hold the victory-parade on another graveyard of the British empire — the *Lal Kila* or Red Fortress of ancient Delhi.

Throughout my public career, I have always felt that though India is otherwise ripe for independence in every way, she has lacked one thing — namely, an army of liberation. George Washington of America could fight and win freedom because he had his army. Garibaldi could liberate Italy, because he had his armed volunteers behind him. It is your privilege and honour to be the first to come forward and organise India's National Army. By doing so, you have removed the last obstacle in our path to freedom. Be happy and proud that you are the pioneers — the vanguard — in such a noble cause.

Let me remind you that you have a two-fold task to perform. With the force of arms and at the cost of your blood you will have to win liberty. Then, when India is free, you

will have to organise the permanent army of Free India, whose task it will be to preserve our liberty for all time. We must build up our national defence on such an unshakable foundation that never again in our history shall we lose our freedom.

As soldiers, you will always have to cherish and live up to the three ideals of faithfulness, duty and sacrifice. Soldiers who always remain faithful to their nation, who perform their duty under all circumstances and who are always prepared to sacrifice their lives, are invincible. If you, too, want to be invincible, engrave these three ideals in the inmost core of your hearts.

A true soldier needs both military and spiritual training. You must — all of you — so train yourselves and your comrades that every soldier will have unbounded confidence in himself, will be conscious of being immensely superior to the enemy, will be fearless of death, and will have sufficient initiative to act on his own in any critical situation, should the need arise. During the course of the present war, you have seen with your own eyes what wonders, scientific training, coupled with courage, fearlessness and dynamism, can achieve. Learn all that you can from this example and build up for Mother India an absolutely first-class modern army.

To those of you who are officers, I should like to say that your responsibility is a heavy one. Though the responsibility of an officer in every army in this world is indeed great, it is far greater in your case. Because of our political enslavement, we have no tradition like that of Mukden, Port Arthur or Sedan to inspire us. We have to unlearn some of the things that the British taught us and we have to learn much that they did not teach. Nevertheless, I am confident that you will rise to the occasion and fulfill the task that your countrymen have thrown on your brave shoulders. Remember always that officers can make or unmake an army. Remember, too, that the British have suffered defeats on so many fronts, largely because of worthless officers. And remember also that out of

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

your ranks will be born the future General Staff of the Army of Free India.

To all of you I should like to say that in the course of this war, you will have to acquire the experience and achieve the success which alone can build up a national tradition for our army in future. An army that has no tradition of courage, fearlessness and invincibility, cannot hold its own in a struggle with a powerful enemy.

Comrades ! You have voluntarily accepted a mission that is the noblest that the human mind can conceive of. For the fulfilment of such a mission, no sacrifice is too great — not even the sacrifice of one's life. You are today the custodians of India's national honour and the embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations. So conduct yourself that your countrymen may bless you and posterity may be proud of you.

I have said that today is the proudest day of my life. For an enslaved people, there can be no greater pride, no higher honour, than to be the first soldier in the army of liberation. But this honour carries with it a corresponding responsibility and I am deeply conscious of it. I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present, I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death. But if you follow me in life and in death — as I am confident you will — I shall lead you to victory and freedom. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God now bless our army and grant us victory in the coming fight ! !

Inqalab Zindabad ! Azad Hind Zindabad ! ⁵

The speech literally overwhelmed the officers and men of the INA. Everyone of them knew deep in his heart that they had a real great leader. General Terauchi and his staff officers were also deeply impressed. No better timing for the delivery of the speech could have been conceived. Prime Minister Tojo was making a tour of South-east Asia right at the time and landed

⁵ Giani, pp. 20-21.

in Singapore on 6 July, that is, just a day after Netaji won the hearts of 13,000 officers and men of the INA and also the Japanese officers.

In the briefings to Tojo, Terauchi's staff spared no words in praising Netaji's dynamic capabilities and described with awe the Indian leader's unimpeachable private life. Ono colonel stated: "This Indian leader lives 24 hours of every day only in completely disinterested dedication to the cause of his country's emancipation. He is stoicism itself and has not shown any interest in the common pleasures of life." Tojo, who had been preaching austerity to the Japanese, nodded approvingly and commented: "I am glad that my judgment was correct. When I met him for the first time in Tokyo, I felt I was looking at a man of really great calibre." Terauchi expressed concurrence and then spoke up: "He brought up the pending issue of the provisional government. Personally I am now inclined to support it. What do you think?" Tojo replied at once. "I am for it now. The situation has changed a lot in the past several months." The Prime Minister chose to forget all his displeasure at the manner of other Indian leaders in abruptly submitting their 60-point demand 14 months ago. By referring to the change in situation, Tojo was thinking of or rather brooding over Burma's restive mood, Thai Prime Minister Pibulsonggram's growing ambiguity in his collaboration with Japan and all the unfavourable developments in other parts of South-east Asia and China.

Soon after he came out of the conference with Terauchi's staff, Tojo met Netaji and stated: "You may go ahead with the establishment of your provisional government. With regard to routine and formalities, will you please coordinate your views with General Terauchi's command and also the Tokyo government?" Flushed with joy, Netaji asked: "Mr. Prime Minister, how about my other question at our last meeting in Tokyo?" Tojo grinned rather wryly as he answered: "General Terauchi is in charge of all operations in this region. Imperial Head-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

quarters in Tokyo will certainly respect his recommendations.” Netaji nodded with a broad smile. The possibility of his INA driving into India rose considerably.

Tojo accepted Netaji's invitation to review the INA and also his request for substantial supplies of arms for toning it up. On 9 July, all Indian residents of Singapore gathered at a rally — in order to demonstrate their solidarity to the visiting Japanese Prime Minister. At this rally Netaji again made an important speech, saying, *inter alia* —

. You will now realise that the time has come for the three million Indians living in East Asia to mobilise all their available resources — including money and manpower. Half-hearted measures will not do. I want total mobilisation and nothing less — for we have been told repeatedly, even by our enemies, that this is a total war . . .

. . . Out of this total mobilisation, I expect at least three hundred thousand soldiers and three crores — that is thirty millions — of dollars. I also want a unit of brave Indian women to form a 'Death-defying Regiment' who will wield the sword which the brave Rani of Jhansi wielded in India's First War of Independence in 1857.

Friends! We have for a long time been boasting so much of the second front in Europe. But our countrymen at home are now hard-pressed and they are demanding a second front. Give me total mobilisation in East Asia and I promise you a second front — a real second front for the Indian struggle.

The response of the local Indian population was enthusiastic and instantaneous. Almost every Indian resident donated money and valuables to Netaji and the women's auxiliary corps of the INA was created quickly.

Netaji's decision to make the INA Asia's first regular army to accept women in its ranks bewildered old-fashioned Japanese officers. Traditionally the Japanese considered war to be men's business and refused to establish women's auxiliary corps.

Women nurses of the Red Cross took part in a number of Japanese operations but they were not treated as members of the army or navy. Chinese guerrillas, who opposed the Japanese sometimes operated with women soldiers. But no other regular army was known to have recruited women or accepted women volunteers until Netaji made the decision. Some Japanese officers expressed misgivings, saying they did not wish to see the inclusion of women cause laxity of discipline in the INA. Later developments and the complete absence of any such laxity in the INA effaced all such misgivings and enhanced Japanese respect for Netaji's leadership.

With regard to Netaji's canvassing for funds, it is necessary to refer back to the final paragraph of the note exchanged between Colonel Tamura and Pritam Singh in 1941. It read :

(f) The Japanese Army will make available whatever materials and funds are needed to carry on I.I.L. activities at the request of Pritam Singh. The I.I.L. will be at liberty to receive donations offered voluntarily by those Indians residing in the areas of Japanese military operations.

In his meeting with Netaji in Singapore, Tojo endorsed the old note and gave Netaji a free hand in collecting funds from Indian residents of South-east Asia. That was a very important agreement.

If the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere was to function as a common market of self-sufficiency as it was originally conceived, Japan had to rely on the cooperation of Chinese, Indian and Jewish businessmen in the sphere. These businessmen played an important role in the economies of countries concerned. That was one of the reasons why the Japanese military did not share Hitler's anti-Semitism. Without cooperation from Jewish businessmen, Japan could not manage, for example, Hong Kong and Shanghai. With regard to overseas Chinese, who controlled business in Indo-china, Indonesia and Singapore,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the Japanese military had to learn a lesson at a high price. Some hotheaded army officers, notwithstanding the policy of the High Command, rounded up and executed many Chinese who allegedly refused to collaborate with the Japanese in Singapore. Japan paid indemnity for the sins and crimes committed in Singapore for many years after the war. Indian businessmen were also active all over South-east Asia. Especially strong were about one million Indians who lived in Burma and virtually controlled its economy and finance. About two million other Indian businessmen were also well established in Bangkok, Saigon, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and many other towns of the region.

Subhas Chandra Bose left Singapore on 20 July for Rangoon in order to attend Burma's independence ceremony. On the way, he stopped over in Bangkok, trying to meet Thai Prime Minister Marshal Luang Pibulsonggram. But Netaji failed to see Thailand's leader on this visit. The Prime Minister was out of town, said his secretaries apologetically. The Indian leader fixed an appointment for his second visit to Bangkok on his way back from Rangoon. There were indications that the Thai leader was rather reluctant to see the explosive Indian revolutionary. Pibulsonggram was the first South-east Asian leader to collaborate with the Japanese when the Pacific War broke out, but got wary and evasive after the tide of the war turned. He gradually brought Thai collaboration with the Japanese to a low gear, thereby trying to protect his nation's interest.

The visit to Rangoon gave Netaji the stimulating experience of sharing with the Burmese their exultation over independence and also of talking with a gathering of enthusiastic Indian youths in town. But the visit was not without a sour note. Netaji's informal request for making Rangoon the seat of the Indian Provisional Government was not agreed to by Ba Maw, Burma's Chief of State. The reluctance was not motivated by Ba Maw's personal jealousy of Netaji's popularity but was the result of Burma's deep-rooted antipathy towards Indians. Since the massive immigration of 7,000 Bengali farmers into Burma

in 1874, Indian immigrants, by working harder than Burmese natives, had steadily built up their position and by 1930 held an upper-hand over the natives in both commercial and industrial spheres. Burmese nationalism was definitely against the revival of Indian supremacy. Netaji had to negotiate for months painfully and patiently with the Burmese government – with the full support of the Japanese military – for gaining the entry of the Indian Provisional Government along with the INA troops into Rangoon on the condition that Indians would never try to interfere in the internal affairs of Burma.

From Rangoon he went back to Bangkok on 4 August and succeeded in meeting Prime Minister Pibulsonggram. The leader of Thailand, the only country in Southeast Asia which maintained independence while neighbouring countries were being colonised by European powers, was a small, inscrutable man, but quite powerful. He was affable in his talks with Netaji but hardly committed to anything. Netaji, however, won the Thai leader's tacit consent to the INA passing through Thailand to Burma, once the latter's permission was obtained. At Bangkok too Netaji worked round the clock and addressed a gathering of Indian residents exhorting them to intensify the fight against Britain.

On 9 August, Netaji flew to Saigon, where he conferred with the Japanese Ambassador and high Japanese army officers. Here again he attended and addressed a rally of some 1,000 Indian residents. Many hundred miles away from the foremost battleground, Saigon appeared peaceful and prosperous. Because it served as the relay point of Japanese reinforcements to the south, the city was teeming with fresh soldiers and war materials. It was an encouraging sight for Netaji who had observed a greyish mood at both Rangoon and Bangkok. He did not know that about that time the Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo made the fateful decision of authorising the Southern Command at Singapore to prepare for an all-out offensive from Burma against India.

Subhas Chandra Bose returned to Singapore on 14 August 1943 from a whirlwind and gruelling tour of East Asia — Bangkok, Rangoon, Bangkok again and Saigon — not for rest but for intensified activities. He addressed another great Indian rally held in Singapore in commemoration of the first anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest by the British. The women's corps as well as all Indian residents, including many children, marched through the main streets of the port city to the rally.

Twelve days later on 26 August Netaji received at his official residence two surprise guests — Maj. Gen. Todai Kunomura, Chief of Staff of the 15th Army, accompanied by Maj. Iwachi Fujiwara, the INA's foster-father, who had been re-assigned as intelligence officer of the 15th Army. They were visiting Singapore to attend a tactical conference with Terachi's staff. For several of Netaji's staff officers also present at the meeting, Fujiwara's visit meant a joyful reunion. Bose most cordially thanked Fujiwara for everything he had done for the cause of Indian independence. He and his staff officers were quite pleased to hear of Fujiwara's reassignment to Burma after having been shunted out following Mohan Singh's rebellion.

Netaji felt sorry for Mohan Singh and, in fact, had already visited him secretly at a Sumatra prison to cheer him up. Mohan Singh stayed in the prison until the end of World War II. Fujiwara was aware of Netaji's concern about the prisoner but did not discuss the subject. He and his general had come with a more important news. After an exchange of friendly greetings, Kunomura solemnly revealed the Japanese decision of 12 August to 'prepare' for the Imphal Operation, an all-out offensive against the British in India. He added that his commanding general Mutaguchi wished to carry out the operation in close cooperation with the INA. Netaji listened to Kunomura with deep concentration. As Kunomura finished his representation, Netaji's tense and serious expression was transformed into a broad smile. He held Kunomura's hands and expressed his com-

plete satisfaction and also profound appreciation of Mutaguchi's offer. He became so enthusiastic that he could no longer wait for the tedious translator's service, but switched to the German language, talking directly with the general. He had learnt that Kunomura was also formerly in Germany as military attache. Bose expressed his fervent desire to see his INA spearhead the Japanese thrust into India. He declared that if INA troops entered India ahead of their Japanese allies, he felt convinced that the Indian people would welcome them and coordinate their uprisings against the British with the action from outside. Kunomura, a meek, intellectual type of a man, nodded suavely and promised to relay Netaji's wishes to Mutaguchi. Netaji was so excited that he continued an uncontrollable fusillade of tactical questions and opinions as if the Imphal operation was already a definite plan. Kunomura tried his utmost to be amiable and affable, but could not answer or comment on the torrent of questions and opinions.

Netaji was a fireball when he attended another rally of 15,000 Indians at Penang on 3 September and held them spellbound for hours together with a most brilliant speech. Elated and exalted, Netaji really looked like a great prophet. As soon as his speech was concluded, all the people raced to reach the platform and pile up all they had before him — a total of 2 million dollars. It was indeed one of Netaji's most successful and glorious organising acts.

Five days later, however, Netaji, back at Singapore, heard the news of Italy's surrender to the Allies. Even this news of grave disaster failed to dampen the spirit of the indomitable leader. He immediately issued a statement criticising those Indians who were victims of British propaganda. He made the forthright statement that the British had ceased to be a world power and that whether Axis powers won or lost the war, Britain would go down in any case. Italy's debacle only spurred Netaji's preparations for the establishment of the Provisional Government of Free India.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

On 21 October 1943 about 1,000 Indian representatives from all over the Far East assembled in Singapore and unanimously adopted his proposal for the establishment of the Provisional Government, and elected him as the chief executive of the Government.⁶ Netaji issued a statement, that read :

As a student of history and, in particular, of revolutions in different parts of the world, during 22 years of public life, I always felt that what India was lacking in her fight for freedom were two things — a National Army and a National Government to lead that army to battle. In the course of the present war, thanks to the brilliant victories achieved by the armed forces of Nippon it became possible for Indians in East Asia to organise the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army.

The creation of a National Army gave reality and seriousness to the whole Independence Movement in East Asia. If this army had not been organised, the Independence League in East Asia would have been a mere propaganda organ. With the creation of the National Army it became possible as well as necessary to set up a Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India). The Government is born out of the Independence League for the purpose of launching and directing the final struggle for India's freedom.

In setting up this Provisional Government we are, on the one hand, meeting the exigencies of the Indian situation and are, on the other, following in the footsteps of history. In recent times, the Irish people set up their Provisional Government in 1916. The Czechs did the same during the last World War. And, after the last World War, the Turks, under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal, set up their Provisional Government in Anatolia.

In our case, the Provisional Government of Azad Hind will

⁶ See Appendix for text of Proclamation.

not be like a normal peace-time government. Its functions and its composition will be of a unique kind. It will be a fighting organisation, the main object of which will be to launch and to conduct the last war against the British and their allies in India. Consequently, only such departments will be run by the Government as will be necessary for the launching and the prosecution of the struggle for liberty.

The Cabinet will consist of a certain number who will represent the civil departments of the Government — while there will be others representing the armed forces of the Government. Since the purpose of the Government is to fight for independence, the armed forces have been given a larger representation on the Cabinet

Besides the ordinary Ministers of the Cabinet, provision has been made for a number of advisers to the Cabinet. In this manner, the Provisional Government will maintain close and organic connection with the entire Indian community in East Asia and mobilise all their resources for the coming struggle.

When the Provisional Government is transferred to Indian soil, it will assume the functions of a normal government operating in its own territory. Many new departments will then be started.

With the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, the Indian Independence Movement has obtained all the preconditions of success. It remains now to start the final struggle for freedom. This will begin when the Indian National Army crosses the frontier of India and commences its historic march to Delhi. This march will end only when the Anglo-Americans are expelled from India and the Indian National Flag is hoisted over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi."

The Japanese government's official recognition of Netaji's Provisional Government came two days later on 23 October.

On the following day, the Provisional Government of Free India declared war on Britain and the U.S.A. as its first sovereign act. The Supreme Command of Japanese in the South headed by Terauchi, since promoted to the rank of Field Marshal, issued a statement, pledging to provide full support to the Indian Independence Movement and declaring that Japan had no territorial or economic designs on India. Two days later, Netaji, accompanied by Generals Chatterji and Bhonsle, left Singapore for Tokyo for attending the Greater East Asia Conference that was held in Tokyo on 5 and 6 November 1943.

Historians agree that this conference was a failure in its purpose of convincing the world of Japan's disinterested aim of establishing a free East Asia and of the solidarity of the leaders of the region. The conference was eclipsed by the meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek held eighteen days later at Cairo and their joint statement renouncing territorial designs on the part of the Allies. Had the Tokyo conference been held more than a year or at least six months earlier, it might have achieved something. Why was it not held earlier? "No one to the best of my knowledge recommended it to Tojo, before I did in March 1943 upon winding up my first fact-finding tour of South-east Asia," stated Lt. Gen. Seizo Aisue who became G2 or the top intelligence officer early in that year and who is now president of the Japanese Veterans Association. Aisue said further :

' On the basis of my findings, I considered it important for Japan to enunciate a policy renouncing territorial or economic designs, thereby refuting enemy propaganda accusing Japan of waging a war of aggression. I was concerned about a growing number of neutral nations that came down the fence to go over to the Allied side. I also thought that this kind of a conference was needed to cement the solidarity of the leaders of South-east Asia. I recommended to Tojo to hold the conference at Bandung, Indonesia, in view of its convenient loca-

tion for a gathering of South-east Asian leaders, its vicinity to the Equator made it easy to diffuse shortwave broadcasts all over the world, its adequate conference facilities as well as the rather cool climate of the place because of its elevation. No, I did not dream at all that the first Afro-Asian conference under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru would take place at this place twelve years later and go down in history as a significant achievement."

Tojo shelved Aizawa's recommendation for three months. After he returned in July from Singapore, where he met Bose and Terauchi, he decided to hold the conference in November in Tokyo, not Bandung. Tojo's choice of Tokyo as the venue is generally interpreted to reflect his lack of statesmanship. Almost every month in 1943, Tojo flew to countries of Greater East Asia to meet their leaders. His trips were always very short, seldom lasting more than four days as when he visited both Bangkok and Singapore in July. Evidently Tojo regarded the conference, on the same footing as the short monthly trips, as a political stunt intended for home consumption, rather than an appeal to the world. He was getting uneasy about his position for he knew that both Imperial Court circles and senior statesmen were trying to topple his regime.

Thailand's strong man Pibulsonggram refused to attend the conference and sent a proxy—a powerless figurehead named Prince Wan Waithayakon. Ba Maw attended it but hardly represented the general will of the Burmese people. Another participant, Jose P. Laurel, President of the Philippines, was no more popular among his fellow-countrymen. Anti-Japanese guerillas, with weapons furnished by America, were beginning to be active all over the Philippines. China's Nanking regime was represented by its head, Wang Ching-wei, formerly Chiang Kai-shek's chief administrator, who broke with Chungking a little before the Pacific War broke out. Wang's government declared war against the Allies on 9 January 1943 thereby virtually blocking

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

any further Japanese attempt at any rapprochement with Chiang who was supported by the Allies. Manchukuo was represented by a man of lesser calibre, Piemai Chang Ching-hui, who actually was the grand chamberlain to Emperor Pu Yi. None of them matched Subhas Bose in calibre. As a result, the conference in substance turned out to be Netaji's conference, although he participated in it as an observer, India being outside of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.

Three days prior to the conference, the German Ambassador Heinrich Stahmer made an official call on Netaji and notified him of the German recognition of his government. Stahmer also attended the conference as another observer.

The Conference adopted the Greater East Asia Joint Declaration, which said nothing new. Towards the end of the agenda, Ba Maw moved a motion to "extend full sympathy and support to the Indian struggle for freedom" which was seconded by all the other delegates. Netaji took the floor, thanked his colleagues for the resolution and said in the course of a great speech :

This is not a conference for dividing the spoils among the conquerors. This is not a conference for hatching a conspiracy to victimize a weak power, nor is it a conference for trying to defraud a weak neighbour. This is an assembly of liberated nations, an assembly that is out to create a new order in this part of the world, on the basis of the sacred principles of justice, national sovereignty, reciprocity in international relations and mutual aid and assistance.

We must not forget that all these dreams of a new world, of a new Asia, of a new, free and prosperous Greater East Asia depend entirely on our ability to achieve victory in this war. So far as India is concerned our fate is indissolubly linked up with the fate of Nippon and her allies in this war. If our allies were to go down, there will be no hope for India to be free for at least 100 years. But we know that this time Providence, fate, and luck are on our side, and I want to assure Your

Excellency and Excellencies that we, the Indian people, having waited all our life for an international crisis of this sort, are determined to make the fullest use of this opportunity for achieving the final emancipation of our country.⁷

Netaji delivered the speech with tears in his eyes. There was no doubt that this speech was the highlight of the whole conference proceedings.

Prime Minister Tojo concluded the conference by declaring .

As is evident from our repeated statements, Japan stands ready to offer every possible assistance to India to realise its long-cherished dream of freedom. In view of the fact that the Provisional Government of Free India has now been firmly established and Indian patriots have closed their ranks and rallied round the Provisional Government of Free India, thereby strengthening its position, I would like to announce here and now that Japan is ready to transfer the Andaman and the Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India in the near future.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands form an archipelago extending like stepping stones between Burma and Sumatra in the Bay of Bengal. Their total area of about 8,100 square kilometres was inhabited by about 33,000 people. The transfer, implemented a month later, made Netaji's government a sovereign entity over these islands.

The day after the conference closed, Netaji addressed a Japanese rally held in Tokyo, saying, *inter alia* :

For Indians the return of the Andaman and Nicobar islands represents the first territory to be liberated from the British yoke. By the acquisition of this territory, the Provisional Government has now become a national entity in fact as well as

⁷ *Said Subhas Bose*, Ed. Amar Lahiri, Calcutta: 1947, pp. 43-58.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

in name. The liberation of the Andamans has symbolic significance because the Andamans was always used by the British as a prison for political prisoners. Most of the political prisoners sentenced to penal servitude for conspiracies to overthrow the British Government — and there have been hundreds of them — were locked up in this island. Like the Bastille in Paris, which was liberated first in the French Revolution, setting free political prisoners, the Andamans where our patriots suffered is the first to be liberated in India's fight for independence. Part by part, Indian territory will be liberated, but it is always the first piece of territory that has the most significance. We have renamed Andamans as *Shaheed* in memory of the martyrs and the Nicobars as *Swaraj*.

We are now about to launch an armed struggle: I want to tell my comrades and my compatriots who are still groaning under the British yoke that we now have all the means needed for the liberation of our motherland. All that remains is to fight and win freedom. Instead of establishing the headquarters of the Provisional Government of Free India on the Andaman or Nicobar Islands, I will move it along with the marching Indian National Army.⁸

In the subsequent one week of his stay in Tokyo, Netaji kept himself quite busy, as usual conferring daily with Japanese leaders. When he met Dr. Shumei Okawa, an ultra-nationalist Japanese philosopher who had made certain studies of India, Netaji stupefied Okawa by suggesting that he would if necessary join hands with Russia or the 'devil himself' for the purpose of defeating the British. Okawa later said that he found Netaji to be a man devoted entirely to the cause of Indian independence, and not at all a pro-Nazi politician as some of his critics insinuated.

⁸ Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose, Publications Division, Government of India, Delhi: 1965, p. 211.

Netaji took time off his rigid schedule to call on Rash Behari Bose on his sick bed and also on Indian students studying in Japan.

In his negotiations with the Japanese military he obtained numerous promises but failed to get them fully implemented because of Japan's own hardships and adversities in war.

On 17 November 1943 he flew from Tokyo to Nanking on an invitation extended by Wang Ching-wei. His four-day schedule at Nanking was again packed with many engagements day and night. At a rare pause for private conversation, Wang expressed wonder at Netaji's living like a saint without ever caring for the common pleasures of life. Netaji only smiled, but did not reply. Netaji's puritanic life continued to amaze other national leaders and Japanese military officers. That was one other reason why he was respected without reservation by all who knew him.

He moved from Nanking to Shanghai on 21 November and met Indian residents of China's biggest commercial port. The visit was more successful than he anticipated, for many Indian youths volunteered to join his INA. Now fully familiar with Japan's dire shortage of shipping, Netaji had to decline the offer with regret. Next day he flew to Manila where he concentrated his efforts in raising donations for his government from among the Indian residents, but without much success. The resources of Indian merchants in the long-time American colony were quite small compared to those of other South-east Asian cities. He returned to Singapore on 25 November for urgent conferences with his cabinet ministers and military aides to decide upon policy measures and strategic plans. On 10 December Netaji left Singapore again for another whirlwind tour of Indonesia and met as many Indians as possible at Djakarta, Surabaya and a number of other towns in Borneo and Sumatra in the course of a week. Thus the leader with inexhaustible energy kept himself on the move continuously. In a matter of less than five months, he covered practically the whole of East Asia in spite of all wartime handicaps and difficulties. He won

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the hearts of the three million Indians living in the region. On 29 December, he visited the Andaman Islands to officially take the area over as the sovereign territory of the Provisional Government of Free India. He appointed Lt. Col. A. D. Loganathan as Chief Commissioner of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

8

The Imphal Operation was the final offensive of the East Asia War, mounted by three Burma-based Japanese divisions and one INA division. Imphal, in Manipur Province of India, was the main Allied base near the Burmese border. The campaign lasted from 15 March to 9 July 1944. The operation has often been compared to the operation Wacht am Rhein or the Battle of the Bulge which was the final all-out drive launched by Germany towards Ardennes on the Western front from December 1944 to January 1945. Both operations almost succeeded and both are termed 'gamblers' by historians today. If the German push towards Ardennes was called Wacht am Rhein, the Japanese-Indian thrust against Imphal might be called 'Wacht am Chindwin', although the official Japanese code name for the action was most prosaic — Operation 'U'.

The official history of the British Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War compiled by the Combined Inter-Services Historical Section (India and Pakistan) published in 1958 says :

Soon after the completion of the Japanese conquest of Burma in June 1942, a certain Lieutenant-Colonel Hayashi had advocated an attack on Imphal. He considered that the Japanese should strike against India without giving time to the defenders to recuperate from their disastrous retreat, and Imphal's capture would rob them of the best base for launching a counter-offensive against Burma. . . . 18th Division argued that the jungles of Burma were impassable for large bodies of operational troops and that any attack on Indian

territory would provoke anti-Japanese feelings in India. About December 1942, therefore, the plan was abandoned. When in April 1943 the plan was revived, it secured the support of Lieut-General Mutaguchi, Commander of the 18th Division. The exploits of the Chindits had convinced him that the jungle was not impassable for well-trained troops, and the leaders of the Indian National Army had repeatedly declared that they and their Japanese allies would be welcomed as liberators of India. In view of these two major factors, Lieut-General Mutaguchi pressed for an attack to destroy the threat to Burma, rather than wait for the Allied attack and fight defensive battles on the thinly held fronts. He had been appointed the Commander of Japanese Fifteenth Army in March 1943, hence his views naturally carried greater weight. A reconnaissance of the Chindwin area also showed that the river was easily passable by rafts during the dry season.

"Imperial Headquarters at Tokyo was keen to produce a spectacular victory to offset the effects on civilian morale of the Japanese defeats in the Pacific. Moreover, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose strongly favoured attack by the Indian National Army (then about to be re-formed) and the Japanese army to liberate India. .

The official Indo-Pakistani version went on :

The Japanese were once more faced with the crucial choice between a purely defensive and an offensive-defensive strategy. They could either devote their limited resources in plugging holes in the extensive fronts from week to week, switching their troops from this sector to that as each threat became dangerous. This defensive strategy might at best only postpone the Allied reconquest of Burma till the available Japanese troops had been decimated by attrition. The alternative was to seize the initiative by a bold stroke and hurl back the numerous Allied armies closing in on them by a threat to India.. .

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

If this plan succeeded, the Allied threat to Burma would be removed for many a long month, and the world would be stupefied by another dazzling Japanese victory. Of course, they realised that failure would be disastrous. But, nurtured as they were on Clausewitz's ideal of the *Feldherr*, and the 'Radical Solution' to all war problems, they still chose the heavier gamble. The fact that they came within an inch of success must be considered ample vindication of their German strategic doctrines.

The Indian-Pakistan records and observations were their own, not corroborated by official Japanese records and analysis. An unofficial theory held widely by the Japanese is to regard the Imphal operation as a brain-child of Netaji, who with his tremendous influence dragged the Japanese military into the disastrous adventure. An unofficial Indian theory, also circulating widely, holds that INA soldiers were expended like pawns in the wanton and reckless Japanese operation. Neither theory seems to be based on facts. Terachi's staff in Singapore drew up a plan in August 1942 of throwing two divisions against Imphal and another against Ledo for the primary purpose of cutting the Allied route of supplies to Chungking. Tokyo's Imperial Headquarters found the plan quite fuzzy and directed Singapore to re-examine and draft the formula, then called 'Operation 21' on 22 August 1942 but rescinded the directive on 23 November 1942, saying that it was "unfeasible for the time being".

British Brigadier Charles Wingate's airborne expedition to Upper Burma in February 1943 changed the 18th Division Commander Lt. Gen. Kenya Mutaguchi's concept of jungles. After he was promoted to the Command of the 15th Army (actually a corps of three divisions), he began to seek the revival of Operation 21. Mutaguchi led the 18th Division when it triumphantly spearheaded the drive against Singapore in the initial stages of the war. In his memory was only the "invincible,

glorious Japanese Army". A man of unusual persistence, his enthusiasm was only roused to fanatical heights, instead of quenched, by criticism or reservations expressed by other generals in the 15th Army. He replaced his chief of staff, sent two divisions commanded by his critics to Upper Burma, and asked for reinforcements for use in the Imphal operation. Mutaguchi's passionate persistence gradually prevailed over his immediate superiors in the overall Burma Command in Rangoon, then Singapore and eventually Tokyo. In wartime atmosphere, fist-shaking swashbucklers' voices tended to silence those of moderation and reason.

Tokyo agreed to provide Burma with reinforcements for use in Operation 'U' when it issued the directive for 'preparations' in August 1943. But shipping shortage and other setbacks slowed down the implementation. Scepticism grew at Imperial Headquarters. In October, War Minister Tojo transferred Lt. Gen. Kitsuju Ayabe, G1 or top operations officer at the General Staff, to Singapore as Terauchi's deputy chief of staff. Ayabe was instructed to 'realistically reappraise' the Imphal Operation formula, but was also reminded by Tojo that Netaji's return to India could produce a very important political impact. Ayabe was another German-educated officer who graduated from Japan's War College at the top of his class. After two months of study and fact-finding, Ayabe swallowed Mutaguchi's formula. Ayabe did not see his predecessor, Lt. Gen. Shinichi Tanaka, a strong critic of Mutaguchi, then commanding the 18th Division at Myitkyina, obviously because Tanaka was banished to Burma in 1942 after quarrelling with Tojo.

In December, Ayabe, accompanied by two staff officers, went to Tokyo to ask for execution orders of the Operation. They painted a rosy picture of the planned operation and obtained Tojo's sanction on the New Year's eve. Execution orders became official on 7 January 1944. The decision coincided with the entry of Netaji's Provisional Government of Free India into Rangoon with a vanguard unit of the INA, the consent of the Burmese

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Government having been obtained after four months of negotiations. In the evening, Lt. Gen. Masakazu Kawabe, commanding the overall Burma headquarters, held a welcome party in honour of Netaji and his staff officers. Netaji concluded his speech with these words : "My only prayer to the Almighty at this moment is that we may be given the earliest opportunity to pay for our freedom with our own blood." Kawabe and his staff officers were overwhelmed into silence for awhile. Kawabe and his staff, who had been disappointed with what they called Ba Maw's ineptness and Aung San's growing recalcitrance, immediately became devoted friends of Netaji. Since then they never tried to hide even the top secrets of Japanese military intelligence from Netaji. Soon the Japanese-Indian-Burmese military group was established in Rangoon for coordination. Eventually it was decided that the Burmese Army would not join the great operation, for it was just one division strong and too small. This decision is worth remembering in the context of later developments in Burma.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister and War Minister General Tojo made himself concurrently the Army Chief of Staff on the reasoning that the intensification of war required a perfect coordination between the Administration and the High Command. Thus Tojo became Japan's first and the last general to control politics and the military simultaneously — not without strong resentment of other generals who considered it unconstitutional. In other words, Tojo staked his political existence on Imperial. It was undeniable that Tojo was "keen to produce a spectacular victory to offset the effects on civilian morale of the Japanese defeats in the Pacific" and his own ebbing popularity.

Mutaguchi was ready to spring into action when the execution orders came in January. He wished to wind up the whole schedule before the dry season ended in Burma, that is, early May. But his men were not quite ready. Of the three Japanese divisions made available to him, only the 33rd had been in Burma for long and consisted of veterans of a series of actions. The 31st,

which was reorganised around the nucleus of a regiment decimated in Guadalcanal in the Pacific, came from Bangkok in time. But the arrival of the 15th from Nanking, China, was long overdue. Shortage of shipping forced the 15th to come in a piecemeal fashion. Moreover, the Singapore command ordered the 15th to stay for awhile in Thailand, ostensibly for the construction of a 300-kilometre military road from Chiang Mai in north Thailand to Toungoo, Burma. The undisclosed ulterior reason for the non-scheduled stay of the 15th Division there seemed to be the necessity of ensuring the security of Thailand which was becoming more and more untuly against Japan. The delay exasperated Mutaguchi, who sent a blistering message of protest to Singapore on 11 February 1944. Some 20,000 men of the 15th Division marched on foot for 1,200 kilometres from Bangkok to Rangoon and looked groggy when Mutaguchi finally greeted them at the end of February. Mutaguchi consequently set March 15 as the D-day.

INA troops also continued to stream into Burma *via* Thailand. Netaji made it a rule to personally review and encourage all his troops passing through Rangoon. One day, enemy planes came swooping down upon one such parade. Japanese military advisers were distressed to see all Burmese dignitaries present on the occasion run away in panic. They turned their eyes and gulped as they recognised Netaji standing erect on the rostrum and calmly directing his officers to herd the troops away for cover. Only after all the Indian troops had dispersed in good order did Netaji step down and walk off. Japanese officers murmured admiration for the great Indian leader from the bottom of their hearts. Incidentally no one got injured from the enemy strafing on that day.

In March 1944, the Provisional Government of Free India donated 100,000 bahts to the Thai government as a token of its appreciation of Thai sympathy and assistance to the Indian independence campaign. The money in fact seemed to be in repayment for the accommodations of INA troops which passed

through Thailand with none too enthusiastic blessings from Pibulsonggram's government. It was not known whether the Thai government billed Netaji for the expense. But the donation out of its limited funds impressed the people in general of the sovereign status of the Provisional Government.

Around this time Netaji heard the news of the death of Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi in prison at the age of 74. He issued a statement of profound condolences and concluded with a new pledge .

There is only one way in which the sons and daughters of India can avenge the death of Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi, and that is by the complete destruction of the British empire in India. A special responsibility lies on the shoulders of Indians in East Asia, who have launched an armed struggle against the British rulers in India. This responsibility is shared in particular by all our sisters here. In this hour of sorrow we will renew our solemn pledge to continue the armed fight until the last Britisher is driven out of India.⁹

In spite of numerous bunglings in the course of preparations, the deployment of well over 120,000 troops along the Chindwin river, a front of some 200 kilometres went on so smoothly and under such a cloak of secrecy that British spies planted in the area failed to detect anything unusual. The 31st Division took the uppermost position, the 15th in the middle, and the 33rd down in the south along the bank of the Chindwin River. No. 1 Subhas Brigade of the INA joined a diversionary group of the 15th and another INA group supported the 33rd from its left flank.

When the D-day finally came, Mutaguchi assembled war correspondents at his headquarters in Maymyo on Central Burma highlands and declared cheerfully :

⁹ Arnn, *Testament of Subhas Bose*, Calcutta: 1946, p. 70.

I am firmly convinced that my three divisions will reduce Imphal in one month. In order that they can march fast, they carry the lightest possible equipment and food enough for three weeks. Ah, they will get everything from British supplies and dumps. Boys I See you again in Imphal at the celebration of the Emperor's Birthday on 29 April.

The Japanese-Indian offensive took the British by complete surprise. The Japanese and INA troops, mostly foot soldiers lacking vehicles and artillery, or any air support, literally galloped through mountains and jungles, smothering or routing the enemy on the way. Especially fast was the advance of the 31st in the north to Kohima and the 15th to Imphal. Both crossed the Indo-Burmese border early in April by traversing on foot some 200 kilometres of very hard terrain of Arakan mountains in two weeks. The whole performance, however, was marred by a serious mistake made by the 33rd, which was believed to be the crack force of the advancing Japanese. This division drove on very swiftly in the beginning and successfully entrapped the British 17th Division in a narrow valley tucked in by rugged mountains, the tallest of them 2,324 metres high. The annihilation or wholesale surrender of the highly motorised 17th Division appeared only a matter of time. Blocked at its head by a powerful Japanese regiment and pressed hard from its tail, the 17th appeared doomed.

The official history of the British-Indian Armed Forces says :

Early the next morning (26 March), however, a patrol of 2/5 Royal Gurkha Rifles found that Japanese defenders had evacuated the south ridge. The battalion moved forward again reaching the road and established contact with the Pany Force before the morning was out. At 11 hours, on 26 March, the whole of the 48th Indian Infantry Brigade (of the 17th) marched down from Sakawng hill to milestone 109. The most dangerous Japanese road-block on the Imphal-Tiddim road was thereby broken through.

Official Japanese records say that the evacuation was ordered by Lt. Gen. Motozo Yanagida, commanding general of the 33rd, after he received a message from the 215th Regiment, which was blocking the retreat of the British 17th Division. The message said that the 215th Regiment encountered very powerful enemy reinforcements (two brigades of the 23rd British Indian Division) coming from the other side of the road and was prepared to fight to the last man. Yanagida told the 215th to withdraw two kilometres to the west. And that removed the road-block to the retreating 17th British Division.

On 27 March, Yanagida cabled Mutaguchi recommending the "re-examination of the whole operation formula". Infuriated, Mutaguchi cabled back a message of violent reproach, demanding that Yanagida give hot pursuit to the fleeing enemy at once. Yanagida refused to obey. After one week had been wasted in the quarrel by cable, Yanagida resumed the movement — but not swiftly as before. During this week, the 17th British Division completed its withdrawal to Imphal. Thus, the official British-Indian account of this period does not conform to Japanese records. The British-Indian version said .

The Japanese pressed on at their best pace on the heels of the 17th Indian Division. . . It had covered 162 miles of which about 100 miles had been disputed fanatically by the Japanese. But the numerous road-blocks had been broken through due to the great determination of the divisional troops and the help rendered by the 37th and 49th Indian Infantry Brigades (of the 23rd Div). The Allied air force had also rendered excellent support.

When Yanagida resumed the march, he elected to be very cautious and wary, and made it a rule that strong patrols preceded and beat the bush before the main force of the 33rd Division marched. Yanagida's unit reached Toibung, some 50 kilometres south of Imphal on 10 April, four days after the 31st Division swarmed to Kohima, an important junction mid-way

between Imphal and Dimapur in Assam and one week after the 15th occupied hills overlooking the Imphal-Kohima road. Nevertheless, the whole picture looked definitely favourable to the Japanese and INA forces, and even better than expected and ahead of schedule.

When Imperial Headquarters issued a communique on 8 April saying that "Japanese troops, fighting side by side with the Indian National Army, captured Kohima early on 6 April", many Japanese began to expect Imphal to fall before the Emperor's birthday on 29 April. Tojo, who was a scowling and sulking man for many months, was smiling again and felt happy. He issued a statement and made it clear that "whatever area the Indian National Army liberated should be placed under the administrative control of the Provisional Government of Free India. It is the aim of Japan to crush the enemy and help to place India under the complete control of the Indian people." Rash Behari Bose, who was critically ill with tuberculosis, rose from his sick-bed against medical advice and went to Radio Tokyo to record his speech expressing jubilation to be broadcast "when Imphal fell". He was carried back after he had recorded his speech at the studio. That speech of course failed to go on the air.

Netaji issued a statement¹⁰ announcing that the INA, fighting under the command of the Provisional Government of Free India, had embarked on its sacred mission with the co-operation of the Japanese Imperial Army. At that historic moment, when the Indo-Japanese troops had crossed the border and started marching deep into India, the Provisional Government drew the attention of the world to the epochal event. He declared that the Provisional Government of Free India would continue to fight side by side with the Japanese Army until India was completely liberated. On behalf of the Provisional Government of Free India he further urged upon the Indian people to give it full support, block the US-British war efforts by resorting to

¹⁰ *Giani*, pp. 117-19.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

sabotage and co-operate in bringing about the success of the struggle for freedom as early as possible. He urged upon Indian soldiers serving with the British Army to refuse to fight for the rulers and come over to the INA, and upon Indian officials working for the British Government to co-operate with the Provisional Government in fighting the holy war. He assured the Indian people that there was nothing to fear as long as they did not work as agents of the British, and that the seat of the Provisional Government would in due course be shifted to Indian soil liberated from British rule. He advised Indians to stay away from the US-British airfields, munition factories and other military installations to avoid being hurt as a result of Indo-Japanese attacks. He concluded by saying that at this crucial moment of history, India expected all Indians to do their duty.

On 4 April, Netaji appointed Lt. Col. A. C. Chatterjee as the governor of the newly liberated territories of India.

9

That the Japanese and INA siege of Imphal and Kohima from April to July 1944 ended in their disastrous defeat is now well-known. It is easy to count holes in any military operation in hindsight discussions. In relating history, however, it is important to take due note of the psychology and mentality of the time. It is also very important to judge a historical event in a long perspective.

General Sir William Slim, then commanding the British 14th Army, wrote in his memoirs that Allied commanders were dreading an attack on Dimapur in Assam, virtually undefended as it was at the beginning of April. According to him, if the commander of the Japanese 31st Division had left "a detachment to mask Kohima, and, with the rest of his division, thrust violently on Dimapur" the result would have been a staggering blow to the 14th Army. One of his men, Arthur Campbell, in his book

The Siege, subtitled "A story from Kohima," wrote, "Here (at Dimapur) was a vast wooden township of sheds and storehouses and railway sidings, holding sufficient supplies for a whole army for a year. . .there was no one to defend this base against the Japanese soldiers who had so suddenly appeared only a few miles away."

Asked to comment on these British accounts in a post-war interview, Mutaguchi sadly told Field Saito :

My original plan submitted to the Singapore command included Imphal, Ledo and Dimapur as targets, but that plan was rejected. In the Imphal operation that was executed, the 31st Division was specifically instructed to clear Kohima of the enemy and converge on to Imphal : Well, had Sato (commanding general of the 31st Division) been a more flexible and imaginative man, he might have done what Slim dreaded, when he saw British troops stampeding in terror and panic towards Dimapur. But Japanese intelligence services in those days performed so poorly that we at Maymyo or Singapore simply failed to imagine that Dimapur was undefended.

With regard to the equally disastrous German operation against the Ardennes in December 1944, Field Marshal Keitel and Colonel General Jodl told a post-war interviewer :

We do not believe, with the troops and materials then at our disposal, that the Supreme Command could have done anything better as it saw the situation. The operation was fundamentally one of surprise and to this extent we believe it was a complete success.

Virtually similar statements were made by Mutaguchi and his immediate superior Kawabe when asked about their reappraisal of the Imphal operation formula. Mutaguchi added : "I still believe that Imphal could have been taken had the three divisions been as good as my 18th Division (when I commanded it in 1941-42)". Hated and despised by relatives of 65,000

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

soldiers who fell in the operation, Mutaguchi and Kawabe lived their post-war years miserably until death relieved them of all torment in 1964 and 1966 respectively.

In 1944, Mutaguchi was a furious, fixated general. In May he dismissed Lt. Gen. Yanagida, commander of the 33rd, who was 'disqualified' as two regiments of his force got bogged down in the siege of two British divisions supported with lavish supplies from the air at Bishonpur, some 20 kilometres south of Imphal. Mutaguchi also replaced Lt. Gen. Masafumi Yamauchi, commander of the 15th, who became ill while his troops were being bled white in the Imphal plain. These replacements hardly proved effective. Ironically British General Slim commented on the 33rd Division with these kind words: "Whatever one may think of the military wisdom of thus pursuing a hopeless object, there can be no question of the supreme courage and hardihood of the Japanese soldiers. I know of no army that could have equalled them."

A month later, however, the roof fell upon Mutaguchi when Lt. Gen. Kotoku Sato, commanding the 31st, began his withdrawal on 3 June, without Mutaguchi's authorisation, from the Kohima area with about 10,000 survivors of his division. His repeated requests for replenishments of food and supplies had been ignored. That was the first and the last insubordination of a divisional commander in the 80 years of history of the Imperial Japanese Army. Mutaguchi flew into a rage, dismissed Sato and moved to court-martial him. An equally violent and furious Sato bellowed: "I welcome a chance to expose all the stupidity and madness behind the entire plan of this operation." Frightened superiors at Singapore muffled up the case by pronouncing Sato to be mentally deranged. Sato's break-off sent two other divisions reeling down. The operation was officially called off on 9 July. Nine days later, Tojo and his cabinet resigned. A month later, Mutaguchi was retired and practically all other high ranking officers in Burma were relieved of their posts.

The INA's Kiani regiment was decimated, with a certain number of its soldiers defecting to the Allies at the foremost front line near Imphal. Netaji offered to join the hard-pressed regiment but was thwarted by his Japanese advisers. Colonel Kiani refused to obey Japanese orders for evacuation and insisted that he would continue the march deeper into India. Embarrassed Japanese advisers with the INA unit cabled the Rangoon command, asking for withdrawal orders in the name of Netaji. Shown the cable Netaji resolutely stated : "I am inclined to support Kiani, because I also wish to join him." It was only after long persuasion by high Japanese officers that Netaji finally consented to ask Kiani to come back with all survivors 'by any means'.

Around this time, Netaji heard that Mahatma Gandhi had written off chances of a Japanese victory in the war and had begun to negotiate with the British for a compromise. He addressed a long message to Gandhi over the Rangoon radio on 6 July 1944. The message reflected not merely his mood at the time but also a resolute defence of his political activities since his secret departure from India in January 1941. The full text of this important document has been reproduced in an Appendix.

When Netaji took over the INA, it was an inadequately equipped, poorly trained contingent of 13,000 officers and men, largely comprising former prisoners of war with no properly organised training. But no heavy equipment to match those of Indian troops under British command came from Japan, notwithstanding Tojo's personal promise. In fact, Japan was getting short of arms and materials even for its own troops, so it was not that Tojo deceived Netaji. As a result of Netaji's moving appeals to Indian communities in various parts of South-east Asia, the strength of the INA grew rapidly into three divisions of 10,000 men each, not including other independent companies and battalions holding some 20,000 volunteers under training. They were

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

mostly lightly armed. Perhaps this was just suitable for guerrilla warfare.

Netaji was known to be listening regularly to enemy radio broadcasts and therefore he must have known of the imbalance of power between the Japanese and the Allies in 1944. Even if he was not a career military officer, Netaji could not have been gullible enough to always take Japanese propaganda at its face value. Netaji's public statements issued from time to time and quoted in this book fairly extensively illustrated his marvellous clairvoyance.

Netaji repeatedly emphasised the importance of martyrdom in a liberation war and declared more than once: "It does not matter who among us will live to see India free." Especially noteworthy was his speech delivered to INA officers and men on 5 July 1943 when he took over command. He referred to India's lack of a national military tradition and underlined the need "to unlearn some of the things that the British taught us" and "to learn much that they did not teach." That Netaji was not over-optimistic about the course of the campaign was clear from the straightforward offer of "nothing except hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death," which very graphically described what exactly took place on the Indo-Burmese frontier one year later. His insistence on continuing to march deeper into India with a decimated regiment and with only guerrilla-type equipment makes sense when one looks at post-war developments in Indochina.

The official British-Indian version of the Imphal Operation concludes as follows:—

The Japanese commander of the Fifteenth Army had gambled for high stakes, and had lost. He had banked on quick success and had hoped to maintain his forces in the inhospitable region by local supplies and captured dumps. But these hopes had been belied. His troops had indeed fought like heroes and covered themselves with glory. They

had performed superhuman feats of tenacity and endurance and had proved yet again that Japanese troops could stand hardships and absorb losses which would have disintegrated any other army in the world

But they had attacked prepared positions held by over 1,500,000 Allied troops with barely one-third of that strength. They had run out of ammunition in the middle of the battles and had to conserve every round. Supplies of food and medicine were completely exhausted. In spite of it all, there were no cases of wholesale surrender even by small bodies of Japanese troops. They did not lose heart and kept hammering away at the stout defences till ordered to withdraw.

The Indian and British soldiers also had proved again their mettle in fierce combat. They had held and beaten back the desperate Japanese attacks on every sector and had inflicted far heavier casualties than they suffered. They showed that they had mastered the difficult art of jungle warfare, and, given suitable circumstances, could defeat the flower of the Imperial armies face to face in the field...

These words indicated that the Indian forces which fought under the British command also tried to "learn much that the British did not teach." But we are not sure whether they did "unlearn some of the things that the British taught us."

A prophet in 1944 might have foreseen the Indian army of the sixties. Former INA officers were not taken in the army of Free India and the majority of the career officers of the Indian Army were said to be more British than the Britons themselves. The Indian Army that defeated "the flower of the Imperial Japanese armies" in the mountains on the India-Burma border was routed on the Himalayas by the Chinese Army — an army built around the nucleus of veterans of a revolutionary war.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

American seizure of Saipan in the Central Pacific. Thereby the Japanese homeland came within the range of B29 Superfortress bombers. The resulting resignation of Tojo and his cabinet was far from graceful. Tojo tried frantically to cling to his post, insisting that the horse must not be changed midstream and refusing to acknowledge his failures. But practically no one came to his rescue.

A Japanese Prime Minister's successor in those times was selected by a council of former Prime Ministers, with the Lord Keeper of Privy Seal participating as Secretary. Field Marshal Terauchi, commanding all Japanese Armies in the South and a friend of Netaji, was recommended as the first candidate, and General Kuniaki Koiso, governor of Korea, as an alternate one. Prime Minister Tojo expressed strong opposition to the choice of Terauchi, saying that the top general's absence from his post even for a day would jeopardise the entire Japanese military operations in the South. At the time, Terauchi was based in Manila, working on an overall strategy to cope with an imminent American thrust to the Philippines. While in office, Tojo had shunted or banished numerous generals he disliked or feared to foremost battle positions. Obviously Tojo apprehended that he himself would be kicked out to some sure-death post, once Terauchi returned to Tokyo.

When Koiso became the new Prime Minister, Tojo begged Koiso to retain him as War Minister. Koiso refused and let Tojo retire and join the ranks of reserve officers. Thus Tojo idled away for the rest of the war he started. Few Japanese felt sorry for him when the Allies hanged him in 1948 as a major war criminal. But an overwhelming majority of the Japanese people regarded the 11-nation military tribunal as a kangaroo court of revenge and admired the stand of the Indian judge Pal, who cast the lone 'not-guilty' vote in the verdict.

Tojo's downfall naturally created serious repercussions all over Greater East Asia. Thailand's Prime Minister Luang Pibulsonggram resigned two days later on 20 July 1944. This

seemed to be a shrewd move. While many other collaborators of Tojo were punished after the war, Pibulsonggam came back and became Prime Minister again in 1948. Four years later, however, he was overthrown by a coup. Pibulsonggam lived his last few years quietly and peacefully as an exile in Tokyo.

Ba Maw was stunned. He floundered about but found no alternative but to stay on in his position. In contrast, Subhas Chandra Bose greeted the news with equanimity and immediately sent a *message to Koiso expressing his unshakeable determination to continue cooperation with Japan in the struggle against the common enemy*. That Netaji was the first foreign leader to assure support to Japan's new Prime Minister did not mean that he was placing himself at the mercy of Japan.

A little before the Imphal Operation was called off, Netaji had a dinner meeting with Vice-Admiral Kan-ei Chudo, who commanded Japanese naval forces in the Burma area (misidentified in certain other books as Naval Attache Nakado). Netaji commanded an army and normally teamed with Japanese Army officers but he always felt a deep attachment to the Japanese Navy as a natural consequence of the very dramatic voyage from Europe to the East made successful by the Japanese and German submarines. After dessert, the two had an informal, friendly chat. With a Navy officer's typical objective bluntness, Chudo expressed pessimism about the operation directed towards India. Netaji nodded impassively. "My full sympathy is with you and your cause of Indian independence" Chudo went on. "So please do not misunderstand me if I may appear to be meddling in the affairs of the Army. Netaji, what do you plan to do in case this Army operation folded up?" Netaji quietly answered: "I have not yet written off this operation." After a long pause, Chudo, who had diplomatic experience, spoke up:

Apart from Japan, I think the Soviet Union is the only major power that can logically be sympathetic to your cause. Yes, that country is now an ally of Britain and not in a posi-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

tion to consider anything like this Imphal operation. But I am inclined to believe that non-regulars, I mean guerrillas or the so-called partisans, may volunteer to take sides with you. I wonder whether you would give a thought to the possibility of returning to India with such non-regulars from the other side, say for example, Central Asia. The Soviet Union now has a non-aggression pact with Japan. If you are so inclined, I shall be pleased to do everything, even to personally escort you to Samarkand or Tashkent.

Netaji remained silent for five or six minutes before he cautiously replied :

Admiral Chudo, I do appreciate your kind and disinterested offer. I do trust you and I am ready to follow your advice provided your formula is endorsed by Tokyo.

Chudo nodded gravely. The night's dinner party ended in a tense atmosphere

Netaji was not so naive as to believe that Chudo's idea could easily be cleared by Tokyo but was disappointed when he was told several days later that Chudo had received a negative reply. About a month later, Netaji met Colonel Yamamoto, Director of Hikari Kikan, who passed through Central Asia and Siberia in December 1942 when he was transferred from Berlin to Tokyo for reassignment. Evidently without coordination with Chudo, Yamamoto suggested to Netaji that he change horses — from Japan to the Soviet Union — in his fight against Britain. Yamamoto's idea was also to use Central Asia as a new stepping-stone for Netaji's march on Delhi. Subhas Chandra Bose replied cautiously once again that he would respect any advice from a long-time friend. Yamamoto asked for instructions from Tokyo forthwith but was met only with stony silence. In fact, Tokyo was not in a position to consider such a plan because the Japanese government itself was persistently trying to send its own peace feelers to the Allies through the Soviet government and

certainly did not wish to hobble the main task by complicating affairs. To Netaji, however, the advice of the two disinterested friends meant much.

Netaji re-emerged again as an impassioned, indomitable fighter in September when he heard that Indian National Congress leaders were inclined to bargain with the Muslim League on the basis of a possible partition of India as a stepping-stone to a compromise with the British. The partition idea was most repugnant to Netaji, who throughout his public career never discriminated between Hindus and Muslims. His staff always comprised both Hindus and Muslims and his private secretary was a Muslim. On 12 September he broadcast a bustling speech warning his countrymen against playing into the hands of Britain and her traditional policy of 'Divide and Rule'.

At the end of October, Tokyo invited him for consultations with the new cabinet, adding that the Japanese government was ready to confer on him the First Order of the Rising Sun, the highest decoration which had been awarded to a number of other leaders in the South, including Ba Maw. Netaji surprised the Japanese government by politely turning the offer down, saying, "I should like to accept it only after we have emancipated India". On 1 November Netaji, accompanied by his top aides, Kiani, Chatterji and Habib-ur-Rahman Khan, flew to Tokyo for a series of discussions with Japanese leaders and also to participate in various other events arranged by his Japanese hosts. When he met the Japanese Army and Navy leaders, Netaji tactfully but firmly asked for arrangements for his meeting with the Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo. They might or might not have known his real intentions. But all Japanese military leaders evasively replied, "Netaji, that matter comes under the jurisdiction of the Foreign Ministry." Bose went to see Foreign Minister Shigemitsu and made the same request. But Shigemitsu only sulked and said nothing.

Returning to his hotel, Netaji sat down at his desk and took a long time composing a letter addressed to the Soviet Amba-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

sador. He then told one of his aides to take it along to the Embassy and deliver the message by hand to the Ambassador. About three hours later, the courier returned dejected, with the letter unopened. "The Ambassador would not come out to receive it and his secretary just handed me back the letter without opening it," the courier reported. Netaji shook his head with a deep sigh. The unopened letter was burnt. Its contents have never been divulged and can only be surmised. Perhaps Netaji outlined the idea as proposed by Chudo and Yamamoto or perhaps he just expressed his wish to see the Ambassador for a discussion on a very important subject. At the time, the Soviet Union was already planning to abrogate the non-aggression pact with Japan. At the Yalta conference held three months later, Stalin secretly promised to Churchill and Roosevelt to join them in the war against Japan for a price, *viz.* annexation of Japan's northern islands to the Soviet Union.

One of Netaji's achievements during this visit to Tokyo was the Indo-Japanese Loan Agreement. Throughout the negotiations Netaji insisted on obtaining loans without any strings and assuring repayment. His unbending and manly attitude won the praise of Japanese officials who had already dealt with a number of less scrupulous national leaders of other countries. Japan implemented this Agreement by providing the Provisional Government of Free India with a loan of 100 million yen (then worth about \$20 million at the nominal exchange rate of 4.75 yen to the U.S. dollar). About 90 million yen remained unused when Japan surrendered to the Allies in August 1945. Netaji spent all the remaining funds as discharge allowance to all members and employees of the INA and the Provisional Government. Japan waived claims to its repayment.

Wang Ching-wei, head of the Nanking regime, died of illness at a Nagoya hospital on 10 November 1944, while Netaji was visiting Tokyo. The Indian leader was saddened by the death of a comrade. His sadness deepened when he visited Rash Behari Bose who appeared to be losing his long battle with a stubborn

illness. The old Indian revolutionary died three months later in Tokyo.

Subhas Chandra Bose returned to Rangoon at the end of November 1944, to find that the situation had deteriorated in one month — faster than anticipated. Enemy planes were roaming over Burma day and night without interception by the Japanese and enemy warships were cruising steadily a few miles off the Burmese coast. On the ground, hordes of British and allied forces were surging forward for a reconquest of Burma, shattering Japanese resistance. Netaji's long-time friend Yamamoto was relieved of his post as the head of Hikari Kikan, which was functioning mainly as an advisory group to the INA, by Maj. Gen. Saburo Isoda. Netaji missed Yamamoto but he quickly became a good friend of Isoda, a warm-hearted man who was at one time military attache in the United States.

Bad news flowed in quick succession. The British forces began landing at Akyab, Burma, on 31 December. This place had a special significance for Netaji, for his original plan was to begin his march into India from Akyab via Chittagong. But the indomitable leader refused to flinch under the most unfavourable circumstances. When the reorganised 15th Division of the Japanese Army was ordered to oppose the British along the Irawady river, Netaji enthusiastically offered the INA First Division, also reorganised, for support of the 15th.

On 23 January 1945, Netaji observed his 48th birthday. Worshipful trust of the Indian community of Rangoon in their leader did not wane despite war adversities. Indian residents held a rally and donated gold and jewels weighing in total one and half times his weight. Subhas Chandra Bose was a tall and big man and must have weighed around 100 kilograms even after going through untold hardship. Soon afterwards, Netaji rushed out to join the INA troops on the Irawady front after learning that the First Division along with the Japanese '15th were falling back under the powerful push of the enemy. When

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

he finished inspection of the new position of the INA at Pyinmana, Netaji declared :

I will fight to death here, right here. In the Irish Revolution, new patriots continued to emerge and climbed over the fallen comrades — until they won. I am convinced that the same will happen to our campaign

Colonel Kiani, commanding officer of the First Division, and Japanese officers who escorted Netaji were horrified. After three hours of intense discussion, they succeeded in making Netaji change his mind.

Major Takahashi, one of the Japanese escort officers, recalled :

The Indian leader appeared to me to be a superman. During the three weeks of the inspection tour, he had to replace three *aides-de-camp*. They were all overcome with exhaustion. Netaji worked twenty hours a day without rest, meeting local Indians and inspecting troops and facilities. No normal person could share his workload.

Netaji's personal appearance and encouragement certainly boosted the morale of INA troops. But the push by the Allies was just too stupendous for the lightly equipped INA and Japanese forces to check. They continued to fall back. Upon his return to Rangoon, Netaji heard that a group of INA troops had surrendered to the British. He issued a proclamation forthwith, telling the whole INA that any deserters should be shot. This proclamation prevented more defections, but not tactical retreats.

The worst for Netaji and the Japanese occurred on 15 March 1945, the anniversary of the launching of the disastrous Imphal Operation. On that day, the Burma Defence Army's one division, long preserved intact, was ordered into action against the invaders. Maj. Gen Aung San, commander of the Burma division, held a colourful parade before Rangoon's golden Shwe

Dagon Pagoda, then ordered 3,000 men to go into action — against the Japanese, not the British. Then organised attacks on Japanese forces and facilities petered out rather quickly and before long Burmese soldiers changed their uniforms into plain clothes and melted amidst the crowd. That was wise, because Japanese soldiers could not tell guerrillas from innocent citizens. Revolting Burmese soldiers continued to work havoc and effectively harried the Japanese until the end of the war. This rebellion and the existence of a national army gave Burma advantage in its post-war negotiations for independence with Britain. But Aung San was assassinated by his fellow-countrymen in 1947.

On 20 April 1945, General Heitaro Kimura, who relieved Kawabe as the Commander-in-Chief of Japanese Army forces in Burma, advised Netaji of his decision to withdraw from Rangoon, adding that Ba Maw had already left. Kimura urged Netaji to also withdraw along with his troops to Thailand. It required Kimura many hours of patient persuasion before Netaji finally consented to his proposal on condition that the women soldiers of the INA were first evacuated by train. The Japanese Army made available the last passenger train bound for the east to 80 women soldiers who were assembled at short notice. Netaji personally saw the women off as the train pulled out from the Rangoon station. Thereafter he rode a sedan with General Isoda. Maj. Gen. Loganathan stayed at Rangoon as Netaji's deputy to command the INA. His orders were to fight to the last man.

Netaji's car had covered just about 100 kilometres when it reached Sittang River where bridges were down. Japanese Army engineers refused to allow the car over a pontoon bridge they had built, saying that it was too flimsy to stand its weight. Netaji and Isoda abandoned the car and walked. At the other end of the pontoon, Isoda ran around and discovered an abandoned damaged truck. He succeeded in repairing it and urged the Indian leader to climb into it. Netaji shook his head, saying,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

“Look, General Isoda, my women soldiers are marching over there. I cannot leave them here,” Isoda gave up and joined him to lead the march of INA women soldiers. The march went on one thousand kilometres under the broiling sun until they reached Bangkok. It was shortly after the column crossed the Thai border that Netaji learned of Germany’s capitulation to the Allies on 7 May 1945. He looked stern and would not comment.

The column reached Bangkok almost one month after they had left Rangoon. One Indian resident offered his house as Netaji’s temporary residence. For about 10 days and nights, Netaji confined himself to a room and would not come out. One Indian officer, who visited Netaji, answered a Japanese officer’s question, quipping, “Netaji seems to be contemplating an exile in Russia.” Several days later, Netaji left Bangkok for Singapore. After settling down at his old home, he again occupied himself with whatever he could do to promote the cause of Indian independence. Day in and day out, he went on the radio to appeal to Indians at home against a compromise with the British, especially against the trap of the partition formula.

11

The Soviet Union entered the war against Japan on 9 August 1945, and its forces at once invaded Manchuria and northern Japanese islands. Depleted of supplies and trained troops, which had been diverted to the south in the preceding months, the Japanese defence was weak in the north.

Two days later Netaji learned that Japan had already radioed its readiness to surrender. In the subsequent two days, he discharged civilian employees of his government, disbanded some 23,000 troops of the INA based in and around Singapore and paid them off. On the eve of the Japanese surrender, Netaji held a meeting of his cabinet and issued the following special message to his countrymen in East Asia :

Sisters and Brothers! In this unprecedented crisis in our history, I have only one word to say. Do not be depressed at our temporary failure. Be of good cheer and keep up your spirits. Above all, never for a moment falter in your faith in India's destiny. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long.

Habib-ur-Rahman Khan, Netaji's Deputy Chief of Staff, stated in a note to Tatsuo Hayashida of Japan in 1965 :

A decision was taken in the same meeting that he should proceed to Tokyo on the following morning for consultations with the Japanese government. Accordingly, on the morning of 15 August 1945, Mr. Bose accompanied by a few officers including Mr. Habib-ur-Rahman Khan and Mr. S. A. Ayer, left by plane for Tokyo. On the way we halted at Bangkok and again at Saigon where we changed the plane. Only Mr. Bose and myself were accommodated in the Japanese heavy bomber (Sally), carrying some senior Japanese Army officers to Tokyo.

This statement, written at Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 20 years after the war, was slightly at variance with what surviving Japanese officers testified. According to Japanese witnesses, Netaji with his six top adjutants arrived by plane in Bangkok shortly after Japan officially surrendered to the Allies at noon on 15 August 1945. They proceeded to see Teruo Hachiya, Minister to the Provisional Government of Free India, and Isoda of Hikari Kikan, who had been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General. Hachiya and Isoda said that Netaji expressed his desire to join the Soviet forces in Manchuria to seek a way for continuing his campaign against Britain. Isoda quoted Netaji as saying : "I have no illusions and I am prepared to face the worst, execution or imprisonment, by the Russians. I wish to go and take a chance so long as there seems to be the faintest possibility. I request the Japanese government to assist me

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

again as it did when I came from Europe to the East" Isoda relayed Netaji's wish to Terauchi's headquarters, which had moved from Manila in November 1944 to Dalat, a highland resort north-east of Saigon. Dalat was chosen as it was closer to Thailand than Singapore and also because of the weakening health of the Commander-in-Chief.

The Japanese were preparing for a showdown in Thailand against the Allied forces who had by then recaptured Burma and appeared to be heading towards Thailand. The Japanese were also vigilant against the possible recurrence of the Aung San style defection by the Thai troops. Both the possibilities were thwarted by some 100,000 Japanese officers and men who had poured into Thailand. The Dalat command immediately transmitted Netaji's wishes to Tokyo. The Japanese High Command, then mulling over requests from numerous leaders of Greater East Asia for political asylum in Japan, fidgeted and said: "Mr. Bose should know better than to write off Japan and go over to Russia after having received whole-hearted assistance and co-operation from Japan."

Field Marshal Terauchi, who was indisposed and bed-ridden, growled: "Ah, the fat-headed staff of Tokyo seem to regard Bose as a Japanese subject! Tell Tokyo that I respect the free will of my friend who fought for his country." Terauchi's angry response silenced Tokyo and the High Command cabled its concurrence without wasting any more time. Tokyo did not wish to make an issue out of anything with Terauchi. The Japanese government's gravest concern at the time was how to let three million Japanese soldiers deployed over widespread areas to lay down arms gracefully to the Allies. Many of Japanese Army and Navy officers were known to be doubting or challenging the surrender orders. Terauchi's influence was considered very important. The same day Terauchi made another important decision. Lt. Gen. Tsunamasa Shidei, chief of staff at the Burma Command who was reassigned to the Manchurian command, reached Saigon from Rangoon and asked whether he

should continue his journey. "Let him go", ruled Terauchi. "The Japanese Army in Manchukuo will find Shidei handy for his linguistic ability in English, French and German and also his knowledge of international law in dealing with the Russians for surrender procedures."

One of the few remaining bombers was dragged out of its shelter for a long flight from Saigon to Hsinking (Changchun), Manchuria, via Dairen. Changchun was Manchukuo's capital where regional Japanese military headquarters were based. The selected plane was Type 97-2 (modified) bomber, known to the Allies by the code name of Sally. It was a twin-engined plane, measuring 22.5 metres wing to wing, 18 metres nose to tail, and weighing 7,490 kilos. The Japanese Army called it a 'heavy bomber' because Japan did not operate any bigger bombers during the war. Sally, built by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, was designed to make the maximum speed of 230 knots. When staffed by the regular crew of seven members, the bomber armed with six cannon and machine guns and loaded with a dozen 60 kilo bombs or four 250 kilo bombs cruised at about 180 knots. Selected for the controls of the flight was Warrant Officer Aoyagi, the best of the surviving pilots in Saigon. Assigned as his co-pilot was Major Saburo Takizawa. Five other crew members included Lt. Col. Shino Nonogaki and Major Taro Kono. Nonogaki was named captain of the bomber. This line-up, contrary to the standard practice today, requires explanation. During World War II, Japan lacked an independent air force. The Army and Navy had their own air forces. A majority of Japanese flyers in both services were non-commissioned officers. Aoyagi's selection as the chief pilot means this NCO was more experienced than Takizawa. Colonels or majors handling administration duties in the Army air force were often transferred from infantry and other divisions. Both Nonogaki and Kono were officers of such category, not qualified to be pilots. Therefore Nonogaki's status as captain was quite

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

different from what it means today. This fact must be remembered in judging testimonies of the surviving officers.

Terauchi told his staff to make room on this plane for Netaji. On hearing of the clearance, Netaji and his staff officers, accompanied by Hachiya and Isoda, flew from Bangkok to Saigon on 17 August. The two pilots were appalled when the seven Indians began to climb into the bomber. They declared that it was impossible to fly the plane with so many additional passengers. The seven-man crew and four passengers — Shidei and his three *aides-de-camp* with personal effects — were the maximum load, the pilots insisted. As painful on-the-spot negotiations got nowhere, Isoda hopped on a small liaison plane and flew to Dalat, which was 30 minutes away by air from Saigon. Isoda could not see Terauchi, who was ill, but consulted with his staff. Isoda was saddened to learn that there were no other pilots, other than Aoyagi, who were experienced in a long flight over the seas. Attrition of the Japanese air arm and mortality of pilots had been very severe in the preceding months of the losing war. "If we have the time we may be able to discover some capable pilots at some frontline posts," said Dalat officers. "But we cannot afford the time. We are flying this plane without obtaining safety conduct from the Soviet Union. British authorities in this region may forbid us to fly any combat planes for any purpose any moment. We are racing against time."

Isoda flew back to Saigon and reported the situation to Netaji. The Indian leader conferred with six adjutants for about 10 minutes and then asked Isoda to take him and Habib-ur-Rahman Khan aboard. The crew insisted that just one additional passenger was the absolute limit but ultimately acceded to Isoda's request. Netaji and his Deputy Chief of Staff went aboard with about 10 pieces of luggage. Nervous crew members begged them to reduce the luggage. Netaji nodded and returned seven of them to other Indian officers. At last the bomber began to taxi, but stopped short as one of the Indian officers suddenly rushed up, gesticulating and shouting: "Captain, please wait just 15

minutes. We have received word that local Indians are coming over here with their gifts for Netaji." The crew obliged. Looking weary, they sweated out some 30 minutes until a sedan gunned its way to the side of the plane and delivered two suitcases. The crew hand-weighed them and accepted. They did not wish to delay the departure any more.

The plane, with an estimated one metric ton of excess load, took off from Saigon at about 5 p.m. and flew north. About two hours later, the bomber touched down at Touane, a Japanese base roughly midway between Saigon and Hanoi. The pilots announced that they could not take the risk of a night flight in that overloaded state. As soon as the passengers were settled in nearby barracks for an overnight rest, the crew dismantled the six machine guns and dumped them along with all ammunition, thus reducing the weight by about 600 kilos. By that time Netaji and Shidei had become good friends. Survivors say that Netaji had a serious discussion on India's future with Shidei when they shared a room at the barracks for the night.

The disarmed bomber left the base at about 5 a.m. on 18 August and reached Taipei's Sungshan (called by the Japanese 'Matsuyama') airstrip at about noon. (Sungshan was later vastly expanded to become Taipei International Airport, Taiwan.) Aoyagi flew at an altitude of about 4,000 metres and covered a distance of 1,200 nautical miles, including some technically necessary detours, in seven hours. It was a beautiful performance considering the none-too-well-maintained condition of the overworked bomber. The crew took two hours to refuel and recheck the plane, while passengers ate a light lunch of sandwiches and bananas in a tent pitched for them by the airstrip guards.

No top officers of the Japanese military based in Taiwan came out to greet Netaji, Head of the Provisional Government of Free India. As this breach of protocol drew the anger of an Indian investigation commission sent to Japan in 1956, it may be appropriate to describe Taiwan's situation on that day.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

When the Japanese Emperor broadcast surrender orders on 15 August 1945, General Rikichi Ando, Governor of Taiwan who was concurrently Commander-in-Chief of Army forces in the island, immediately decided to obey the orders. But the Third Army Air Force, which had moved from Singapore to Taiwan for massive suicide attacks with 800 planes, refused to do so, insisting that the Emperor's broadcast was not authentic. Recalcitrant aviation officers at first held Ando incommunicado but eventually agreed to the compromise of sending Ando's chief civilian administrator and deputy chief of staff to Tokyo on a fact-finding mission. The two envoys were still in Tokyo on 18 August and returned to Taipei only on the following day. Ando was thus unable to come out of house arrest to greet Netaji at the airstrip. This general committed suicide on 15 April 1946 after completing the surrender procedures.

The crew did not at all wish to stay long at Taipei because the next leg between Taipei and Dairen (Dalny), Manchuria, spanned another 1,000 nautical miles and would take about six hours of flight. The two pilots considered it imperative to complete this flight before it got very dark. Nevertheless they took two hours to re-check the engines, because that on the port side vibrated when test-run. They re-examined its spark plug and other mechanisms until they were satisfied. The plane left at about 2 p.m. with three tanks of gasoline carried inside it as was done during the previous flight. Unlike some other Japanese combat planes, this Type 97 bomber lacked the device to fix extra fuel tanks on the exterior of the fuselage. A catastrophic accident is reported to have occurred shortly after the take-off allegedly killing Netaji, General Shidoi, two pilots and two other crew members. Habib-ur-Rahman Khan, Nonogaki, Kono and five other persons survived with minor-to-serious injuries. Statements of survivors made about 20 years after the accident were at variance with one another. Because of the abnormal situation that prevailed at the time in Taipei, full scale investigations were not carried out.

The present writers, therefore, asked a number of leading aeronautical experts of Japan, with full knowledge of and experience in flying and maintenance of wartime combat planes, to compare varied versions and try to reconstruct the accident factually. One particular published version reads :

In the case of heavy bombers, normally the tail gets lifted halfway down the runway but in this case according to Capt Nakamura (a maintenance officer then at Taipei), the tail was not lifted off the ground until it had run approximately three-fourths down the runway. The plane took off and made a steep ascent when a loud explosion was heard and the plane tilted to the left. The propeller and the port engine fell out and the plane dived to the ground.

Our panel of experts termed this version as "completely irrelevant and illogical" and reported as follows .

Type 97-2 bombers, fully loaded, normally took to the air after running approximately three-fourths, sometimes almost the full length, of Taipei's runway. For twin-engined bombers, it was physically impossible to make a steep ascent immediately after take-off. Captain Nakamura was a newcomer to the base, with little or no experience, knowing practically nothing about normal performance of bombers. He alleged that a loud explosion preceded the crash, but six of seven survivors denied his statement.

The entire Japanese air operations before and during the Pacific War did not record any other case of a propeller falling out during take-off. If the plane dived to the ground, it could have only smashed itself into bits, killing all aboard instantly.

Nonogaki actually was thrown out clear of his turret seat when the plane contacted the ground and he sustained just minor bruises. Netaji's *aide-de-camp* also survived with minor injuries. This fact proves that the bomber was under control

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

until it contacted the ground and did not go into spin or plummet. The port propeller and engine could have been torn away at the impact but not in midair.

Major Kono testified in gist as follows :

The left engine failed immediately after take-off. I had hardly taken breath when the tip of the plane's right wing hit the mud fence off the end of the runway. As the bomber was barely airborne, it did not explode when it contacted the ground. With a loud noise, it jolted to a stop, letting all cargo stacked at the rear cascade towards the fore part of the plane.

Another published version attributed the accident to, among others, the excess load, sudden change of flight plan, psychological disturbance caused by the news of Russia's occupation of Port Arthur and the pilot's inexperience.

Our panel of experts commented .

That the thirteen men with personal effects did not exceed the load limit was proven by the standard seven-hour flight from Tourane to Taipei; Russia's airborne troops began entering Port Arthur on 22 August, that is, four days after the accident occurred; and pilot Aoyagi was fully experienced after having flown from Taipei many times in his career.

By comparing varied versions and studying circumstantial evidence, our experts objectively re-constructed the accident as follows :

The bomber with 13 persons aboard took off from Taipei's airstrip after taxiing about three quarters of the 800 metre runway. It was barely airborne when it suddenly tilted to the left, then came down trying to belly-land. The bomber overshot the airstrip, ploughed into a mud fence, and burnt up about one minute later. Pilot Aoyagi was stabbed in the chest by the steering gear and died in hospital soon afterwards.

And his co-pilot was killed instantly as his steering rod smashed up his head. Then postures indicate that the two pilots did their best to save the plane and as many persons aboard as possible.

At the ploughing impact, one of the gasoline tanks hung inside the plane went wild, harpooning General Shidei at the back of his head to an instantaneous death. Another tank hit Mr. Bose less violently but fell and broke, splashing him with gasoline. Fire started at the fuel tank inside the fuselage and spread fast.

Habib-ur-Rahman Khan stated in his note to Tatsuo Hayashida, from Rawalpindi in 1966 .

Mr. S. C. Bose and myself jumped out through the fire. As soon as I was out of the plane, I saw him struggling with fire on his clothes as some petrol had been splashed on them. I rushed forward and put out the fire and soon laid him on the ground. I noticed that he had sustained a deep head injury which was bleeding profusely. His body had also suffered from deep burns. I escaped with minor injuries on my person. At this time the following talk took place between myself and Mr. Bose :

Mr. S. C. Bose : 'I hope you have not been seriously injured ?'

Self : 'No, Sir, I have escaped with minor injuries.'

Mr. Bose : 'I do not think I will survive this accident. When you go back, tell my countrymen that I fought to the last for the freedom of my country. And no power could now keep our country in bondage any longer. They should continue the struggle. India will be free before long.'

All the victims were taken to an Army hospital in Taipei City, about 15 minutes away by motorcar from the airstrip.

Habib-ur-Rahman Khan stated : "The Japanese doctor treated

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

him as best as he could, but unfortunately he expired at 8-30 p.m. (the same day)." He added that the cremation of Netaji's remains took place in Taipei on 20 August and his ashes were flown on 5 September to Japan. They are still kept at the Renkoji Buddhist temple in Tokyo. All jewels and other valuables recovered from the burnt wreckage were later shipped to the Indian government.

The accident at Taipei was a serious shock to ailing Field Marshal Terauchi. He did not rise again from his sick-bed and died on 20 June 1946.

Habib-ur-Rahman Khan concluded his statement with the following words :

Finding that their hold over the services of the country had loosened and the people wanted them now to go home, the British rulers decided to quit India on 14-8-47. Thus the stand of the INA and its leader in particular and the people of India in general was fully vindicated. It is indeed a great tragedy that Mr. Bose had not been able to see for himself the fruits of his life-long freedom struggle. Many in Bharat still believe that he is alive and will turn up some day. How much we wish that he had come back alive. In that case it is more than certain that he would have occupied a dominant position in Indian politics. Thus the relations between Bharat and Pakistan would have been cordial rather than embittered as they are today. He was known to be a most judicious and fair-minded leader. However, the blaze of freedom left by him is still burning and will continue to inspire the freedom-fighters all over the globe for all time to come.

N. G. JOG

The war officially ended on 14 August 1945, with Japan's unconditional capitulation to the Allies. The repatriation of INA men who had surrendered on the Burma front, however, had begun in May. They were refused 'prisoners of war' status and were treated as deserters and traitors. INA men captured on the Imphal front were brought to India earlier. Most of the secret INA agents who had been landed by submarine or parachute in India during the previous two years were caught and summarily shot. The first regular trial of INA men by a court martial seems to have been held sometime in July 1945. An enterprising journalist reported in the first week of August that six INA men were executed and that thousands were brought to India under arrest and kept in the Red Fort. This news sent a shock-wave throughout India, but the issue could be discussed only in whispers owing to rigorous censorship imposed during the war. Broadcasts of the Free India Centre in Germany and of the Provisional Government of India in South-east Asia were no doubt furtively listened to by many people, but they did not know how much credence could be attached to the news. Very few could believe, for instance, that the INA had planted its flag and established itself for a few weeks in Imphal on the Indian soil.

The end of the war ripped open the blanket of secrecy cast on the INA although the censorship was not officially withdrawn until some months later. The thousands of INA men who were brought to India could not be held incommunicado and their colourful accounts of the INA and their Netaji were eagerly listened to. Nor could the fraternisation between the regular

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Indian Army soldiers and the INA men be avoided before the latter's repatriation from South-east Asia. This was to have far-reaching consequences.

In August 1945, the full story of the INA was yet to be widely known. Responsible persons refrained from commenting on it lest it should be misunderstood. Nehru, however, issued a guarded statement to the press on 20 August when he felt distressed by the execution of some INA men.

“At any time”, he observed, “it would have been wrong to treat the INA men too harshly but at this time when, it is said, big changes are impending in India, it would be a very grave mistake leading to far-reaching consequences if they were treated just as ordinary rebels. The punishment given to them would in effect be a punishment on all India and all Indians and a deep wound would be created in millions of hearts.”

It took the censor three days to pass this statement for publication. Simultaneously an official note was issued to the effect that “the Government of India are at present considering very carefully the treatment to be given to Indian soldiers who joined the enemy. The cases of these men are being examined as quickly and as sympathetically as possible.” Instead of allaying public anxiety and influencing public opinion in Government's favour, this press note had quite a contrary effect. The demand for the release of the INA men gathered momentum. Public admiration for these men increased every day. On August 27, therefore, the Government issued another communique that “It had decided to treat with mercy and generosity the rank and file of those soldiers who yielded to pressure and who were so misguided as to join the forces raised by the enemy, but they will allow the law to take its course and will try to court-martial the leaders and those who were guilty of particularly heinous

crimes They will be allowed to choose counsel to represent them ”

The proposed trial of the INA men at once became a public issue of prime importance. It was widely discussed in homes and bazaars almost to the exclusion of other topics such as the recent victory of the Labour Party in Britain and the policy it was likely to adopt in India. The All-India Congress Committee took formal notice of the INA trial in a resolution passed on 22 September. It announced the formation of a Defence Committee for the INA men. The following month Mahatma Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, “Though I can have nothing in common with any defence by force of arms, I am never blind to the valour and patriotism often displayed by persons in arms. India adores those men who are on trial. No doubt the Government has overwhelming might on their side. But it will be a misuse of that power if it is used in the teeth of universal Indian opposition.” Gandhi even met General Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief in India, in this connection. By now a wave of adoration for the INA was sweeping the length and breadth of India. Enterprising reporters had brought from Burma and Malaya immense material highlighting the activities of the INA and its leader. It was supplemented by oral accounts of INA men and Indian civilians returning from South-east Asia. Even a documentary film of the INA was smuggled out of Singapore and shown privately in Delhi and elsewhere.

India's spontaneous reaction to all these reports was only to be expected from an enslaved people who, for decades, had been trying to liberate themselves and who, only three years earlier, had served notice on the British to ‘quit India’. In their frenzy of joy and admiration, the people forgot that the INA was a vanquished force and that its soldiers were detained in India not even as prisoners of war, but as common felons. They were hailed almost as conquerors and liberators. As for Netaji Bose, his sensational exploits during the four-and-half years

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

since his dramatic escape from Calcutta became a legend, a myth. They were recounted as epics. Huge posters bearing his pictures were set up and garlanded at every city square. Booklets and pamphlets about the INA and its leader poured in a copious flow for many months. *Jai Hind*, the greeting coined by Bose in Germany and popularised in South-east Asia, became a common form of salutation. Bose became the man of the hour, more powerful in death than in life. If, by some miracle, he had been restored to life and had returned to India, he would have carried everything before him as Napoleon did after his escape from Elba.

The Government which had tried its best during the war to portray Bose as a Quisling and his INA men as mercenaries and traitors must have been startled and nonplussed by this popular reaction. It had failed to see that a subject nation's criteria of a leader could not be the same as those of its alien masters. Perhaps the Government entertained a sneaking hope that if 'the heinous crimes' were brought home to the INA accused in the full glare of a public trial, popular opinion would still veer in its favour. And it set about it artfully by putting a Muslim, a Hindu and a Sikh officer on a joint trial. Captain Shah Nawaz Khan, Captain P. K. Sahgal and Lieutenant G. S. Dhillon were no doubt engaged jointly in the Mount Popa operations in Burma, but their being put up together as accused must have been partly influenced by communal considerations. The fish disdained to use to the bait. They remained uncompromisingly Indian, obstinately united. And the people at large too, took a common interest in the trial. They unitedly hoped and prayed for the acquittal of the accused. They refused to distinguish one accused from the other on the basis of religion. All of them were only Indians — valiant soldiers of Netaji's INA. No separate sectarian help for defence was asked for or offered. The Indian National Congress came forth to organise a joint defence of all the accused. Nehru announced at the All India Congress Committee session in September 1945 that a

defence committee had been formed by the Congress and invited other parties to join it. (None did. It was unnecessary.) He also added that it would be a tragedy if these officers were punished for the offence of having laboured for the freedom of India.

By the time the general court-martial began its proceedings on 5 November, Shah Nawaz Khan and his two colleagues had become in Nehru's words "symbols of India fighting for independence. The trial dramatised and gave visible form to the old contest, England *versus* India. It was a trial of strength between the will of the Indian people and the will of those who hold power in India."

A make-shift court was set up for the trial in the Red Fort where a number of INA prisoners were accommodated in cages. While this was probably the determining reason for the selection of the site, the former imperial associations of the Red Fort also must have partly influenced the choice. It would help to attract maximum public attention to the trial. This publicity gimmick recoiled on the authorities. The Red Fort did strike public imagination, but not in the way the brass-hats had hoped for or expected. The Red Fort vividly recalled to the public mind the old days of freedom and Moghul splendour. It also called to mind the trial of Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul Emperor, in the same place nearly a century ago. In a sense it also fulfilled the INA war-cry *Delhi chalo* — Onward to Delhi! The accused verily seemed victorious in their defeat. It was not they who were on trial but the judges and the authorities who had appointed them. It was indeed a test case — India *versus* England.

The General Court Martial was composed of seven army officers presided over by Major-General Blaxland. The defence counsels represented the cream of India's legal and forensic talent though the main burden fell on Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Bombay Bar. Among the 17 members of the Defence Committee were the Rt Hon. Sh. Tej Bahadur Sapru, the dis-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

tinguished liberal leader, three former judges of High Courts and Jawaharlal Nehru, who put on the barrister's gown which he had laid aside thirty years earlier. The press was represented in full force at the trial and extensive reports of the daily proceedings were published by every newspaper in India. Ten charges were levelled jointly and severally against the three accused. The main common charge — and the only charge that really mattered — was “waging war against His Majesty the King-Emperor of India”. The other charges were incidental and derivatory.

The trial commenced on 5 November 1945, and continued with short intervals till the last day of the year when judgment was pronounced. The first few sittings were taken up by the Prosecution who tendered voluminous documentary evidence and put up a number of witnesses — British, Indian and even Japanese — to substantiate charges against the accused. The leading Defence Counsel Bhulabhai Desai began his address on 1 December and concluded it the following day. It ranks high in the history of such trials for its comprehensive nature, brilliant arguments and lucid exposition of the principles of International Law. It is of lasting interest to lawyers and jurists. The common man looked at the trial as a closing chapter in the fascinating account of Netaji's efforts to liberate his country with the help of the INA.

It was on this aspect of the case that Bhulabhai Desai laid emphasis. “The case before the court is not a personal case of any kind or sort,” he told the judges at the very outset of his address. “The honour and the law of the Indian National Army are on trial. What is now on trial before the court is the right to wage war with impunity on the part of a subject race for their liberation.” Fortunately for the Defence, the Prosecution itself had submitted a mass of evidence and a number of witnesses to establish the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, the raising of the Indian National Army and the utilisation of this Army in the field against Britain. This was

the very material which the Defence Counsel utilised to build up its case on the principles of International Law. In the event, the Defence conclusively proved that the acts which formed the subject-matter of the charges were acts done in the course of operations of an organised Army of a government. This Government, it was argued, had attained statehood, that it possessed territories (in Burma, in the Andaman Islands and even in India), for however short a time; that it was accorded recognition as a government by several states. It was emphasised that this government had been accredited an ambassador of another state, namely, Japan. It had even formally made a declaration of war on Britain and the U.S. Rarely indeed has a Prosecution been more convincingly hoist with its own petard.

Submitting that nothing is an offence which was justified by law, the Defence Counsel pleaded that the acts with which the accused were charged before the court were justified in law, that is to say, by the International Law. Therefore, there could be no question of a personal or individual liability. "There was at one time the old idea", Counsel observed, "that you had to be an independent or a sovereign state to be able to declare war. Of course it created a vicious circle that a subject race would remain in perpetuity a subject race. It can never make a legitimate war for the purpose of liberating itself. Hence modern International Law has recognised the right of subject races which are not for the time being independent, to be so organised and if they are organised to fight an organised war through an organised army. The individual members of that army are unanswerable before any municipal court for what was done in due prosecution of that war." After all the INA was not operating *in vacuo*. There were two million Indian nationals in South-east Asia who had sworn allegiance to the Provisional Government of Netaji Bose for the purpose of liberating their motherland. Even assuming that the government was not based on its own territory, its position was analogous to that of several emigre governments—the Dutch, the Polish,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the French, the Yugoslav — who were operating from London without an inch of territory they could call their own in Europe. And there were the *Maquis* — the French Partisans — on whose behalf General Eisenhower had issued a stern warning to the German Command that they constituted a combatant force forming an integral part of the Allied Expeditionary Force and should be treated as such. Reprisals against resistance groups would violate the rules of war by which Germany was bound and for which the German Army would be held fully accountable. Surely the status of the INA was superior to that of the French Partisans.

Bhulabhai Desai recalled how at the time of the British surrender in Singapore in February 1941, the Indian soldiers were separated from their British comrades and were handed over on behalf of the British Government to Major Fujiwara, the representative of the Japanese Army. Major Fujiwara, in turn, handed them over to Captain Mohan Singh. In that very invidious act of separate surrender, the Indian soldiers were freed from their oath of loyalty to the British King. The question of treason was thus no longer involved in the issue. They were free to fight for their country in any manner they chose:

“Where the King and the country coincide, there is no question of an alternative. If you fight against the King and also fight against the interest of your country, the question does not arise. But the question does arise when there is a fight for freedom. When you are nominally fighting against the King but really fighting to liberate the country, then the point is whether the question of allegiance can arise at all. Unless you sell your own soul, how can you ever say that when you are fighting to liberate your own country, there is some other allegiance which prevents you from so doing? That means that if that happens, there is nothing but permanent slavery.”

In the course of his address, Bhulabhai Desai, pertinently recalled the Declaration of Independence by the United States of

America and the declaration of war in 1776 and stressed its similarity with the Declaration of Netaji Bose in Singapore about the formation of a Provisional Government of Free India on 21 October 1943. The American rebels succeeded and established their own independent government while the Indians failed. But that does not differentiate their status in International Law. The ringing words in the American Declaration were as true in 1943 (or 1945) as they were in 1776.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Bhulabhai Desai cited case after case from the British Privy Council as also from the US Federal Supreme Court to support his plea. He also referred to the leading authorities on International Law – Blackstone, Oppenheim, Hyde, Wheaton and the American jurist Hershey. His extempore address was a *tour de force* of legal erudition and forensic skill. The pity of it was that it should have been addressed to a court martial composed of officers who were innocent of law and not to judges trained to understand and appreciate the subtleties and intricacies of International Law. The general court martial's judgment was a foregone conclusion. It held all the three accused officers guilty of the main charge of waging war against the King-Empire and sentenced them to transportation for life in addition to some other lesser punishments for other offences. This sentence was, of course, subject to confirmation by the Commander-in-Chief in India, who was satisfied that the findings of the court were in each instance in conformity with the evidence. Accordingly he confirmed them. He, however, remitted the sentences of transportation for life against all the accused and confirmed only the sentences of cashiering and forfeiture of arrears of pay and allowances. This order was announced in a

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Gazette of India Extraordinary on 3 January 1946, and the accused were released the same day.

The release of Shah Nawaz Khan and his two comrades was hailed with joy and acclamation throughout the country. Nobody cared a jot that they were not acquitted by the court martial and that the lesser sentences were, in fact, confirmed by the Commander-in-Chief. They remained popular heroes—more popular on account of the ordeal through which they had passed. They were feted, feasted and carried in a hundred processions. The people knew that it was not British mercy that prompted their release but the sheer pressure of Indian public opinion and the growing political consciousness in the regular Indian Army, which, by and large, refused to consider the INA men as traitors. This was frankly conceded by the Commander-in-Chief himself. The reasons that impelled him to remit the sentence were explained by General Auchinleck in a revealing *Minute*

“Having considered all the evidence and appreciated to the best of my ability the general trend of public opinion and of *the feeling in the Indian Army*, I have no doubt at all that to have confirmed the imprisonment solely on the charge of waging war against the King would have probably precipitated a violent outbreak throughout the country and *created active and widespread disaffection in the Army, especially amongst the officers and the more highly educated rank and file*. To have taken this risk would have been seriously to jeopardise our object.”

Obviously, considerations of prudence rather than ‘mercy and generosity’ had prompted the decision of General Auchinleck. The legend of the INA and its Netaji had not only hypnotised the civilian public but it had also affected the regular Indian army. It created a political consciousness to which the Indian serviceman had never been exposed before. It was this political consciousness inspired by the INA which sparked the

revolts in the Royal Indian Air Force and the Royal Indian Navy, the latter of which assumed serious proportions in 1946.

Nehru described the INA trial as marking the end of another chapter of India's history and presaging the beginning of a new one. "Bose's suddenly amplified figure", wrote Dilip Kumar Roy, "added to the romance of the Indian National Army marching singing to Delhi, galvanised a frustrated nation out of its torpor and substantially damaged the insulation of the Indian Army from the magnetic currents of popular enthusiasm for immediate independence." Though Mahatma Gandhi could never support Bose's resort to arms, he shared this widespread sentiment. He generously admitted to a group of senior INA officers who called on him: "You have the satisfaction that the whole country has been roused and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of independence."

If this aftermath of the trial proved anything, it was that the British empire in India had passed into the twilight and the dawn of India's freedom was not far away. The authorities made a brave show of holding another trial in 1946 in which two other INA officers were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, the sentences being duly confirmed by the C-in-C. But it was not long before Government thought better of it and ordered the general release of *all* INA prisoners by the end of 1946. It could not sustain the show of strength in the face of mounting disaffection in the country. After all, British rule was not based on the consent of the governed but on the strength of the Armed Forces. Five years of war had bled Britain white as much in manpower as in material resources. British soldiers everywhere were clamouring to return home. In voting the Labour Party into power, they like their people at home had conclusively proved their disenchantment with the upholders of the empire. They were no longer in sympathy with imperialism and were loath to be posted for garrison duties in India or any other part of the empire. Nor could the British hope to

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

stay put in India on the strength of the Indian Army. That army could no longer be treated as a mercenary force, thanks to the political consciousness created in it by the INA. The British could have held on for a few more years but for the grim possibility of another great rebellion like the one in 1857. They therefore decided to go while the going was good. Discretion is usually the better part of the British valour.

This may not be dismissed as a simplistic view. No doubt there were other weighty considerations that prompted Britain to depart from India on 14 August 1947. Statesmanship demanded it as did the vastly changed international situation and the realisation that the second world war had left Britain a second-rate power. Moreover, with what face could freedom be denied to subject countries when the war was ostensibly fought for freedom? But when all is said and done and due credit is generously given to Britain for its historic transfer of power to India (and Pakistan), one cannot lose sight of the role played by Netaji Bose and his INA in this consummation. It would not be out of place to reproduce here the last Order of the Day issued by Bose on 15 August 1945 as Supreme Commander of the INA :

Comrades, I feel that in this critical hour, 380 millions of our countrymen at home are looking at us, the members of India's Army of Liberation. Therefore, remain true to India and do not, for a moment, waver in your faith in India's destiny. The roads to Delhi are many and Delhi still remains our goal. The sacrifices of your immortal comrades and of yourselves will certainly achieve their fulfilment. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long.

This last pronouncement of Netaji proved prophetic in every respect. The Indian people did hail the officers and men of the INA as members of India's army of liberation and extend

to them a rapturous welcome. The INA did reach Delhi and vindicate its honour in the Red Fort — though not in the manner envisaged by Bose. Finally, the valour and sacrifices of the INA did have a delayed-action effect in achieving the freedom of India within two years to the day — many years earlier than anybody could have envisaged.

EPILOGUE

LOTHAR FRANK

Subhas Chandra Bose has passed into history. Investigations as to his ultimate fate at the end of the war in the Far East have been carried out both at the official level by the Government of India as well as by many individuals over a period of two decades. In fact, as this is being written, a second commission appointed by the Government of India is conducting a fresh enquiry into the matter. The present writer, after making searching enquiries in Japan, is inclined to agree with the findings of the first Netaji Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1956 to the effect that Bose died of injuries sustained in an air-crash in Taipei, Formosa, on 18 August 1945. On the other hand, there is widespread belief amongst the Indian people that their beloved Netaji is still alive. Such belief, however, is not supported by any real evidence.

Bose took the military defeat of his war-time ally Japan and of the Indian National Army with extraordinary fortitude. In his last radio speech to the Indian people, he did not conceal the truth about the disaster that had overtaken his Army. At the same time however he spoke in terms of reorganising his forces and hinted at some sort of an alliance with a potential enemy of Anglo-American Imperialism, the Soviet Union, to continue the struggle for Indian freedom. As a true revolutionary his faith in the final victory of his cause remained unshaken. And even as the world seemed to crumble around him, he was thinking and planning in terms of a different road to Delhi. Bose never looked upon the collapse of the Tripartite powers — his war-time allies — as a threat to the cause that he was fighting for, namely, Indian freedom. Without hesitation and without

sentiment, he separated the future of the Indian freedom movement from the misfortunes of his allies in the war. Thus, he remained, as he always was, a true national revolutionary who now sought new allies and new ways of realising his objective. The question whether he could have carried on his campaign from Soviet soil, however, remains buried in uncertainty.

During his campaign in East Asia, Bose had to reckon with the fact that time was working against him. It was not his fault that he arrived there at least a year too late. His plan of an Indian Revolution should have been launched in 1942. And he did try desperately to come over to the East in 1942. It will be recalled that the Indian National Congress under Gandhi's leadership also took up a militant anti-British attitude in 1942. With Japanese forces at the gates of India and a most favourable internal situation, a military assault from Burma under Bose's dynamic leadership would have made all the difference to India's future. Such an inference is amply justified by what the former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote in his Memoirs (p. 285): "... specially at this particular moment the whole of the Indian sub-continent had remained totally defenceless and its doors open to the enemy. The British rulers in India also knew that in 1942 the Japanese Navy could, without any opposition, go in and out through the Bay of Bengal, and India for the first time since its domination by the British, was threatened by an invasion by an Asian power and the defences that the British had built up in India were not equal to the danger."

In 1942, therefore, Bose had good reasons to hope, on objective considerations, that his aims would be fulfilled. He was thwarted principally by Hitler and the group around him who determined the policies of the German Government. When Bose escaped from India and arrived in Germany, it appeared as if Germany was poised for the final attack on Britain after subduing the rest of Europe.

It was not illogical for Bose to expect that Hitler, at

Biography of Nctaji Subhas Chandia Bose

that particular moment and as the responsible head of the most powerful German State in history would, regardless of his absurd racial theories and vendetta against Bolshevism, show a certain sense of flexibility and adaptability in international affairs. To his great disappointment Bose discovered soon after his arrival in Germany that Hitler was oblivious of the great danger of three world powers combining against him and that he had really learnt nothing. He was still ranting and raving in terms of "a world struggle against Zionism and Bolshevism". Subhas Chandia Bose was naturally not interested in the world struggle of Hitler's conception.

When Bose came to Germany early in 1941 there was a reasonable chance of the Axis powers winning the War. He was therefore interested in obtaining from these powers a declaration guaranteeing Indian independence after the War. We have to remember that about the same time Gandhi was trying to obtain from the British Government a similar declaration and a promise of independence after the War. And it is historically interesting that neither Bose nor Gandhi succeeded in obtaining any definite policy statement on Indian independence from either of the parties in the War. It should be remembered further that Gandhi failed to get a proper response from the British Government even after offering his sympathy and support to the British in their hour of trial. The proposals that Bose made to the German Government in the shape of his Memorandum¹ revealed a political concept that could not be grasped by Hitler and his men. Bose did try, however, to advance his cause by skilful and diplomatic bargaining with the tripartite powers separately and sometimes one against the other.

It is clear that Bose lost all hope of gaining any advantage from the European theatre of war when Hitler embarked upon his campaign against Soviet Russia. His original plan of entering India through the north-west frontier at the head of a

¹ See Appendix.

liberation army was based largely on a continued state of non-belligerency between Germany and Soviet Union. Bose's last hope lay in a separate peace treaty between Germany and Soviet Union. But that was not to be. Since early 1942 Bose was pressing hard for facilities to go over to the Far East where the Japanese had already reached the frontiers of India. But there was agonising delay in his actual transfer to the East with results which we have already discussed.

When one studies in depth the declarations, statements and activities of Bose relating to the war both in the West and in the East, one is struck by his clear and realistic judgment of the course of events compared to the wholly subjective and utterly wrong assessments made by the war leaders of both Germany and Japan. Before his departure by submarine for East Asia from Germany, Bose spoke to his friends in confidence and at *great length of the poverty of thinking in the higher echelons of the German Army and his failure to bring them to an alternative course in the conduct of the war.* In the midst of grim forebodings as to the fate of German arms, he saw a silver lining in the political horizon of Asia when he heard of a statement made by the Soviet Government to the Japanese Government regarding the future of his continent. In the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, the Japanese Counsellor Kawahara told him that the *Soviet Government had made a declaration to the Japanese Government that whatever might be the outcome of the war — according to the Soviet Government, South-east Asia would never return to the position prior to 1942, that Asia was awake and that there had to be a general plan for the progress of Asia.* This information encouraged Bose to assume that the Soviet Union was basically opposed to the capitalist-imperialist war aims of the Anglo-American powers. Further, Bose is also believed to have toyed with the idea that the powers occupying the great land masses of Europe and Asia would eventually combine against the Anglo-Americans and that India would belong to such a *Euro-Asian Comity of Nations, a new inter-*

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

continental bloc, extending from Tokyo to the Atlantic Ocean *via* Moscow and Berlin. Such thoughts might have been promoted by the information given to Bose in Berlin and later also in Japan that the Soviet Union had sent out feelers regarding a separate peace treaty with Germany.

That from early 1941 to the beginning of 1945, relations between Japan and the Soviet Union were completely normal and that diplomatic contacts between them ran along normal channels, was in general accord with Bose's war-time plans for his country's freedom. Opening of a second front by Japan against the Soviet Union in the Far East was in the interest of Germany on the one hand and also of Britain and the United States on the other. And these powers worked for such a front in their own ways. On the other hand, maintenance of peaceful and normal relations between them suited both Japan and the Soviet Union. Thus Japan and the Soviet Union throughout the greater part of the war, followed between themselves a compatible Asia policy. But, Japan's future was unfortunately much too deeply involved with that of the German Reich. Japanese leaders realised only too late that the relationship between Berlin and Moscow determined Japan's fate. After the very faint chance of a separate peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Germany had been missed largely on account of the utterly bankrupt policies of Hitler both on the military and political fronts, Japan was doomed.

In the background of the world political situation in August 1945, it is quite understandable that Bose should decide to proceed to Manchuria, then occupied by Soviet Union, to continue his struggle. That the Japanese agreed to place an aeroplane at his disposal for this purpose showed that they were true to the new 'Asian consciousness' which Bose discovered in Japan on his arrival there in 1943. That the Japanese tacitly agreed to let the Head of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind make contacts with the Soviets also supports this contention.

Since Subhas Chandra Bose fought his battles across the world a quarter of century ago, the process of decolonisation and the emergence of many new national states have been the major development in human affairs — particularly in Asia, Africa and South America. It has to be recognised that Bose was one of the pioneers of this historic development. As a national revolutionary Bose recognised his enemy, British Imperialism, clearly and fulfilled his historic duty of fighting to end it with a dedication and resourcefulness not matched by any other leader of Asia during the first half of this century. A full assessment of his role in the ultimate defeat of British Imperialism in Asia has not yet been made. That he played a major role is, nevertheless, beyond question. A bigger question, however, remains. What would have been his role in the building of a new India after independence? In other words, what would be Bose's ideological legacy for the Indian people in regard to post-war national reconstruction? In fact, his legacy would be of interest not only to the people of India but to all such nations and peoples who have since been struggling for national independence and a new social order.

Since Bose disappeared from the scene, the world political situation has changed profoundly. British Imperialism has been defeated in a large part of Asia and has ceased to be a major threat to human freedom and progress. But that is not to say that imperialism has disappeared from this world, in fact, it may well have evolved into more sinister forms. The principal feature of present-day world politics is the struggle for hegemony between the two super-powers U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. A new competitor in the field is Maoist China. Many other lesser powers and countries with limited means have tended to gather round one of these three super-powers and willy-nilly, accept their social and political systems and foreign policy. The Western capitalist system leads to two different directions, *viz.* the conservative direction resulting in the domination of big landlords and big business interests and the other in a liberal

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

socialist direction resulting in some sort of the so-called democratic socialist system. The left-socialist or communist world has three directions, *viz.* the orthodox Soviet system represented by the Brezhnev doctrine, the new proletarian communism as propounded by Mao Tse-tung and lastly, the independent left socialist movements represented by Tito in Yugoslavia, Castro in Cuba, and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. There is no doubt that Bose, had he returned to India, would have had to choose his road more or less in terms of the above possibilities.

Bose's opting for the Western capitalist system of either variety, including what he himself used to call 'milk and water socialism' can be dismissed outright. His whole political record cancels any such possibility. On the other hand, as a dedicated national revolutionary with a messianic faith in India's historic obligation to evolve a new social order on the basis of a synthesis of all known revolutionary social experiments, he could not have accepted the hegemonistic political creed of either Russia or China. The *Samyavada* that he was searching for India undoubtedly meant for him a *new* alternative. Thus, Free India under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose would have emerged as a new challenge to the world in ideology and practice. There is every reason to believe that, because of the history, size and potential of a united India, the India of Bose's conception and making would have been a bigger challenge to world history and politics than Vietnam, Yugoslavia or Cuba.

Even as a human being and a thinker, Bose was seeking a new philosophy — a new ethical conception — in human affairs. A rare personality in contemporary world history, he was at once deeply involved in the great spiritual heritage of India and actively concerned with the most modern social and technological advances anywhere in the world. His sense of mission did not admit of any compromises or any reservations. He sought to inspire, by his own example, his countrymen and his followers with the same spirit of total dedication to the cause. In this he also succeeded in a great measure and thus remains

Epilogue

an example in leadership. Thus, even though Bose left us much before his time, his legacy in thought and deed for the present and coming generations remains. Who knows, India may in time rediscover Subhas Chandra Bose and in his own words "deliver to the world the message that has been her heritage through the past ages".

Appendices

1. The Karachi Address, 1931

Subhas Chandra Bose's Presidential address at the Karachi conference of the All-India Naujawan Bharat Sabha, 27 March, 1931

Friends and comrades! Today we are meeting under the shadow of a great tragedy. Our minds are too full to speak. At such a critical moment in the history of our country, you have asked me to preside over your conference. For this I feel grateful to you.

We are concerned here with the consideration of that socio-economic structure and body politic which will help to foster manhood and develop character and the will to translate into reality the highest ideal of collective humanity. We are also interested here in investigating the methods that will bring about the earliest attainment of this goal. I am led to the conclusion that the principles which should form the basis of our collective life are justice and equality. We must get rid of bondage of every kind — social, economic and political — and we must become fully and wholly free.

To summarise what I have said, I want a Socialist Republic in India. The message I have to give is one of complete, all-round, undiluted freedom. Until the radical or revolutionary elements are stirred up we cannot get freedom, and we cannot stir up the revolutionary elements among us except by inspiring them with a new message which comes from the heart and goes straight to the heart.

The fundamental weakness in the Congress policy and programme is that there is a great deal of vagueness and mental reservation in the minds of the leaders. Their programme is based not on radicalism but on adjustments — adjustments between the landlord and the tenant, between the capitalist and

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the wage-earner, between the so-called upper classes and the so-called depressed classes, between men and women.

I do not believe that the Congress programme can win freedom for India. The programme by which I believe freedom can be achieved is :

1. Organisation of peasants and workers on a socialistic programme.
2. Organisation of youth into Volunteer Corps under strict discipline.
3. Abolition of the caste system and the eradication of social and religious superstitions of all kinds.
4. Organisation of women's associations for getting our womenfolk to accept the gospel and work out the new programme.
5. Intensive programme for boycott of British goods.
6. Creation of new literature for propagating the new cult and programme.

Before referring to the Gandhi-Irwin truce, I must say something about the Lahore executions. Bhagat Singh was a symbol of the spirit of revolt which has taken possession of the country from one end to the other. That spirit is unconquerable, and the flame which that spirit has lit up will not die. India may have to lose many more sons before she can hope to be free. These recent executions are to me sure indications that there has been no change of heart on the side of the Government and the time for an honourable settlement has not arrived as yet.

With regard to the truce embodied in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, I may say that it is exceedingly unsatisfactory and highly disappointing. What pains me most is the consideration that at the time this Pact was drawn up, we actually had more strength than would appear from the contents of the document. The Pact has inherent weaknesses, but now that the truce is an accomplished fact the question before us is what is to be done at this

stage. I do not for one moment question the patriotism of those who are responsible for the truce terms. Consequently the best course for us will be to do some positive work which will strengthen the nation and the nation's demand. For this purpose I have outlined my programme which the more radical sections among our countrymen will do well to adopt and carry out. This will avoid unnecessary conflict with the Congress leaders at a time when such conflict may tend to weaken the people and strengthen the Government. Above all, let us have restraint and self-control even when we have to criticise others. We shall lose nothing by being courteous and restrained, and we may gain much.

India is the key-stone to the world edifice and a free India spells the destruction of Imperialism throughout the world. Let us, therefore, rise to the occasion and make India free so that humanity may be saved.

2. Letter to Dr. Thierfelder on Indo-German Relations, 1936

Kurhaus Hochland
Badgastein
The 25th March 1936

*Dear Dr. Thierfelder,*¹

It is time for me to return to India, but before I do so, I feel that I must say a few words in a frank but friendly manner.

When I first visited Germany in 1933, I had hopes that the new German nation which had risen to a consciousness of its national strength and self-respect, would instinctively feel a deep sympathy for other nations struggling in the same direction. To-day I regret that I have to return to India with the conviction that the new nationalism of Germany is not only narrow and selfish but arrogant. The recent speech of Herr Hitler in Munich gives the essence of Nazi philosophy. I know that the Deutsche Nachrichtenburo has sent a *dementi* relating to this speech, to India and to Japan. But we do not accept this *dementi*, because it has not been published in the British or in the German press. The new racial philosophy which has a very weak scientific foundation, stands for the glorification of the white races in general and the German race in particular. Herr Hitler has talked of the destiny of the white races to rule over the rest of the world. But the historical fact is that up till now the Asiatics have dominated Europe more than have the Europeans dominated Asia. One has only to consider the repeated invasions of Europe by Mongols, the Turks, the Arabs (Moors), the Huns, and other Asiatic races to understand the strength of my argument. I am saying this not because I stand for the domination of one people by another, but simply because I want to

¹ Dr. Frank Thierfelder is the Director of the India Institute, Munich, Germany.

point out that it is historically false to say that Europe and Asia should not be at peace with one another. It therefore pains us that the new nationalism in Germany is inspired by selfishness and racial arrogance. Here Hitler in his *Mein Kampf* denounced Germany's old colonial policy. But Nazi Germany has begun to talk of her old colonies.

Apart from this new racial philosophy and selfish nationalism there is another factor which affects us even more. Germany in her desire to curry favour with Great Britain finds it convenient to attack India and the Indian people. We have had repeated examples of this in the history of the National Socialist Party. The attempt began nearly ten years ago when the party published a pamphlet in English for propaganda in England consisting of anti-Indian passages from the books of Herr Hitler and Dr. Rosenberg.

I have great regard for the work that you and the Deutsche Akademie have been doing for an understanding between our two countries. But I feel sorry, that owing to the reasons given above, much of this work is being undone. I can only hope in the long run your efforts will prevail, but the present atmosphere in Germany is rather disappointing for us. The older generation which had been brought up under the influence of a different racial and political philosophy is quite different from the people who are trained under the influence of a new and different philosophy — racial and political. I know that we shall not lose our old friends, but I doubt if we shall gain new ones from among the new generation. According to our past experience, the Germans were a very warm-hearted people, particularly friendly to Indians. But we know what will happen when the new education has had its full effect on the rising generation.

I am extremely thankful to you for the efforts you made in arranging the meeting in January last. I had two long talks with Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff and Gesandter Dr. Prusor. Both of them were personally very cordial to me, as on former occa-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

sions. But the result of the interview was practically nil. I left them with the conviction that they attached very little importance to the Indian question. I also had the feeling that if an understanding with India is to be realised, some other Ministry or Ministries should be approached.

After the speech of Herr Hitler, I have issued a very strong statement to the Indian press which I hope will be published in due course. But I would like to say this before I leave Europe that I am still prepared to work for an understanding between Germany and India. This understanding must be consistent with our national self-respect. When we are fighting the greatest empire in the world for our freedom and for our rights and when we are confident of our ultimate success, we cannot brook any insult from any other nation or any attack on our race or culture.

I am an optimist and I still hope that the present atmosphere will change and we shall ultimately arrive at an understanding. Meanwhile I assure you of my warmest esteem and of the great regard I have for the work of the Deutsche Akademie. You need not take the trouble of replying to this letter because within a few days I shall be on my way and on my arrival in India, I shall in all probability be imprisoned.

With warmest compliments,

I am
Yours sincerely
Subhas C. Bose

P.S. : The above represents not only my personal views but also the views of Indian nationalists in general. I have no objection if you forward a copy of this letter to any friends or to any state-department — in order to inform them about the Indian attitude towards Germany.

S.C.B.

3. The Tripuri Address, 1939

(Presidential address of Subhas Chandra Bose at the 52nd Session of the Indian National Congress held at Tripuri on 10 March 1939)

Comrade Chairman, Sister and Brother Delegates,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great honour you have done me by re-electing me to the Presidential chair of the Indian National Congress and also for the warm and cordial welcome you have given me here at Tripuri. It is true that at my request you have had to dispense with some of the pomp that is usual on such occasions; but I feel that that enforced step has not taken away one iota of the warmth and cordiality of your reception and I hope that nobody will regret the curtailment of it on this occasion.

Friends, before I proceed any further, I shall voice your feelings by expressing our joy at the success of Mahatma Gandhi's mission to Rajkot and the termination of his fast in consequence thereof. The whole country now feels happy and tremendously relieved.

Friends, this year promises to be an abnormal or extraordinary one in many ways. The Presidential election this time was not of the humdrum type. The election was followed by sensational developments culminating in resignation of twelve out of fifteen members of the Working Committee, headed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Another distinguished and eminent member of the Working Committee, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, though he did not formally resign, issued a statement which led everybody to believe that he had also resigned. On the eve of the Tripuri Congress, events at Rajkot forced Mahatma Gandhi to undertake a vow of fast unto death. And then the President arrived at Tripuri a sick man. It will, therefore, be in the fitness of things if the Presi-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

dential address this year can claim to be a departure from precedent in the matter of its length.

Friends, you are aware that the Wafdist Delegation from Egypt has arrived in our midst as guests of the Indian National Congress. You will join me in according a most hearty welcome to all of them. We are extremely happy that they found it possible to accept our invitation and make the voyage to India. We are only sorry that political exigencies in Egypt did not permit the President of the Wafd, Mustapha El Nahas Pasha, to personally lead this Delegation. Having had the privilege of knowing the President and leading members of the Wafdist Party my joy today is all the greater. Once again, I offer them on behalf of our countrymen a most hearty and cordial welcome.

Since we met at Haripura in February, 1938, several significant events have taken place in the international sphere. The most important of these is the Munich Pact of September 1938, which implied an abject surrender to Nazi Germany on the part of the Western Powers, France and Great Britain. As a result of this, France ceased to be the dominant power in Europe and the hegemony passed into the hands of Germany, without a shot being fired. In more recent times, the gradual collapse of the Republican Government in Spain seems to have added to the strength and prestige of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The so-called democratic powers, France and Great Britain, have joined Italy and Germany in conspiring to eliminate Soviet Russia from European politics, for the time being. But how long will that be possible? There is no doubt that as a result of recent international developments, in Europe as well as in Asia, British and French imperialism have received a considerable setback in the matter of strength and prestige.

Coming to home politics, in view of my ill-health, I shall content myself with referring to only a few important problems. In the first place, I must give clear and unequivocal expression to what I have been feeling for some time past, namely, that the time has come for us to raise the issue of Swaraj and submit our

national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum. The time is long past when we could have adopted a passive attitude and waited for the Federal scheme to be imposed on us. The problem no longer is as to when the Federal scheme will be forced down our throats. The problem is as to what we should do if the Federal scheme is conveniently shelved for a few years till peace is stabilised in Europe. There is no doubt that once there is stable peace in Europe, whether through a Four-Power Pact or through some other means, Great Britain will adopt a strong empire policy. The fact that she is now showing some signs of trying to conciliate the Arabs as against the Jews in Palestine is because she is feeling herself weak in the international sphere. In my opinion, therefore, we should submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum and give a certain time-limit within which a reply is to be expected. If no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received, we should resort to such sanctions as we possess in order to enforce our national demand. The sanctions that we possess today are mass civil disobedience or Satyagraha. And the British Government today are not in a position to face a major conflict like an All-India Satyagraha for a long period.

It grieves me to find that there are people in the Congress who are so pessimistic as to think that the time is not ripe for a major assault on British Imperialism. But looking at the situation in a thoroughly realistic manner, I do not see the slightest ground for pessimism. With Congress in power in eight provinces, the strength and prestige of our national organisation have gone up. The mass movement has made considerable headway throughout British India. And last but not least, there is an unprecedented awakening in the Indian States. What more opportune moment could we find in our national history for a final advance in the direction of Swraj, particularly when the international situation is favourable to us? Speaking as a cold-blooded realist, I may say that all the facts of the present-

day situation are so much to our advantage that one should entertain the highest degree of optimism. If only we sink our differences, pool all our resources and pull our full weight in the national struggle, we can make our attack on British Imperialism irresistible. Shall we have the political foresight to make the most of our present favourable position or shall we miss this opportunity which is a rare opportunity in the lifetime of a nation?

I have already referred to the awakening in the Indian States. I am definitely of the view that we should revise our attitude towards the States as defined by the Haripura Congress resolution. That resolution, as you are aware, put a ban on certain forms of activity in the States, being conducted in the name of the Congress. Under that resolution, neither parliamentary work nor struggle against the State should be carried on in the name of the Congress. But since Haripura much has happened. Today we find that the Paramount Power is in league with the State authorities in most places. In such circumstances, should we of the Congress not draw closer to the people of the States? I have no doubt in my own mind as to what our duty is today.

Besides lifting the above ban, the work of guiding the popular movements in the States for Civil Liberty and Responsible Government should be conducted by the Working Committee on a comprehensive and systematic basis. The work so far done has been of a piecemeal nature and there has hardly been any system or plan behind it. But the time has come when the Working Committee should assume this responsibility and discharge it in a comprehensive and systematic way and, if necessary, appoint a special sub-committee for the purpose. The fullest use should be made of the guidance and co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi and of the co-operation of the All-India States' Peoples Conference.

I have referred earlier to the advisability of our making a final advance in the direction of Swaraj. That will need adequate preparation. In the first place, we shall have to take steps

to ruthlessly remove whatever corruption or weakness has entered our ranks largely due to the lure of power. Next, we shall have to work in close co-operation with all anti-imperialist organisations in the country, particularly the Kisan movement and the Trade Union movement. All the radical elements in the country must work in close harmony and co-operation and the efforts of all anti-imperialist organisations must converge in the direction of a final assault on British Imperialism.

Friends, today the atmosphere within the Congress is clouded and dissensions have appeared. Many of our friends are consequently feeling depressed and dispirited. The cloud that you see to-day is a passing one. I have faith in the patriotism of my countrymen, and I am sure that before long we shall be able to tide over the present difficulties and restore unity within our ranks. A somewhat similar situation had arisen at the time of the Gaya Congress in 1922 and thereafter, when Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, of hallowed memory, started the Swarajya Party. May the spirit of my late Guru, of revered Motilalji and of other great sons of India inspire us in the present crisis and may Mahatma Gandhi, who is still with us to guide and assist our nation, help the Congress out of the present tangle is my earnest prayer. Vande Mataram!

4. The Ramgarh Address, 1940

(Full text of the Presidential Address of Subhas Chandra Bose at the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference, Ramgarh, Bihar, 19 March 1940)

Comrades,

You have done me a very great honour by inviting me to preside over the deliberations of the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh today. At the same time the responsibility you have thrown on my shoulders is onerous to a degree. This Conference is intended to focus all the anti-imperialist forces in the country that are now determined to resist a compromise with Imperialism. To preside over such a Conference is by no means an easy task. This task becomes all the more serious and arduous when the Chairman of the Reception Committee is no less a person than Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. It is in response to Swamiji's clarion call that we have assembled here today.

Comrades, I shall fail in my duty if before proceeding to discuss the problem of the day, I do not pay a tribute to those who are responsible for organising this Conference. I happen to know something of the obstacles and the difficulties that had to be overcome before this Conference could meet and I can, therefore, speak with a certain amount of authority. These obstacles and difficulties were of a twofold character. In the first place, there were physical and material obstacles and difficulties to be overcome at Ramgarh before adequate arrangements for the Conference could be made. In the second place, persistent hostile propaganda all over the country had to be faced and counteracted by the organisers of the Conference. The most surprising and painful of this propaganda was the determined endeavour of a section of Leftists (or shall I say pseudo-Leftists) to make this Conference impossible by openly cou-

denning it and also by trying to sabotage it. As a matter of fact, during the last few months it has become more and more evident that a number of Leftists have begun to play the role of apologists of the Rightists — but such a phenomenon is not new in history. Man lives to learn and the longer he lives, the more does he realise the aptness of the oft-repeated truism that history repeats itself.

It has been argued by the apologists of the Congress Working Committee that the Congress is itself the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference and that such a Conference is, therefore, unnecessary. The resolution of the last meeting of the Congress Working Committee which met at Patna is held up before our eyes in order to demonstrate that the Congress has adopted an uncompromising policy. One cannot but admire the naivete of such an argument, but is it meet and proper for politicians and political workers to be so very naive?

One has only to go through the whole of the Patna resolution and particularly through the latter portion of it in order to realise that there are loopholes which detract from the intrinsic value of that resolution. No sooner was this resolution passed than Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the statement that the door had not been banged on future negotiations for a settlement. Mahatma's subsequent lengthy remarks on Civil Disobedience do not assure us by any means that the period of struggle has commenced. In fact, what has distressed and bewildered us during the last year and a half is the fact that while on the one hand red-hot resolutions are passed and statements issued by members of the Congress Working Committee, simultaneously other remarks are made and statements issued either by Mahatma Gandhi or by other Rightist leaders which create a totally different impression on the average mind. Then there is the moot question as to whether the Patna resolution would have been passed at all, but for the pressure exerted by the Left during the last six months.

The country eagerly awaits a clear and unequivocal declara-

tion from the Congress Working Committee that the door has finally been banged on all talks of a compromise with Imperialism. But will this declaration be forthcoming? If so, when?

Comrades, those who aver that the Congress is the biggest Anti-Compromise Conference perhaps suffer from shortness of memory and their brains consequently need refreshing. Have they forgotten that as soon as the War began, Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to Simla without caring to consult the Congress Working Committee and informed His Excellency the Viceroy that he was in favour of rendering unconditional help to Great Britain in the prosecution of the War? Do they not realise that Mahatma Gandhi being the sole dictator of the Congress, his personal views necessarily have a far-reaching implication? Have they forgotten that since the outbreak of War, the Congress Working Committee has side-tracked the main issue — namely, our demand for Purna Swaraj — by putting forward a demand for a fake Constituent Assembly? Have they forgotten that some prominent Rightist leaders, including members of the Congress Working Committee, have been continuously whittling down the implications of a Constituent Assembly and that they have gone so far as to accept separate electorate and the existing franchise for the Legislative Assembly as the basis for electing the Constituent Assembly of their dreams? Have they forgotten that after the resignation of Congress ministers, several Congress Ministers have been showing an inordinate desire to get back to office? Have they forgotten the consistent attitude which Mahatma Gandhi has adopted during the last six months in the matter of a compromise with the British Government? And do they not know that behind the smoke-screen of hot phrases, negotiations for a compromise have been going on apace?

Unfortunately for us, the British Government have ceased to take the Congress seriously and have formed the impression that however much Congressmen may talk, they will not ultimately show fight. Since September 1939, there has not been any dearth

of resolutions and statements. Some members of the Congress Working Committee opine that these resolutions have impressed the world. But whether they have impressed the world or not, they have certainly not impressed the British, who are essentially a realistic race. During the last six months we have offered them only words and words and we have received the time-worn reply that so long as the Hindu-Muslim problem remains unsolved, *Purna Swaraj* is unthinkable.

Since September last India has been passing through a rare crisis when men's minds have fallen a prey to doubt and vacillation. The first to fall were the leaders themselves and the demoralisation that seized them has been spreading as a contagion throughout the land. A determined and widespread effort is needed if we are to stem the rot. To make this effort really effective, our activities should be focused at an all-India conference of all those who are determined to have no truck with Imperialism.

The crisis that has overtaken us may be rare in Indian history, but it is nothing new in the history of the world. Such crises generally appear in periods of transition. In India we are now ringing down the curtain on an age that is passing away, while we are at the same time ushering in the dawn of a new era. The age of Imperialism is drawing to a close and the era of freedom, democracy and Socialism looms ahead of us. India, therefore, stands today at one of the crossroads of history. It is for us to share, if we so will, the heritage that awaits the world.

It is not to be wondered at that men's minds should be bewildered when the old structure is crashing under its own weight and the new is yet to rise out of the ashes of the old. But let us not lose faith in ourselves, or in our countrymen or in humanity in this hour of uncertainty. To lose faith would be a calamity of the first magnitude.

Such crises constitute the supreme test of a nation's leadership. The present crisis has put our own leadership to the test and the latter has been unfortunately found wanting. It is only

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

by analysing and exposing the causes of its failure that we can learn the lesson of history and lay the foundation of our future effort and achievement. But such analysis and exposure will necessarily be painful to all concerned, though there is means of avoiding it.

I may digress at this stage and draw an analogy with similar crises in other climes and ages. When the October Revolution broke out in Russia in 1917, nobody had a clear conception as to how the revolution should be directed. Most of the Bolsheviks were then thinking in terms of a coalition with other parties. It was left to Lenin to denounce all coalitions and give out the slogan — "All Power to the Soviet". Who knows what turn Russian history would have taken but for this timely lead of Lenin's during a period of doubt and vacillation? Lenin's unerring instinct (or intuition) which ultimately proved to be prophetic, saved Russia from disaster and from a tragedy similar to that which overtook Spain the other day.

Let us now take a contrary case. Italy in 1922 was to all intents and purposes, ripe for socialism. All that she needed was an Italian Lenin. But the man of the hour did not arrive and the opportunity slipped out of Socialist hands. It was immediately seized by the Fascist leader, Benito Mussolini. By his march to Rome and his seizure of power, Italian history took an altogether different turn and Italy ultimately went Fascist instead of going socialist. Doubt and vacillation had seized the Italian leaders and so they failed. Mussolini had one supreme virtue which not only saved him but brought him the laurels of victory. He knew his mind and he was not afraid to act. That constituted the essence of leadership.

Today our leaders are wobbling and their vacillation has demoralised a section of Leftists as well. 'Unity', 'National Front', 'Discipline' — these have become cheap slogans which have no relation to reality. Befogged by such attractive slogans, they seem to have forgotten that the supreme need of the hour is a bold, uncompromising policy leading us on to a national

struggle. Whatever strengthens us for this purpose is to be welcomed. Whatever weakens us is to be eschewed. Unity which ties us to the apron-strings of Rightist politicians is by no means a blessing. We might as well induce the Congress to effect unity with the Liberal Federation — if unity is to be desired under all conditions and circumstances.

In the present crisis, the most distressing phenomenon is the disruption within the ranks of those who were hitherto regarded as *Leftists*. The immediate future will prove to be the acid test of Leftism in India. Those who will be found wanting will be soon exposed as pseudo-Leftists. The members of the Forward Bloc, too, will have to demonstrate by their work and conduct that they are really forward and dynamic. It may be that in the ordeal that is ahead of us, some of those who are branded as Rightists today, will prove to be genuine Leftists — Leftists in action, I mean.

A word is necessary here in order to explain what we mean by Leftism. The present age is the anti-imperialist phase of our movement. Our main task in this age is to end Imperialism and win national Independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be the socialist phase of our movement. In the present phase of our movement, Leftists will be those who will wage an uncompromising fight with Imperialism. Those who waver and vacillate in their struggle against Imperialism — those who tend towards a compromise with it — cannot by any means be Leftists. In the next phase of our movement, Leftism will be synonymous with socialism — but in the present phase, the words 'Leftist' and 'Anti-imperialist' would be interchangeable.

The problem of the hour is — "Will India still remain under the thumb of the Rightists or will she swing to the Left, once for all?" The answer to this can be furnished only by the Leftists themselves. If they adopt a bold, uncompromising policy in their struggle with Imperialism, regardless of all dangers, difficulties

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

and obstacles, then the Leftists will make history and India will go Left.

To those who may still be thinking of a compromise, the recent history of Ireland and the sequel to the Anglo-Irish Treaty should prove highly instructive and edifying.

A compromise with Imperialism will mean that an anti-imperialist national struggle will soon be converted into a civil war among the people themselves. Would this be desirable from any point of view?

In the event of a compromise being effected with Imperialism in this country, Indian Leftists will in future have to fight not only Imperialism, but its new-fangled Indian allies as well. This will necessarily mean that the national struggle with Imperialism will be converted into a civil war among the Indians themselves.

Let us take time by the forelock and let us act while it is not too late. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati has sounded the clarion call. Let us respond to it with all the strength and courage that we possess. From this Conference let us send out a warning to both Imperialism and its Indian allies. The success of this Conference should mean the death-knell of compromise with Imperialism.

Before we part, let us also set up a permanent machinery for implementing the resolutions of this Conference and for waging an uncompromising war with Imperialism. Everybody now realises that if the Working Committee of the Congress does not give the call for launching a national struggle, others will have to do so. It would, therefore, be in the fitness of things for this Conference to set up a permanent machinery for undertaking this responsibility — should the Working Committee fail us in this crisis. I hope and trust that the deliberations of this Conference will be a prelude to work and struggle on a nation-wide scale and on an All-India front.

Inqulab Zindabad.

5. The Political Testament 1940

To
H.E. the Governor of Bengal,
The Hon. Chief Minister
and
The Council of Ministers.

Your Excellency and Gentlemen !

I am writing this in connection with my letter of the 30th October, 1940, addressed to the Hon. Home Minister (copy of which was forwarded to the Hon. Chief Minister) and my confidential letters to the Superintendent, Presidency Jail, dated the 30th October and 14th November, which were forwarded to Government in due course. Herein I shall recapitulate what I have to say regarding my own case and shall also put down in black and white the considerations that are impelling me to take the most fateful step in my life.

I have no longer any hope that I shall obtain redress at your hands. I shall, therefore, make but two requests, the second of which will be at the end of this letter. My first request is that this letter be carefully preserved in the archives of the Government, so that it may be available to those of my countrymen who will succeed you in office in future. It contains a message for my countrymen and is therefore my political testament.

I was arrested without any official explanation or justification on the 2nd July, 1940, as per orders of the Government of Bengal, under Section 129 of the Defence of India Rules. The first explanation subsequently emanating from official sources came from the Rt. Hon. Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, who stated in the House of Commons quite categorically that the arrest was in connection with the movement for the demolition of the Holwell Monument in Calcutta.

The Hon. Chief Minister virtually confirmed this pronouncement at a sitting of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and stated that it was the Holwell Monument Satyagraha which stood in

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

the way of my release. When the Government decided to remove the Monument, all those who had been detained without trial in connection therewith were set free, with the exception of Mr. Naendia Narayan Chakravarti, M.L.A. and myself. These releases took place towards the end of August, 1940, and almost simultaneously an order for my permanent detention was served under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules, in lieu of the original order under Section 129, which provided for temporary detention.

Strangely enough, with the new order under Section 26, came the news that prosecution was being launched against me under Section 38 of the D.I. Rules before two Magistrates — for three of my speeches and for a contributed article in the weekly journal *Forward Bloc*, of which I had been the Editor. Two of these speeches had been delivered in February, 1940, and the third one early in April. Thus the Government created a unique and unprecedented situation towards the end of August last by detaining me permanently without trial under one Section of the Defence of India Rules and simultaneously prosecuting me before judicial tribunals under another Section of the same Rules. I had not seen a similar combination of executive fiat and judicial procedure before this occurrence took place. Such a policy is manifestly illegal and unjust and smacks of vindictiveness, pure and simple.

One cannot fail to notice that the prosecution was launched long after the alleged offences had taken place. Nor can it be overlooked that for the relevant article in *Forward Bloc*, the paper had already been penalised through forfeiture of the security of Rs. 500 and deposit of a further security of Rs. 2,000. Moreover, the attack on the paper was made all of a sudden, after a long period during which no warning had been given to the paper in accordance with the practice of Government.

The attitude of the Bengal Government was further exposed when applications for my release on bail were made before the two trying Magistrates. Both these applications were stoutly

opposed by the Government spokesmen. On the last occasion, one of the Magistrates, Mr. Wali-ul-Islam granted the bail application, but was constrained to remark that this order would remain inoperative till the Government withdrew their order for my detention without trial under Section 26 of the D.I. Rules. It is thus as clear as daylight that the Government have been pursuing a policy which fetters the discretion of judicial tribunals and interferes with the administration of law. The action of the local Government appears all the more objectionable when it is remembered that they have given the go-by to the instructions of the Government of India with regard to such cases.

Another interesting feature of the Government's policy is my simultaneous prosecution before two Magistrates. If the intention was to place more than one speech of mine before a court of law, that could very well have been fulfilled without resorting to two Magistrates, for I have delivered any number of speeches during the last twelve months within the limits of Calcutta proper. The man in the street is, therefore, forced to think that Government are so keen on seeing me convicted that they have provided for a second string to the legal bow.

Last but not least, Government's action appears to an impartial man to be altogether mala fide, because proceedings were instituted so long after the alleged prejudicial acts had been committed. If the acts in question were in fact prejudicial, then action should have been taken by Government long ago, *i.e.* at the time that the alleged offences were committed.

May I request you to compare for one moment your attitude towards people like myself and towards Muslims arrested and imprisoned under the Defence of India Rules? How many cases have occurred up till now in which Muslims apprehended under the D.I. Rules have been suddenly released without rhyme or reason? The latest example of the Maulvi of Murapara is too fresh in the public mind to need recounting. Are we to understand that under your rule there is one law for the Muslim and another law for the Hindu and that the D.I. Rules have a diffe-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

rent meaning when a Muslim is involved? If so, the Government might as well make a pronouncement to that effect.

Lest it be argued or suggested for one moment that for my incarceration, the Government of India and not the Local Government are responsible, I may remind you that in connection with an adjournment motion concerning myself, tabled by Pandit L. K. Maitra before the Indian Legislative Assembly only the other day, it was stated on behalf of the Government of India that the matter should not come before the Central Assembly, since I had been incarcerated by the Bengal Government. I believe a similar admission was made in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Ministry.

And we cannot forget that here in Bengal we live under the benign protection of a 'popular' ministry.

My recent election to the Indian Legislative Assembly has raised another issue — that of 'immunity' from imprisonment for members of the Legislature, while the Legislature is in session. This is a right inherent in every constitution, no matter whether it is explicitly provided in the statute or not and this right has been established after a protracted struggle. Quite recently, the Burma Government allowed a convicted prisoner to attend the sittings of the Burma Legislative Assembly, but though I am not a convicted prisoner, I have been denied that right by our 'popular' ministry.

If apologists attempt to invoke the precedent of Captain Ramsay, M.P. in support of the Government, I may point out that Capt. Ramsay's case stands on a different footing altogether. Serious charges have been preferred against him, but all the facts not being known to us, it is difficult to argue either way. One may, however, urge that if Capt. Ramsay has been unjustly imprisoned and no redress will be ultimately forthcoming, it would lend substance to what Mr. Kennedy (American Ambassador to Great Britain) and others are reported to have said — namely, that democracy is dead in England. In any case, Capt.

Ramsay has had the opportunity of getting his case examined by a Committee of the House of Commons.

In dealing with my case generally, two broad issues have now to be considered. Firstly, have the Defence of India Rules any sanction — ethical or popular? Secondly, have the rules, as they stand, been properly applied in my case? The answers to both the questions are in the negative.

The D.I. Rules have no ethical sanction behind them because they constitute an infringement of the elementary rights and liberties of the people. Moreover, they are essentially a war-measure and, as is known to everybody, India was declared a belligerent power and was dragged into the war, without the consent of the Indian people or the Indian Legislature. Further, these Rules militate against the claim so vociferously made in Britain that she is fighting the cause of freedom and democracy. And lastly, the Congress Party in the Central Assembly was not a party to the adoption of the Defence of India Act or the Defence of India Rules. In these circumstances, it would not be improper to ask whether the Defence of India Rules should not more appropriately be called the Suppression of India Rules or the Defence of Injustice Rules.

It may be urged on behalf of this Government that the Defence of India Act being an Act of the Central Legislature, all provincial Governments are obliged to administer the Rules framed thereunder. But enough has already been said above to justify the charge that Rules, even as they stand, have not been properly applied in my case. There has been manifest illegality and injustice. Only one explanation can, to my mind, account for such a strange conduct, *viz.* that Government have been pursuing a frankly vindictive policy towards me for reasons that are quite inexplicable.

For more than two months, the question has been knocking at the door of my conscience over and over again as to what I should do in such a predicament. Should I submit to the pressure of circumstances and accept whatever comes my way —

or should I protest against what to me is unfair, unjust and illegal? After the most mature deliberation I have come to the conclusion that surrender to circumstances is out of the question. It is a more heinous crime to submit to a wrong inflicted than to perpetrate that wrong. So, protest I must.

But all these days, protest has been going on and the ordinary methods of protest have all been exhausted. Agitation in the press and on the platform, representations to Government, demand in the Assembly, exploration of legal channels — have not all of these been already tried and found ineffective? Only one method remains — the last weapon in the hands of a prisoner, *i.e.* hunger-strike or fast.

In the cold light of logic I have examined the pros and cons of this step and have carefully weighed the loss and gain that will accrue from it. I have no illusions in the matter and I am fully conscious that the immediate tangible gain will be nil, for I am sufficiently conversant with the behaviour of Governments and bureaucracies in such crises. The classic and immortal examples of Terence Macswiney and Jatin Das are floating before my mind's eye at the moment. A system has no heart that could be moved, though it has a false sense of prestige to which it always clings.

Life under existing conditions is intolerable for me. To purchase one's continued existence by compromising with illegality and injustice goes against my very grain. I would throw up life itself, rather than pay this price. Government are determined to hold me in prison by brute force. I say in reply: "Release me or shall I refuse to live — and it is for me to decide whether I choose to live or to die."

Though there may be no immediate, tangible gain — no suffering, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering and sacrifice alone that a cause can flourish and prosper and in every age and clime, the eternal law prevails — "the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church."

In this mortal world, everything perishes and will perish —

but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas, ideals and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice.

What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better reward can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the broad plains to every corner of his land and across the seas to distant lands? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause?

Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth earthy, he will gain much more in return by becoming the heir to a life immortal.

This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die, so that India may live and may win freedom and glory.

To my countrymen I say, "Forget not that the greatest curse for a man is to remain a slave. Forget not that the grossest crime is to compromise with injustice and wrong. Remember the eternal law - You must give life, if you want to get it. And remember that the highest virtue is to battle against iniquity, no matter what the cost may be."

To the Government of the day I say, "Cry halt to your mad drive along the path of communalism and injustice. There is yet time to retrace your steps. Do not use a boomerang which will soon recoil on you. And do not make another Sindh of Bengal."

I have finished. My second and last request to you is that you should not interfere forcibly with my fast, but should permit me to approach my end peacefully. In the case of Terence

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Macswiney, of Jatin Das, of Mahatma Gandhi and in our own case in 1926 Government did decide not to interfere with the fast. I hope they will do the same this time — otherwise any attempt to feed me by force will be resisted with all my strength, though the consequences thereof may be even more drastic and disastrous than otherwise.

I shall commence my fast on the 29th November, 1940.

Presidency Jail,
26.11.1940

*Yours faithfully,
Subhas Chandra Bose*

6. Memorandum to the German Government, 1941

(Secret Memorandum of Subhas Chandra Bose, Berlin, 9 April 1941)

PLAN FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE AXIS POWERS AND INDIA

As in the World War of 1914-18, so also in the present war, Great Britain has been endeavouring to exploit India for her war purposes. Since the war began, Great Britain has not relaxed her political and economic grip over India in spite of the manifold defeats she has suffered at the hands of Germany. To us in India, it is therefore crystal clear that as the British Empire collapses increasingly, Great Britain will try to hold on to India more and more and she will do so till the very last. It is also clear from British policy in India at the present time that if the British Empire somehow survives this war, Great Britain will endeavour to recover her strength by exploiting the rich resources of India so that she may be able to challenge the 'New Order' after some years.

India is naturally interested in seeing Great Britain completely vanquished in this war and the British Empire completely broken up, so that India may attain her national independence. The British Empire constitutes the greatest obstacle not only in the path of India's freedom but also in the path of human progress.

Since the attitude of the Indian people is intensely hostile to the British in the present war, it is possible for them to materially assist in bringing about the overthrow of Great Britain. India's cooperation could be secured if the Indian people are assured that an Axis victory will mean for them a free India.

In order to establish full cooperation between the Axis Powers and India for the achievement of the common objectives of de-

feating Great Britain, the following plan is being proposed : It will entail work in Europe, in Afghanistan, in the Independent Tribal Territory lying between Afghanistan and India and last but not least, in India.

1. Work in Europe

1. A 'Free Indian Government' should be set up in Europe and preferably in Berlin.

2. A treaty should be entered into between the Axis Powers and the Free Indian Government providing, *inter alia*, for India's independence in the event of an Axis victory, special facilities for the Axis Powers in India when an independent government is set up there, etc.

3. Legations of the Free Indian Government should be established in friendly countries wherever possible.

(N.B. The above measures will convince the Indian people that their independence has been guaranteed by the Axis Powers in the event of an Axis victory and that the status of independence is being recognised already in actual practice.)

4. Propaganda, particularly through the radio, should then be started, calling upon the Indian people to assert their independence and to rise in revolt against the British authorities. Broadcasting will be done in the name of the Free Indian Radio Station.

5. Arrangements should be made to send necessary help to India through Afghanistan for helping the revolution.

The help that India will require is being mentioned below.

2. Work in Afghanistan (Kabul)

1. A centre will have to be established in Kabul for maintaining communications between Europe on the one hand and India on the other. The existing legations may be so enlarged as to be able to undertake this work or new committees may be set up specially for this purpose.

2. The centre should have necessary equipment, like cars,

loeries, special messengers, etc. for maintaining communications between Europe and India.

3. Work in Tribal Territory

1. Our agents are already working in the independent Tribal Territory lying between Afghanistan and India. Their efforts will have to be coordinated and an attack on British military centres will have to be planned on a large scale. The isolated attack now being carried out by such anti-British elements as the Faku of Ipi will have to fit into this larger plan.

2. Some military advisers from Europe will have to be sent to the Tribal Territory.

3. A strong propaganda centre will have to be installed in the Tribal Territory and necessary printing equipment will have to be arranged for.

4. A radio transmitting station will have to be set up in the Tribal Territory.

5. Agents from the Tribal Territory will have to be appointed for procuring military intelligence from the Frontier Province of India, i.e. the province adjoining the Tribal Territory.

4. Work in India

1. Broadcasting for India will have to be done on a large scale. It will have to be done first from stations in Europe, and later on, from stations in the Tribal Territory as well.

2. The printing centre in the Tribal Territory will also be in charge of propaganda in India.

3. Our agents and members of our party in the different provinces in India will be instructed to give the maximum trouble possible to the British authorities in India. Their work will consist of :

- a. Intensive propaganda calling upon the Indian people not to give one soldier or one rupee to the British Government.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- b. Propaganda calling upon the civilian population to defy the civil authorities by refusing to pay taxes, refusing to obey the orders and the laws of the British Government, etc.
- c. Secret work among the Indian section of the army in order to induce them to rise in revolt.
- d. Organising strikes in factories which work for helping Great Britain in her war efforts.
- e. Carrying out sabotage of strategic railway bridges, factories, etc. (Necessary material for this work will have to be sent to India).
- f. Organising revolts among the civil population in the different parts of the country as a stepping-stone to a general mass revolution.

5. Question of Finances

Necessary finances for the above work will have to be provided by the Axis Powers. This will be in the form of a loan to the Free Indian Government established in Europe. At the end of the war, when an independent Government is set up in India, the loan will be repaid in full.

For the expenditure in Europe, payment will naturally have to be made in Marks. For the expenditure in Afghanistan, Marks can be converted into 'Afghans'. For the expenditure in India, 'Afghans' converted into Rupees notes could be printed in Europe and sent to India *via* Afghanistan.

6. Military Aid for smashing British Power in India

In the explanatory note attached to this, I have referred to the military position in India. It will be clear therefrom that the British Government have a maximum force of 70,000 British troops and auxiliaries on whose loyalty they can depend. Consequently, when the Indian troops begin to revolt, the British will find it difficult to hold India with British troops alone. At that juncture, if a small force of 50,000 soldiers with full modern

equipment comes to the aid of India, then the British can be wiped out of India completely. The Axis Powers should consider this important question also.

Memorandum

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. Lesson of the World War of 1914-18.
2. Future of the British Empire as considered by us.
3. The importance of India in the British Empire.
4. Some aspects of British diplomacy in the present war
5. The attitude of the Indian people in the present war as compared with their attitude in the world war of 1914-18
6. The military position in India today.
7. The importance for India of Japanese foreign policy in the Far East.

1. Lesson of the World War of 1914-18

The World War of 1914-18 had several lessons for humanity, but for the purpose of this note, I shall refer to only one. At the conclusion of that war, when the time came to remake the map of Europe, the Allied Powers — and Great Britain and France in particular — wanted to smash the Central Powers in such a manner that they would not be able to raise their heads again. The iniquities of the Treaty of Versailles were manifold, but Great Britain and France did not nevertheless succeed in disturbing the fundamental integrity and homogeneity of the German Reich. On the other hand, the two Empires, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman, were completely broken up and to-day we see clearly what the result of that break-up has been. But for the German Reich, there would have been no power in Europe at the present time to challenge the Anglo-French combination.

It is clear from the events of the last few years and particularly from the events of the last twelve months, that the one outstanding obstacle in the path of building up a new

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Europe and a new world is the heterogeneous British Empire. And even if Great Britain is defeated in the present war, she will still remain the implacable foe of progress and evolution. Consequently if the integrity of the British Empire is left untouched at the end of the war, it will be able to recover after a few years and then challenge the New Order. If the New Order is to last, the British Empire will have to be put out of action once for all and, to that end, it will have to be broken up completely.

The potential resources of the British Empire are incalculable and India is still the jewel of that Empire. If a defeated Great Britain is given time and opportunity to develop these resources, she will be in position to fight again and perhaps more effectively. From the policy and administration of the British Government in India since September 1939, it is clear that the more she has been collapsing in Europe, the more she has been trying to tighten her grip over India and to exploit the resources of that country for her selfish purpose. This effort will continue in future and we in India have no doubt in our minds that if the integrity of the British Empire is left untouched at the end of the present war, a defeated Great Britain will once again threaten the peace of the world after a decade or two.

It is for the Axis Powers to consider whether they should now treat Great Britain in the same manner in which she treated the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires in 1918-19. If Great Britain is to be paid back in her own coin, then the British Empire will have to be broken up completely and the countries that are now under the British yoke will have to be set free. It should be remembered in this connection that even if India alone is left with Great Britain and the other parts of the Empire are dismembered, Great Britain with the assistance of the potential resources of India, will be in a position to challenge the New Order after some years.

Future peace in Europe at the end of this war demands

imperatively a New Order, not only in Europe and Africa, but throughout the world. And with this New Order, the question of India is inseparably connected.

2 *Future of the British Empire as considered by us*

Even before the present war began, we in India were definitely of opinion that the British Empire was decadent. This was not the result of a theoretical knowledge of the laws operating in the history of mankind, but was the conclusion we reached after an observation of indisputable facts. The Empire had given the British people untold wealth and immeasurable resources but it had also given them comfort and luxury, self-complacency and arrogance. Consequently, deterioration in character and morale followed. One aspect of this deterioration is bankruptcy in diplomacy and statesmanship. The British we find in India and in Great Britain today are not the British we would have found, fifty years ago.

While on the one hand the British people have been deteriorating during the last few decades, there has been a phenomenal awakening among the suppressed nations of the Empire and particularly in India. The process of deterioration is thus being expedited by the pressures coming from different parts of the British Empire, e.g. Ireland (Eire), South Africa, Palestine, India, etc. owing to the national awakening everywhere.

It needed a war like the present one to expose to the world the fact that the mighty British Lion was not in reality as powerful as it appeared to be, but had feet of clay. The Empire owed its birth and continuance to military strength, including sea-power, and prestige. When internal deterioration set in and different parts of the Empire began to strive for their independence, other western nations were making rapid progress in science, industry, methods of warfare, etc. and Great Britain was not able to keep abreast of them. To a keen observer it was quite clear that the ultimate fate of the British Empire was doomed and it only needed an international clash to bring

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

about its speedy downfall. Till this clash took place in September 1939, the British Empire was, however, able to maintain its existence and keep up appearances through its past prestige. The series of overwhelming defeats which England has suffered in the different war-fronts since September 1939, have now not only exposed her actual military position, but also have shattered her prestige throughout the world including the dependencies and colonies of Great Britain. During the course of this note I shall show that with her prestige completely shattered and her actual military position so thoroughly exposed before the world, the British regime in India today is like a house of cards.

According to our view in India, when the collapse of the British Empire comes about, the following developments are likely to take place. Canada, Australia and New Zealand will gravitate towards the United States of America. Ireland, South Africa, India, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq etc. will throw off the British yoke and attain full-fledged independence. And the African colonies of England will be divided among the other powers. Great Britain will remain as a third class power in Europe, with no influence on the Continent.

It is within the reach of the Axis Powers to bring about the immediate collapse of the British Empire and its complete dismemberment. And it is possible for India to help in this task. It is hardly necessary to add that we in India want to see the complete dismemberment of this Empire, for we regard it as the greatest curse in modern history.

3. The Importance of India in the British Empire

India with her vast population and untold natural resources and incalculable potential wealth, is the jewel of the British Empire and it is the exploitation of India in the past which has made the British Empire what it is today. Nevertheless, it must be said that so far Great Britain has exploited only a fraction of the resources of India's men and materials. A policy of full

exploitation would have entailed more education for the people and more industrialisation in the country and this the British Government has up till now hesitated to undertake. In the present war we have seen that the British Government has been able to exploit such parts of the Empire as Ireland, South Africa, etc. to the extent that she wanted to — and as the days roll by, she has been trying to exploit India more and more for her selfish purposes. There were some Indians who wrongly thought at one time that as the position of Great Britain became precarious in Europe, she would relax her hold over India and concede the demand of the Indian people for national independence. But quite the contrary has actually occurred. We now find that the attitude of the British Government towards India's demand for freedom has become more stiff since the war began. British industrialists and experts have, moreover, been sent out to India to exploit that country and even such pro-British Indian industrialists who are thoroughly efficient and competent and run such huge concerns as the Tata Iron and Steel Company of Jamshedpur, the Iron and Steel Works of Mysore, the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, etc. are not given any share in the new plan of economic exploitation. Therefore, if we look at British policy in India today there cannot be the slightest doubt that England is determined to reserve India for her own exclusive exploitation and that the Indian people will not be allowed to have either their political freedom or liberty to develop their country industrially.

Consequently, it follows that if Great Britain can somehow avoid a break-up of the Empire in spite of being defeated in the present war, she will get breathing time and by exploiting the vast resources of India, will try again to disturb the New Order which will be ushered in at the end of this war.

India's freedom will make it impossible for Great Britain to raise her head again. And India by striving for freedom now can materially assist in bringing about the overthrow of Great Britain.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

4. Some aspects of British Diplomacy in the Present War

It is one of the cardinal principles of British diplomacy to adopt a sanctimonious role when she is fighting in reality for her own selfish interests. We saw in the World War that Great Britain posed as the champion of smaller nations and we see it now again. At the present time, in order to show that she is the champion of smaller nations, she is giving asylum in a most liberal manner to refugees from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, etc. These refugees like Benes, Sikorski, King of Norway, Queen of Holland, De Gaulle of France etc. are allowed to set up their own Governments in London under the name of 'free' Governments. They are given the full diplomatic status of independent Governments by virtue of special legislation and most, if not all, of these 'Governments' are financed by the British. By this clever subterfuge Great Britain endeavours to show to the world that she is in reality the champion of smaller nations.

Why should not the Axis Powers adopt the same policy and pay England back in her own coin? There are so many nations that are under the yoke of Great Britain and have been striving to throw off that yoke. The representatives of those suppressed nations could very well form their 'free' Governments in the Axis countries in Europe, thereby they could counteract British propaganda on the one hand and on the other help the revolution in their respective countries. This could easily be done at least in the case of India.

5. The attitude of the Indian People in the Present War as compared with their attitude in the War of 1911-18

In the World War the propaganda of the British Government in India was very successful and very little of German propaganda reached that country. Consequently, though the real desire of the people was that England should be defeated in the war, the impression was nevertheless created that the Allied Powers were very strong and would undoubtedly win. Under

this impression many of the older leaders in India were persuaded to give their moral support to Great Britain in her war efforts. During that war, Great Britain was able to recruit one and half million soldiers in India and also to raise large sums of money as a free gift from India for the prosecution of the war. On the present occasion, the situation is quite the reverse of what it was in 1914-18. British propaganda in India has been a failure in spite of its best efforts and nobody now imagines that Great Britain can be victorious this time. Anti-war propaganda has been carried on systematically by the Indian National Congress for several years, with the result that there is no sympathy for the British Government among the Indian people. Moreover, German propaganda through the radio is now able to reach India. The cumulative effect of all these factors has been that this time it took the British Government 15 months to recruit one hundred thousand soldiers in a poverty-stricken country like India in spite of all kinds of monetary temptation. And even these men will not be loyal to the British Government! The monetary help which Britain has received from India this time is a mere fraction of what she got in 1914-18. And even this amount has been subscribed chiefly by the British industrialists in India and the Maharajas. The people's contribution has been practically nothing. During the period from September 1939 to June 1940, I delivered at least one thousand lectures from one end of the country to the other, at which I put the question straight to the people as to whether they would like to see Great Britain defeated this time. And at every meeting they enthusiastically declared that they would like to see the Empire overthrown, so that India could be free.

B. The Military position in India today

The attitude of the Indian people which was hostile to Great Britain at the beginning of the war has been greatly embittered as a result of the imprisonment of most of the leaders and thousands of their followers in every province in India. As there

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

is no possibility of any change in Britain's policy in India while the war lasts, it is certain that the hatred of the people towards British domination will become deeper and deeper as the days roll by. England is thus holding India by the sword at the present time. But even from the military point of view the British position is not as strong as it appears from the outside and only a strong blow is needed to make the house of cards topple down in India.

The full strength of the army in India, including auxiliaries like the armed police and territorials is approximately 250,000. Since the beginning of the war about 100,000 men were sent out on service abroad, *i.e.* to the Near East, Middle East and Far East. This deficiency was recouped by an additional recruitment of 100,000 which it took the British Government 15 months to secure. It is now the plan of the Government to recruit an additional force of 500,000 for service during war time, but it is extremely doubtful if the Government will be able to raise even a part of this force.

Out of this total figure of 250,000 the British troops including auxiliaries, number 70,000. The Indian troops number about 180,000 but they are officered by the British. There is only a small percentage of Indian Officers for the Indian soldiers.

The Indian army is equipped with modern equipment like aeroplanes, tanks, armoured cars, mechanised transport, heavy artillery, etc. though their number is small. They have so far proved to be enough for holding the country in subjugation, but they are most inadequate for fighting a modern army possessing modern equipment.

Rifles, small ammunition and explosives are now being manufactured in India, but other modern equipment like aeroplanes, tanks, armoured cars, motor cars, lorries, heavy artillery, etc. are all imported. During the last few months the British authorities have been constructing large underground shelters on the hillside near the North Western Frontier of India for storing bombs, ammunition, etc.

The British section of the army in India having a maximum strength of 70,000 is the only loyal force in India on whom the British Government can fully depend. The Indian section of the army has many anti-British elements and perhaps the only group that will be loyal to the British is composed of the Punjabi Muslims. The Punjabi Sikhs — the best fighters in the Indian army — are the most anti-British at the present time. Since the war began, many regiments of Punjabi Sikhs have mutinied and they have been court-martialled. I know this from personal experience, because those who were not shot, were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and then they were transported to the Andaman Islands; they passed through the same jail in which I was incarcerated from July to December 1940, *viz.* the Presidency Jail in Calcutta.

As already stated above, British prestige in India is shattered as a result of the many defeats which the British have suffered in the present war. As a matter of fact, after the fall of France in June 1940, the Indian army was in a mood in which there was utter lack of confidence in British military strength. That was the proper psychological moment for a revolution, but it was not availed of by the Indian people. A similar opportunity will come again when Britain receives another severe blow at the hands of the Axis Powers.

When the opportunity comes again and if it is properly utilised revolts can be brought about in the Indian section of the army, in spite of the British personnel of the officers.

In that revolutionary crisis, the British Government will have only the British soldiers to fall back on. If at the juncture, some military help is available from abroad (*i.e.* a small force of 50,000 men with modern equipment) British power in India can be completely wiped out.

7. *The Importance for India of Japanese Foreign Policy in the Far East*

The overthrow of British power in India can, in its last stages,

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

be materially assisted by Japanese foreign policy in the Far East. If Japan decides on expansion southwards it will lead to an open clash with Great Britain. If war then breaks out, it appears more than certain that the East Indies and Far Eastern squadrons of the British navy will, under the present circumstances, be no match for the Japanese navy. And even if America comes to the rescue of the British navy, a Japanese victory could still be hoped for. A defeat of the British navy in the Far East including the smashing up of the Singapore base, will automatically weaken British military strength and prestige in India. India is, therefore, intensely interested in the developments in the Far East. And since Japanese expansion southwards necessitates a prior agreement between the Soviet Union and Japan, India is greatly interested in a pact which will, on the one hand, expedite a settlement of the China Affair and will, on the other, enable Japan to move freely and confidently towards the South.

7. Proclamation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind 1943

After their first defeat at the hands of the British in 1757 in Bengal, the Indian people fought an uninterrupted series of hard and bitter battles over a stretch of one hundred years. The history of this period teems with examples of unparalleled heroism and self-sacrifice. And, in the pages of that history, the names of Sirajuddoula and Mohanlal of Bengal, Haider Ali, Tipu Sultan and Velu Tampi of South India, Appa Sahib Bhonsle and Peshwa Baji Rao of Maharashtra, the Begums of Oudh, Sardar Shyam Singh Atarwala of Punjab and last, but not least, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Maharaj Kunwar Singh of Dinraon and Nana Sahib — among others — the names of all these warriors are for ever engraved in letters of gold.

Unfortunately for us, our forefathers did not at first realise that the British constituted a grave threat to the whole of India and they did not therefore put up a united front against the enemy. Ultimately, when the Indian people were roused to the reality of the situation, they made a concerted move — and under the flag of Bahadur Shah in 1857, they fought their last war as free men. In spite of a series of brilliant victories in the early stages of this war, ill-luck and faulty leadership gradually brought about their final collapse and subjugation. Nevertheless, such heroes as the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Kunwar Singh and Nana Sahib live like eternal stars in the nation's memory to inspire us to greater deeds of sacrifice and valour.

Forcefully disarmed by the British after 1857 and subjected to terror and brutality, the Indian people lay prostrate for a while, but with the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885, there came a new awakening. From 1885 till the end of the last

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

World War, the Indian people, in their endeavour to recover their lost liberty, tried all possible methods — namely, agitation and propaganda, boycott of British goods, terrorism and sabotage — and finally armed revolution. But all these efforts failed for a time. Ultimately, in 1920, when the Indian people, haunted by a sense of failure were groping for a new method, Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the new weapon of non-co-operation and civil disobedience.

For two decades thereafter, the Indian people went through a phase of intense patriotic activity. The message of freedom was carried to every Indian home. Through personal example, people were taught to suffer, to sacrifice and to die in the cause of freedom. From the centre to the remotest villages, the people were knit together into one political organisation. Thus, the Indian people not only recovered their political consciousness, but became a political entity once again. They could now speak with one voice and strive with one will for one common goal. From 1937 to 1939, through the work of the Congress Ministries in eight provinces, they gave proof of their readiness and capacity to administer their own affairs.

Thus, on the eve of the present World War, the stage was set for the final struggle for India's Liberation. During the course of this war, Germany with the help of her allies has dealt shattering blows to our enemy in Europe — while Nippon, with the help of her allies has inflicted a knock-out blow to our enemy in East Asia. Favoured by a most happy combination of circumstances, the Indian people today have a wonderful opportunity for achieving their national emancipation.

For the first time in recent history, Indians abroad have also been politically roused and united in one organisation. They are not only thinking and feeling in tune with their countrymen at home, but are also marching in step with them, along the path to freedom. In East Asia, in particular, over two million Indians are now organised as one solid phalanx, inspired by the slogan of Total Mobilisation. And in front of them stand the

sentenced ranks of India's Army of Liberation, with the slogan 'Onward to Delhi' on their lips.

Having goaded Indians to desperation by its hypocrisy and having driven them to starvation and death by plunder and loot, British rule in India has forfeited the goodwill of the Indian people altogether and is now living a precarious existence. It needs but a flame to destroy the last vestige of that unhappy rule. To light that flame is the task of India's Army of Liberation. Assured of the enthusiastic support of the civil population at home and also of a large section of Britain's Indian Army and backed by a gallant and invincible allies abroad — but relying in the first instance on its own strength, India's Army of Liberation is confident of fulfilling its historic role.

Now that the dawn of Freedom is at hand, it is the duty of the Indian people to set up a Provisional Government of their own, and launch the last struggle under the banner of that Government. But with all the Indian leaders in prison, the people at home totally disarmed — it is not possible to set up a Provisional Government within India or to launch an armed struggle under the aegis of that Government. It is, therefore, the duty of the Indian Independence League in East Asia, supported by all patriotic Indians at home and abroad to undertake this task — the task of setting up a Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) and of conducting the last fight for freedom, with the help of the Army of Liberation (that is, the Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army) organised by the League.

Having been constituted as the Provisional Government of Azad Hind by the Indian Independence League in East Asia, we enter upon our duties with a full sense of the responsibility that has devolved on us. We pray that Providence may bless our work and our struggle for the emancipation of our Motherland. And we hereby pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of her Freedom, of her welfare, and her exaltation among the nations of the world.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

It will be the task of the Provisional Government to launch and to conduct the struggle that will bring about the expulsion of the British and of their allies from the soil of India. It will then be the task of the Provisional Government to bring about the establishment of a permanent National Government of Azad Hind constituted in accordance with the will of the Indian people and enjoying their confidence. After the British and their allies are overthrown and until a permanent National Government of Azad Hind is set up on Indian soil, the Provisional Government will administer the affairs of the country in trust for the Indian people.

The Provisional Government is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Indian. It guarantees religious liberty, as well as equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens. It declares its firm resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally and transcending all the differences cunningly fostered by an alien Government in the past.

In the name of God, in the name of bygone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice — we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and strike for India's Freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and all their allies in India and to prosecute that struggle with valour and perseverance and with full faith in Final Victory — until the enemy is expelled from Indian soil and the Indian people are once again a Free Nation.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind :—

Subhas Chandra Bose, Head of the State, Prime Minister and Minister for War, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Supremo Commander of the Indian National Army.

Appendix VII

Capt. Miss Lakshmi (Women's Organisation), S. A. Ayer (Publicity and Propaganda), Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterjee (Finance), Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed, Lt.-Col. N. S. Bhagat, Col. J. K. Blonsie, Lt.-Col. Gulzara Singh, Lt.-Col. M. Z. Kiani, Lt.-Col. A. D. Loganathan, Lt.-Col. Ehsan Qadir, Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz (Representatives of the Armed Forces); A. M. Sahay, Secretary (with Ministerial Rank); Rash Behari Bose (Supreme Adviser); Karim Gani, Debnath Das, D. M. Khan, A. Yellappa, J. Thivy, Sardar Ishar Singh (Advisers); A. N. Sarkar (Legal Adviser).

8. INA Proclamations on Entering India 1944

FIRST PROCLAMATION

I. The Indian National Army, under the leadership of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, has now massed in force and advanced into a territory of Eastern India as the spearhead for the creation of a Free India.

The Indian National Army with the help and co-operation of the Imperial Nipponese Army, has pushed into Eastern India with the object of crushing the Anglo-American forces, the common enemy of East Asia, of making India really an India for Indians by liberating her from the shackles of the despotic rule under which she has been groaning for ages; of bringing complete freedom and peace and order to the three hundred and eighty millions of our brothers and sisters in India; and also of driving away the Anglo-American menace from the borders of our neighbours — the Independent Burmese.

Brothers and Sisters in India!

Be engaged in your daily work without fear; gather wholeheartedly under your Tricolour Flag of Independence hoisted by the Provisional Government of Azad Hind; brace yourselves up for winning Complete Independence by retaking our Motherland from the hands of our enemies, the Anglo-Americans.

The East Indian Territory into which the Indian National Army has advanced with the powerful aid of the Imperial Nipponese Army, as well as the people thereof, have now been liberated from the bondage of the Anglo-Americans. This territory has become the first free Indian territory on the Mainland of India under the Provisional Government and will serve as

the base for liberating our Motherland. The Imperial Nipponese Army will not establish a military administration but will cooperate with and wholeheartedly help the Provisional Government of Azad Hind in maintaining perfect peace and order.

II. If any person fails to understand the intentions of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian National Army, or of our Ally, the Nippon Army, and dares to commit such acts as are itemised hereunder which would hamper the sacred task of emancipating India, he shall be executed or severely punished in accordance with the Criminal Law of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian National Army or with the Martial Law of the Nippon Army, the application of which has been agreed upon between the two allied Armies, namely, the Indian National Army and its Ally, the Imperial Nipponese Army.

Punishable Acts

- (1) Rebellious acts against the Provisional Government of Azad Hind or the Indian National Army, or our Ally, the Nipponese Army.
- (2) Acts of spying.
- (3) Acts of stealing and taking by force, damaging and destroying war materials which are in the possession of the Provisional Government or belong to our Ally, the Nippon Army.
- (4) Acts of damaging or destroying of valuable material resources controlled or utilised by the Provisional Government of Azad Hind or by the Nippon Army under previous agreement with the Provisional Government.
- (5) Acts of destroying various installations or equipments for traffic, communication, transportation, broadcasting, etc. which are controlled or utilised by the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian National Army, or by the Nippon Army under previous agree-

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- ment with the Provisional Government; or acts of interference with the employment and utilisation thereof.
- (6) Violent acts against, intimidation of, killing or wounding of, or doing other harmful acts to those who belong to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian National Army or our Ally, the Nippon Army.
 - (7) Acts of spreading enemy propaganda or wild and false rumours, and other acts of disturbing and misleading the minds of the inhabitants.
 - (8) Acts of disturbing the money circulation and economic organisation or of obstructing the production and free interchange of commodities.
 - (9) Any act other than those contained in the above items, that benefits the enemy or is harmful to peace and order and the well-being of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian National Army or our Ally, the Nippon Army.
 - (10) Acts of attempting, instigating and abetting those acts contained in the above items.

The trial and punishment of such criminals will entirely be at the discretion of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind except when crimes committed are of such a nature as of necessity, owing to wartime emergency, must be dealt with by the Nippon Army as agreed upon between the two Allied Armies.

III. The Nippon Army will maintain strict discipline and protect, in the area into which they have advanced, the lives and properties of the Indian masses who do not commit any hostile act; and due respect will be paid to the religions, customs and manners of the Indian people.

It is guaranteed that any Nippon soldier who may violate these strict injunctions shall be severely punished in accordance with the Martial Law of the Imperial Nipponese Army.

The Indian National Army will maintain strict discipline and protect, in the area into which it has advanced, the lives and

properties of the Indian masses who do not commit any hostile act; and due respect will be paid to the religions, customs and manners of our countrymen.

It is guaranteed that any Indian soldier who may violate these strict injunctions shall be severely punished in accordance with the Martial Law of the Indian National Army.

The above is solemnly proclaimed in the month of April in the year 1944 by the Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army.

SECOND PROCLAMATION - 4 APRIL 1944

Under the leadership of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind which was formed on 21 October 1943, at Syonan (formerly Singapore) by the unanimous will of the three million Indians in East Asia, the Indian National Army has crossed the frontier and has penetrated deep into Indian territory.

The Provisional Government of Azad Hind, your own Government, has only one mission to fulfil. That mission is to expel the Anglo-American armies from the sacred soil of India by armed force and then to bring about the establishment of a permanent National Government of Azad Hind, in accordance with the will of the Indian people.

The Provisional Government of Azad Hind will continue the armed struggle until the Anglo-American forces are annihilated or expelled from India.

While prosecuting the armed struggle for the complete liberation of India, the Provisional Government of Free India will push on with the work of reconstruction of the liberated areas.

The Provisional Government of Azad Hind is the only lawful Government of the Indian people. The Provisional Government calls upon the Indian people in the liberated areas to render all assistance and co-operation to the Indian National Army and to the civilian officials appointed by the Provisional Government.

Biography of Nctaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The Provisional Government guarantees the safety of life and property of the Indian population in the liberated areas, but will inflict severe punishment on those who carry on any activities, overt or covert, which might be of help to our Anglo-American enemies or their allies, or might disturb the work of reconstruction to be started by the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government calls upon the Indian people to co-operate wholeheartedly with our Ally, the Nippon Army, who are giving unstinted and unconditional assistance in defeating our enemies. In the last two years, the British have been strongly reinforcing themselves with troops from America, Australia, Chungking-China and East and West Africa. The Provisional Government has, therefore, felt compelled to avail itself of the generous offer of all-out aid made by Nippon, whose armed forces have scored unparalleled victories over the Anglo-Americans since the beginning of the war in East Asia. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind is supremely confident that the Indian National Army, with the aid of the invincible forces of our Ally, the Nippon Army, will crush the Anglo-Americans and bring about the complete liberation of India.

The Provisional Government is fully convinced of Nippon's sincerity towards India. The Provisional Government is convinced that Nippon has no territorial, political, economic or military ambitions in India. The Provisional Government is convinced that Nippon is interested only in destroying the Anglo-American forces in India which are the enemies not only of India, but of Asia as well. The destruction of Anglo-American Imperialism alone will terminate this war and bring peace to the world.

In accordance with its status as an independent Government the Provisional Government of Azad Hind is arranging to issue its own currency in Rupee-Notes of different denominations. But owing to the rapid development of the war situation, culminating in our quick advance into India, it has not been possible to bring into India, in time, the currency of the Provi-

sional Government. The circumstances have, therefore, rendered it necessary for the Provisional Government to borrow from the Nipponese Government the currency (*viz.* military rupee notes) already in its possession and to use that currency as a temporary measure. As soon as the Provisional Government's own currency is available, the currency borrowed from the Nipponese Government will be gradually withdrawn from circulation.

Brothers and Sisters! Now that our enemies are being driven out of Indian soil, you are becoming once again what you were before — namely, free men and women. Rally round your own Government — the Provisional Government of Azad Hind — and thereby help in preserving and safeguarding your newly-won liberty.

4 April 1944

Subhas Chandra Bose
Head of the State.

9. Radio Address to Mahatma Gandhi 1944

Netaji's Broadcast address to Mahatma Gandhi over the Rangoon Radio on 6 July 1944.

Mahatmaji,

Now that your health has somewhat improved, and you are able to attend to public business to some extent, I am taking the liberty of addressing a few words to you with a view to acquainting you with the plans and the activities of patriotic Indians outside India.

Before I do so I would like to inform you of the feelings of deep anxiety which Indians throughout the world had for several days after your sudden release from custody on grounds of ill-health. After the sad demise of Shrimati Kasturbaiji in British custody it was but natural for your countrymen to be alarmed over the state of your health. It has, however, pleased Providence to restore you to comparative health, so that three hundred and eighty-eight millions of your countrymen may still have the benefit of your guidance and advice.

I should like to say something about the attitude of your countrymen outside India towards yourself. What I shall say in this connection is the bare truth and nothing but the truth.

There are Indians outside India, as also at home, who are convinced that Indian Independence will be won only through the historic method of struggle. These men and women honestly feel that the British Government will never surrender to persuasion or moral pressure or non-violent resistance. Nevertheless, for Indians outside India, differences in method are like domestic differences.

Ever since you sponsored the Independence Resolution at the Lahore Congress in December 1929, all members of the Indian National Congress have had one common goal before them.

For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. In all their propoganda before the world, they give you that position and the respect due to that position. For in the world-public, we Indian nationalists are all one — having but one goal, one desire and one endeavour in life. In all the countries free from British influence that I have visited since I left India in 1941, you are held in the highest esteem, as no other Indian political leader has been, during the last century.

Each nation has its own internal politics and its own attitude towards political problems. But that cannot affect a nation's appreciation of a man who has served his people so well and has bravely fought a first-class modern power all his life. In fact, your worth and your achievements are appreciated a thousand times more in those countries that are opposed to the British Empire than in those countries that pretend to be the friends of Freedom and Democracy. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India and by foreign friends of India's freedom, was increased a hundredfold when you bravely sponsored the 'Quit India' Resolution in August 1942.

From my experience of the British Government while I was inside India — from the secret information that I have gathered about Britain's policy while outside India — and from what I have seen regarding Britain's aims and intentions throughout the world, I am honestly convinced that the British Government will never recognise India's demand for Independence. Britain's one effort today is to exploit India to the fullest degree, in her endeavour to win this war. During the course of this war, Britain has lost one part of her territory to her enemies and another part to her friends. Even if the Allies could somehow win the war, it will be United States of America, and not Britain that will be top dog in future and it will mean that Britain will become a protege of the U.S.A.

In such a situation the British will try to make good their present losses by exploiting India more ruthlessly than ever

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

before. In order to do that, plans have been already hatched in London for crushing the nationalist movement in India once for all. It is because I know of these plans from secret but reliable sources that I feel it my duty to bring it to your notice.

It would be a fatal mistake on our part to make a distinction between the British Government and the British people. No doubt there is a small group of idealists in Britain as in the U.S.A. who would like to see India free.

These idealists who are treated by their own people as cranks form a microscopic minority. So far as India is concerned, for all practical purposes the British Government and the British people mean one and the same thing.

Regarding the war aims of the U.S.A. I may say that the ruling clique at Washington is now dreaming of world domination. This ruling clique and its intellectual exponents talk openly of the 'American Century', that is, that in the present century the U.S.A. will dominate the world. In this ruling clique there are extremists who go so far as to call Britain the forty-ninth State of the U.S.A.

There is no Indian, whether at home or abroad, who would not be happy if India's freedom could be won through the method that you have advocated all your life and without shedding human blood. But things being what they are I am convinced that if we do desire freedom we must be prepared to wade through blood.

If circumstances had made it possible for us to organise an armed struggle inside India through our own efforts and resources that would have been the best course for us. But Mahatmajl, you know Indian conditions perhaps better than anybody else. So far as I am concerned, after twenty years' experience of public service in India, I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to organise an armed resistance in the country without some help from outside—help from our countrymen abroad, as well as from some foreign power or powers.

Prior to the outbreak of the present war, it was exceedingly difficult to get help from a foreign power, or even from Indians abroad. But the outbreak of the present war threw open the possibility of obtaining aid — both political and military — from the enemies of the British Empire. Before I could expect any help from them however I had first to find out what their attitude was towards India's demand for freedom. British propagandists, for a number of years, had been telling the world that the Axis Powers were the enemies of freedom and, therefore, of India's freedom. Was that a fact? I asked myself. Consequently, I had to leave India in order to find out the truth myself and as to whether the Axis Powers would be prepared to give us help and assistance in our fight for freedom.

Before I finally made up my mind to leave home and homeland, I had to decide whether it was right for me to take help from abroad. I had previously studied the history of revolutions all over the world, in order to discover the methods which had enabled other nations to obtain freedom. But I had not found a single instance in which an enslaved people had won freedom without foreign help of some sort. In 1940 I read my history once again, and once again, I came to the conclusion that history did not furnish a single instance where freedom had been won without help of some sort from abroad. As for the moral question whether it was right to take help, I told myself that in public, as in private life, one can always take help as a loan and repay that loan later on. Moreover, if a powerful Empire like the British Empire, could go round the world with the begging bowl what objection could there be to an enslaved, disarmed people like ourselves taking help as a loan from abroad?

I can assure you, Mahatmasi, that before I finally decided to set out on a hazardous mission, I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the pros and cons of the case. After having served my people so long to the best of my ability, I

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

could have no desire to be a traitor, or to give anyone a justification for calling me a traitor.

It was the easiest thing for me to remain at home and go on working as I had worked so long. It was also an easy thing for me to remain in an Indian prison while the war lasted. Personally, I had nothing to lose by doing so. Thanks to the generosity and to the affection of my countrymen, I had obtained the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. I had also built up a party consisting of staunch and loyal colleagues who had implicit confidence in me.

By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking — not only my life and my whole future career — but what was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we would win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our lifetime we would get another chance — another golden opportunity for winning freedom as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home. But I was convinced of two things: firstly that such a golden opportunity would not come within another century — and secondly, that without action from abroad we would not be able to win freedom, merely through our own efforts at home. That is why I resolved to take the plunge.

Providence has been kind to me. In spite of manifold difficulties, all my plans have succeeded so far. After I got out of India, my first endeavour was to organise my countrymen, wherever I had happened to meet them. I am glad to say that everywhere I found them to be wide awake and anxious to do everything possible for winning freedom for India. I then approached the Governments that were at war with our enemy, in order to find out what their attitude was towards India. I found out that contrary to what British propaganda had been telling us for a number of years — the Axis Powers were now openly the friends of India's freedom. I also discovered that

they were prepared to give such help as we desired, and as was within their own power.

I know the propaganda that our enemy has been carrying on against me. But I am sure that my countrymen, who know me so well will never be taken in. One who has stood for national self-respect and honour all his life and has suffered considerably in vindicating it, would be the last person in this world to give in to any other foreign power. Moreover, I have nothing to gain personally at the hands of a foreign power. Having received the highest honour possible for an Indian at the hands of my own countrymen, what is there for me to receive from a foreign power? Only that man can be a puppet who has either no sense of honour and self-respect or desires to build up a position for himself through the influence of others.

Not even my worst enemy can dare to say that I am capable of selling national honour and self-respect. And not even my worst enemy can dare to assert that I was a nobody in my own country and that I needed foreign help to secure a position for myself. In leaving India, I had to risk everything that I had, including my life. But I had to take that risk because only by doing so could I help the achievement of India's freedom.

There remains but one question for me to answer with regard to the Axis Powers. Can it be possible that I have been deceived by them?

I believe it will be universally admitted that the cleverest and the most cunning politicians are to be found amongst Britshers. One who has worked with and fought British politicians all his life, cannot be deceived by any other politicians in the world. If British politicians have failed to coax or coerce me no other politician can succeed in doing so. And if the British Government, at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assault, has been unable to demoralise me, no other power can hope to do so.

Moreover as you personally are aware, I have been a close student of international affairs. I have had personal contacts

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

with international figures before the outbreak of this war. I am therefore no novice who could be duped by a shrewd and cunning politician. Last but not least, before forming an opinion about the attitude of the Axis Powers I established close personal contact with important leaders and personalities in the Axis countries who are responsible for their national affairs.

Consequently, I make bold to say that my countrymen can have the fullest confidence in my judgment of the international affairs. My countrymen abroad will testify to the fact that since I left India, I have never done anything which could compromise in the least, either the honour or the self-respect or the interests of my country. On the contrary, whatever I have done has been for the benefit of my nation, for enhancing India's prestige before the world and for advancing the cause of India's freedom.

Mahatmaji, since the beginning of the war in East Asia our enemies have been carrying on a raging and tearing campaign against Japan. I shall, therefore, say something about Japan—particularly because at the present moment I am working in the closest co-operation with the Government, army and people of Japan.

There was a time when Japan had an alliance with our enemy. I did not come to Japan so long as there was an Anglo-Japanese alliance. I did not come to Japan, so long as normal diplomatic relations obtained between the two countries. It was only after Japan took what I consider to be the most momentous step in her history—namely, declaration of war on Britain and America—that I decided to visit Japan of my own free will.

Like so many of my countrymen I had read anti-Japanese propaganda material for a number of years. Like so many of my countrymen, I did not understand why Japan went to war with China in 1937. And like so many of my countrymen, my sympathies in 1937 and 1938 were with Chungking. You may remember that as President of the Congress, I was responsible for sending out a medical mission to Chungking in December 1938.

But what I realised after my visit to Japan and what many people at home do not yet realise, is that since the outbreak of the war in East Asia, Japan's attitude towards the world in general, and towards Asiatic nations in particular has been completely revolutionised.

It is a change that has overtaken not merely the Government, but also the people of Japan. A new consciousness — what I may best describe as an Asiatic consciousness — has seized the souls of the people of Japan. That change explains Japan's present attitude towards the Philippines, Burma, and India. That is what explains Japan's new policy in China.

After my visit to Japan and after establishing close contact with the present-day leaders of that country I was fully satisfied that Japan's present policy towards Asia was no bluff but was rooted in sincerity.

This is not the first instance in history when an entire nation has been seized with a new consciousness. We have seen instances of it before in France during the French revolution and in Russia during the Bolshevik revolution. After my second visit to Japan in November 1943, I visited the Philippines, and met Filipino leaders there and saw things for myself. I have also been in Burma for a fairly long time and I have been able to see things with my own eyes after the declaration of its independence. And I have been to China to find out if Japan's new policy was real or if it was a fake. The latest agreement between Japan and the National Government of China has given the Chinese people practically all that they had been demanding. Japan, under that agreement, has even agreed to withdraw her troops from China on the termination of hostilities.

What then is Chungking-China fighting for? Can one believe that Britain and America are helping Chungking-China out of purely altruistic motives? Will not Britain and America demand their pound of flesh in return for the help that they are now giving to Chungking to make her continue the fight against Japan? I clearly see that Chungking is being mortgaged to

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Britain and America because of past hatred and antagonism towards Japan.

So long as Japan did not initiate her present policy towards China, there might have been some justification or excuse for the Chinese to seek British and American aid for fighting Japan. But now that an entirely new chapter in Sino-Japanese relations has begun, there is not the slightest excuse for Chungking to continue her meaningless struggle against Japan. That is not good for the Chinese people, it is certainly not good for Asia.

In April, 1942, you said that if you were free to do so you would work for an understanding between China and Japan. That was an utterance of rare statesmanship. It is India's slavery that is at the bottom responsible for the chaos in China. It is because of the British hold over India that Anglo-Americans could bluff Chungking into hoping that sufficient help could be brought to Chungking to enable Chungking to continue the war against Japan. You were absolutely right in thinking, Mahatmaji, that a free India would work for peace between Japan and China. I go so far as to say that the freedom of India will automatically bring about an honourable understanding between Chungking and Japan, by opening the eyes of Chungking to the folly that she is now committing.

Since I came to East Asia and visited China, I have been able to study the Chinese question more deeply. I find that there is a dictatorship ruling in Chungking. I have no objection personally to dictatorship, if it is for a righteous cause. But the dictatorship that rules at Chungking is clearly under foreign American influence. Unfortunately, the Anglo-Americans have been able to deceive the ruling clique at Chungking into thinking that if Japan could be somehow defeated, then China would become the dominant power in Asia. The fact, however, is that if Japan were defeated by any chance, then China would certainly pass under American influence and control. That would be a tragedy for China and for the whole of Asia.

It is through this false hope of becoming the dominant power

in Asia, if Japan could be somehow defeated, that the ruling clique at Chungking has entered into an unholy alliance with the ruling clique at White House and at Whitehall. I know something of the propagandist activities of the Chungking Government in India and of its efforts to play upon the emotions of the Indian people and win their sympathy. But I can honestly say that Chungking which has been mortgaged to Wall Street and Lombard Street, does not deserve the sympathy of the Indian people any longer especially after Japan has initiated her new policy towards China.

Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her declarations of policy had been mere promises. But I have seen with my own eyes how in the midst of a world war Japan has put through revolutionary changes in countries like the Philippines, Burma and National China. Japan is true to her word and her actions are in full conformity with her declarations.

Coming to India, I must say that Japan has proved her sincerity by her deeds. There was a time when people used to say that Japan had selfish intentions regarding India. If she had them, why should she recognise the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should she decide to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should there now be an Indian Chief Commissioner of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands stationed at Port Blair? Last but not least, why should Japan unconditionally help the Indian people in East Asia in their struggle for their independence?

There are Indians all over East Asia and they have every opportunity of seeing Japan at close quarters. Why should three million Indians distributed all over East Asia adopt a policy of the closest co-operation with Japan if they had not been convinced of her *bona fides* and of her sincerity? You can coerce one man or coax him into doing what you want him to do. But

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

no one can coerce three million Indians distributed all over East Asia.

If Indians in East Asia had taken help from Japan without putting forward their own efforts and without making the maximum sacrifice, they would have been guilty of wrong-doing. But, as an Indian, I am happy and proud to be able to say that my countrymen in East Asia are putting forward the maximum efforts to mobilise men, money and materials for the struggle for India's freedom.

I have had experience at home in collecting funds and materials and in recruiting men for national service for a period of twenty years. In the light of this experience, I can properly assess the worth and value of the sacrifice that our countrymen in East Asia are now making. Their effort is magnificent. It is because they are putting forward a magnificent effort themselves and are prepared to make the maximum sacrifice that I see no objection to taking help from Japan for such necessary articles as arms, ammunition, etc. that we ourselves cannot produce.

Mahatmaji, I should now like to say something about the Provisional Government that we have set up here. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind (or Free India) has been recognised by Japan, Germany and seven other friendly powers and this has given Indians a new status and a new prestige in the eyes of the whole world. The Provisional Government has, as its one objective, the liberation of India from the British yoke, through an armed struggle. Once our enemies are expelled from India and order is established, the mission of the Provisional Government will be over. It will then be for the Indian people themselves to determine the form of Government that they choose and also to decide as to who should take charge of that Government.

I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that I and all those who are working with me, regard themselves as the servants of the Indian people. The only reward that we desire for our efforts,

for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from the political field once India is free. The remainder will be content to take up any position in Free India, however humble it may be. The spirit that animates all of us today is that it is more honourable to be even a sweeper in Free India than to have the highest position under British rule. We all know that there are hundreds of thousands of able men and women at home to whom India's destiny could be entrusted once freedom is achieved.

How much help we shall need from Japan till the last Britisher is expelled from the soil of India, will depend on the amount of co-operation that we shall receive from inside India. Japan herself does not desire to thrust her assistance upon us. Japan would be happy if the Indian people could liberate themselves through their own exertions. It is we who have asked for assistance from Japan after declaring war on Britain and America, because our enemy has been seeking help from other powers. However, I have every hope that the help we shall receive from our countrymen at home will be so great that we shall need the minimum help from Japan.

Nobody would be more happy than ourselves if by any chance our countrymen at home should succeed in liberating themselves through their own efforts or if by any chance the British Government accepts your 'Quit India' Resolution and gives effect to it. We are, however, proceeding on the assumption that neither of the above is possible and that an armed struggle is inevitable.

Mahatmaji, there is one other matter to which I shall refer before I close and that is about the ultimate outcome of this war. I know very well the kind of propaganda that our enemies have been carrying on in order to create the impression that they are confident of victory. But I hope that my countrymen will not be duped thereby and will not think of compromising

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

with Britain on the issue of independence under the mistaken notion that the Anglo-Americans will win the war.

Having travelled round the world under wartime conditions with my eyes open, having seen the internal weakness of the enemy on the Indo-Burma frontier and inside India and having taken stock of our own strength and resources I am absolutely confident of our final victory.

I am not so foolish as to minimise in the least the strength of the enemy. I know that we have a long and hard struggle in front of us. I am aware that on the soil of India Britain will fight bravely and fight hard in a desperate attempt to save her Empire. But I know also that however long and hard the struggle may be it can have but one outcome — namely, our victory.

India's last war of independence has begun. Troops of the Azad Hind Foj are now fighting bravely on the soil of India and in spite of all difficulty and hardship they are pushing forward, slowly but steadily. This armed struggle will go on until the last Britisher is thrown out of India and until our Tricolour National Flag proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

Father of our nation! In this holy war for India's liberation we ask for your blessings and good wishes. Jai Hind.

10. Special Order of the Day 15 August 1945

Comrades,

In our struggle for the independence of our Motherland, we have now been overwhelmed by an undreamt-of crisis. You may perhaps feel that you have failed in your mission to liberate India. But let me tell you that this failure is only of a temporary nature. No setback and no defeat can undo your positive achievements of the past. Many of you have participated in the fight along the Indo-Burma frontier and also inside India and have gone through hardship and suffering of every sort. Many of your comrades have laid down their lives on the battlefield and have become the immortal heroes of Azad Hind. This glorious sacrifice can never go in vain.

Comrades, in this dark hour I call upon you to conduct yourselves with the discipline, dignity and strength befitting a truly Revolutionary Army. You have already given proofs of your valour and self-sacrifice on the field of battle. It is now your duty to demonstrate your undying optimism and unshakable will-power in the hour of temporary defeat. Knowing you as I do, I have not the slightest doubt that even in this dire adversity you will hold your heads erect and face the future with unending hope and confidence.

Comrades, I feel that in this critical hour, thirty-eight crores of our countrymen at home are looking at us, the members of India's Army of Liberation. Therefore, remain true to India and do not for a moment waver in your faith in India's destiny. The roads to Delhi are many and Delhi still remains our goal. The sacrifices of your immortal comrades and of yourselves will

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

certainly achieve their fulfilment. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long.

Jai Hind

Subhas Chandra Bose

11. Special Message to Indians in East Asia 15 August 1945

Sisters and Brothers,

A glorious chapter in the history of India's struggle for Freedom has just come to a close and, in that chapter, the sons and daughters of India in East Asia will have an undying place.

You set a shining example of patriotism and self-sacrifice by pouring out men, money and materials into the struggle for India's Independence. I shall never forget the spontaneity and enthusiasm with which you responded to my call for 'Total Mobilisation'. You sent an unending stream of your sons and daughters to the camps to be trained as soldiers of the Azad Hind Fauj and of the Band of Jhansi Regiment. Money and materials you poured lavishly into the war chest of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. In short, you did your duty as true sons and daughters of India. I regret more than you do, that your sufferings and sacrifices have not borne immediate fruit. But they have not gone in vain, because they have ensured the emancipation of our Motherland and will serve as an undying inspiration to Indians all over the world. Posterity will bless your name, and will talk with pride about your offerings at the altar of India's Freedom and about your positive achievement as well.

In this unprecedented crisis in our history, I have only one word to say. Do not be depressed at our temporary failure. Be of good cheer and keep up your spirits. Above all, never for a moment falter in your faith in India's destiny. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long. Jai Hind

Subhas Chandra Bose

BIBLIOGRAPHY

English

- AYER, S. A., 'The Indian Independence Movement in East Asia' (Netaji Oration 1901), Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1961.
- AYER, S. A., *Unto Him a Witness*, Bombay: Thacker & Co., 1951.
- AZAD HIND, (Journal founded by Subhas Chandra Bose), Ed. K. A. Bhatta, Berlin, Free India Centre, 1942, 1943 and 1944.
- AZAD, MAULANA ABUL KALAM, *India Wins Freedom*, Calcutta: Orient Longman Ltd., 1959.
- BA MAW, *Break-through in Burma — Memoirs of a Revolution, 1939-46*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968.
- BEAMISH, JOHN, *Burma Drop*, London: M. G. Elek Books, 1958.
- BHARATI A., *The Ocho Robe*, London: 1961.
- BLOOD BATH, Ed. Narayan Menon, Singapore: The Indian Independence League, 1944.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *An Indian Pilgrim: An Unfinished Autobiography and Collected Letters, 1897-1931*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1962.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *Correspondence 1924-1932*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1967.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, 'Europe Today and Tomorrow', *Modern Review*, 1937.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *Fundamental Questions of Indian Revolution*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1970.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, 'Japan's Role in the Far East', *Modern Review*, 1937.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *The Indian Struggle, 1920-1942*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1960.
- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *The Mission of Life*, Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., Ltd., 1958.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA, *Through Congress Eyes*, Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1938.
- BOSE, SURESH CHANDRA, *Dissentient Report*, Calcutta: Subarna Prakashani, 1958
- BRECHER, MICHAEL, *Nehru — A Political Biography*, London: Oxford University Press, 1950.
- BROWN, ERMINE A., *Eminent Indians*, Calcutta: 1946.
- BUSCH, BARALD, *U-Boats at War (Wo War der U-Boot Krieg)*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1955.
- CHATTERJI, A. C., *India's Struggle for Freedom*, Calcutta: Chuker verthy, Chatterji & Co., 1947.
- CHAUDHURI, KALI PRASANNA, *Netaji and India*, Shillong: Kali Prasanna Chaudhuri, 1956.
- CHURCHILL, WINSTON, S., *The Second World War*, London: Cassel & Company, 1945.
- Ciano: Diary and Diplomatic Papers*, Edited by Malcolm Muggeridge, London, 1948.
- CROSSROADS, *The Works of Subhas Chandra Bose, 1938-40*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1962.
- DASGUPTA, HEMENDRA NATH, *Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das*, New Delhi: Publication Division, Govt. of India, 1960.
- DASGUPTA, HEMENDRA NATH, *Subhas Chandra*, Calcutta: Bharat Book Agency, 1946, 1st Ed.
- DESAI, BHULABHAI J., *INA Defence — Subject People's Right to Fight for Freedom*, Bombay, 1960.
- EDWARDES, MICHAEL, *The Last Years of British Rule*, London: Cassel and Calcutta: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1963.
- FAMOUS SPEECHES AND LETTERS OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*, Ed. Ganpat Rai, Lahore: Lion Press, 1946.
- FERGUSON, BERNARD, *The Wild Green Kirth*, London: St. James' Library.
- FREEDOM'S BATTLE*, Ed. Jhaveri, K. Vitthalbhai, Bombay: Vitthalbhai K. Jhaveri, 1947.
- GANDHI, M. K., *Essence of Democracy*, London, 1946.
- GANPULEY, N. G., *Netaji in Germany*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1960.

- GHOSH, J. N., *Netaji Subhas Chandra*, Calcutta: Orient Book Company, 1946, 1st Ed.
- GHOSH, K. K., *The Indian National Army: Second Front of Indian Independence Movement*, Meerut: Moonakshi Prakasan, 1969.
- GIANI, K. S., *Indian Independence Movement in East Asia*, Lahore: Singh Brothers, 1947, 1st Ed.
- HAYASHIDA, T., *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: His Great Struggle and Martyrdom*, Bombay: Allied Publishers Private Ltd, 1970.
- IMPORTANT SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF SUBHAS BOSE*, Ed. Jagat S Bhaht, Lahore: The Indian Printing Works, 1947, 2nd Ed.
- JAI HIND — THE DIARY OF A REBEL DAUGHTER OF INDIA WITH THE RANI OF JHANSI REGIMENT*, Ed. V. K. Jhaveri, Bombay: Jannabhoomi Prakasan Mandir, 1945, 1st Ed.
- JOG, N. G., *In Freedom's Quest: Life of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*, Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1969, 1st Ed.
- JONES, F. C. and BARTON, P., *The Far East 1942-1946*, London, 1955.
- KAMATH, H. V., 'Netaji 1937-40: Prelude to the Final Struggle', (Netaji Oration 1963), Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1964.
- KAUSHIK, P. D., *The Congress Ideology and Programme 1920-1947*, Bombay, 1964.
- KHAN, SHAI NAWAZ, *I.N.A. and Its Netaji*, Delhi: Rajkamal Publications, 1946.
- KURTI, KITTY, *Subhas Chandra Bose As I knew Him*, Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1966, 1st Ed.
- LAHRI, AMAR, *Said Subhas Bose*, Calcutta: The Book House, 1947.
- MAJUMDAR, A. K., *Advent of Independence*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
- MAJUMDAR, R. C., *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vols. III, IV, Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1962-68.
- MAJUMDAR, S. K., *Evolution of Netaji: The Warrior Prophet of India* (Netaji Oration 1960), Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1960.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- MASTERS, JOHN, *The Road Past Mandalay*, London : Michael Joseph, 1961.
- MOOKERJEE, GIRIJA K., *Netaji, the Great, Resistance Leader*, (Netaji Oration 1965), Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1966.
- MOOKERJEE, GIRIJA K., *This Europe*, Calcutta: University Press, 1950.
- NATION'S HOMAGE, Life and Work of Netaji S. C. Bose*, Ed. P. D. Saggi.
- NEHRU, JAWAHARLAL, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1960, 2nd Ed.
- NEHRU, JAWAHARLAL, *Autobiography*, Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1962.
- NETAJI, HIS LIFE AND WORK*, Ed. Shri Ram Sharma, Agra: Shibal Agarwala & Co. Ltd., 1948.
- NETAJI INQUIRY COMMITTEE REPORT*, (Shah Nawaz Khan), New Delhi: Government of India, 1956.
- ON TO DELHI*, Ed. Narayan Menon, Singapore: The Indian Independence League, 1944.
- ON WITH THE FIGHT*, Ed. Narayan Menon, Singapore: The Indian Independence League, 1944.
- 'PLATOON LECTURES OF THE INA', Syonan (Singapore) Department of Enlightenment and Culture, Singapore: Indian Independence League, 1948.
- PYARELAL, *Mahatma Gandhi, the Last Phase*, Ahmedabad: Nav jivan Prakashan, 1956-58.
- ROY, DILIP KUMAR, *Netaji the Man*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963, 1st Ed.
- SAFRANI, ABID HASAN and THIVY, JOHN A., *The Men from Imphal*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1971.
- SEHGAL, LAKSHMI, 'The Role of Women in the Azad Hind Movement' (Netaji Oration 1964). Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1965.
- SEHGAL, P. K., 'The Indian National Army' (Netaji Oration 1966), Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1967.

Bibliography

- SELECTED SPEECHES OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*, Delhi. Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1962.
- SENGUPTA, H. K., *India's Man of Destiny*, Calcutta: Orient Agency.
- SETHI, HIRAJI, *Subhas Bose, Is He Fascist?* Lahore: Hero Publications 1943, 1st Ed.
- SHAI, HARIN, *Gallant End of Netaji*, Delhi: Atmaram & Sons, 1956.
- SHAW, JAMES, *The March Out*, London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1953.
- SINGH, DURLAB, *Formation and Growth of the Indian National Army*, Lahore: Hero Publications, 1949, 1st Ed.
- SINGH, DURLAB, *The Rebel President*, Lahore: Hero Publications, 1942, 3rd Ed.
- SINGH, MOHAN, *Leaves from my Diary*, Lahore: Free-World Publications, 1946.
- SITARAMAYYA, DR. PATTABHI, *History of the Indian National Congress*, 2 Vols, Bombay: Padma, 1935/47.
- SIVARAM, M., *The Road to Delhi*, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1967, 1st Ed.
- SYKES, CHRISTOPHER, *Troubled Loyalty — A biography of Adam von Trott*, London: Collins, 1968.
- TENDULKAR, D. G., *Mahatma*, Vols. 1-8, Delhi: Govt. of India, 1960-63.
- TESTAMENT OF SUBHAS BOSE, Ed. Arun, New Delhi: Rajkamal Publications, 1946.
- THE THIRD REICH, London: The International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, 1955.
- TOYE, HUGH, *The Springing Tiger — A Study of a Revolutionary*, London: Cassell, 1959, 1st Ed.
- TOYNBEE, ARNOLD, 'The Eve of the War,' 'Initial Triumph of the Axis,' 'The Realignment of Europe,' in *Hitler's Europe*, London: 1964 58.
- TWO HISTORIC TRIALS IN RED FORT*, Ed. Moti Ram, New Delhi. Raxy Printing Works, 1946.
- UTTAMCHAND, *When Bose was Ziauddin*, Delhi: Rajkamal Publications, 1946, 1st Ed.
- VYAS, M. R., 'The Azad Hind Movement in Europe' (Netaji Oration 1962), Calcutta, *Bulletin of the Netaji Research Bureau*, 1968.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

WERTH, ALEXANDER and HARBICH, WALTER, *Netaji in Germany*, Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1970.

German

Akten aus dem Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten in Tokyo.

Akten des Red Fort Prozesses gegen die Offiziere der Indian National Army 1946.

Akten und Schriften aus der Bibliothek des India Office in London soweit schon zu Studien freigegeben

Akten, soweit erhältlich, im Zentralarchiv der D.D.R. in Potsdam.

Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik des Deutschen Reiches in Bezug auf *An der Seite des Mahatma im engsten Kreise Gandhis*, miru behn Madelaine Slade, 1970 Sensen Verlag, Wien, gedruckt in der Offizin Josef Schwarz 'Erbin, Wien Aus dem Englischen übertragen von Madelaine Slade, 1960; Titel des Originals: "The Spirit's Pilgrimage".

Archiv-Akten des Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten in New Delhi.

"Araber und Inder in gemeinsamen Front," in: *Völkischer Beobachter* Nr. 266, S.2, Berlin 28, September 1942.

AZAD HIND, Zentrale Freies Indien, Berlin, Jahrgänge 1942-1944.

"Bald Wird Indien frei sein — Subhas Chandra Bose zum 23. Jahrestag von Amritsar," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 95, S.1, Berlin 15, April, 1942.

"Bose antwortet dem Betrüger Cripps — Indiens einziger Feind ist der britische Imperialismus, Wer mit England Verhandelt, ist ein Verräter," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 92, S.1, 2.

"Botschaft Subhas Chandra Boses an Mussolini," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 267, S.2, Berlin 24.9.1943.

CANARIS, Abshagen, Karl-Helmz, Stuttgart 1957.

"Chandra Bose ruft Indien gegen seine Feinde auf," in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 228/29, Berlin 14.5.1942.

"Das Freie Indien Und Seine Probleme," in: *Wille und Macht*, Heft 8, Berlin, August, 1942.

- "Das Programm Boses," in: *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, Nr. 154, Wien 6.6.1942.
- "Der neue Appel Boses and Indien," in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 124/125, Berlin 14, März 1942, Auch in: *Völkischer Beobachter* vom 14, März 1942
- Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung Berlin*, Jahrgänge 1941-1943.
- Deutschland-China-Japan, 1939-1939: Dilemma der deutschen Fernostpolitik (Ost)*; Drechsler, Karl, Berlin 1964.
- "Deutschland, Indien und Japan — Die natürlichen Freunde und Verbündeten," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 79, S.1 Berlin, 14, März 1942.
- "Die einzige Lösung: Indien den Indern," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 88, Berlin 29, März 1942.
- "Eine Botschaft Subhas Chandra Boses," in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 12, Frankfurt 7.1.1943.
- Frankfurter Zeitung*, Frankfurt/Main, Jahrgänge, 1941-1943.
- FURTWANGLER, FRANZ-JOSEF: *Männer Die ich sah und kannte*, Hamburg, 1951.
- "Fond der gesamten islamischen Welt," in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 480/81, Berlin 8.10.1942.
- GOEBBELS, J., *Goebbels Tagebucher 1942-1943*, Herausgegeben von L.F. Lochner, Zurich, 1948.
- "Gewaltstaat England weicht nur der Gewalt — Bose zum indischen Freiheitskampf", in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Berlin, 28 January 1943.
- HALIFAX, LORD, *Indian Problem*, London ohne Jahr
- HILDEBRAND, L., *Siegt Asien in Asien*, Göttingen, 1965.
- HITLER, ADOLF, *Politik und Propaganda Adolf Hitlers 1922-1945*, Herausgegeben von E. Kloss, München, 1967.
- Indien Asiens gefährliche Jahre*, Giseler Wirsing, 1. Auflage 1938, Eugen Diederichs Verlag
- Indien*, Alsdorf, Ludwig; Berlin 1940.
- Indien im britischen Reich*, Bhatt, K. A., Heidelberg-Berlin 1943.
- "Indien in der Forderung nach Unabhängigkeit völlig einig," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 88, S.2, Berlin 15.10.1942.
- Indien Kultur der Nationen*, Hans Steche, 1963, Glock und Lutz Verlag, Nürnberg.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

100-Jahre Indien — Die politische Entwicklung 1857-1900, Casper Schrenck-Notzing, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1961.

Jawaharlal Nehru: *Eine Biographie*, Frank Moraes, 1957. Verlag Kurt Desch München — Wien — Basel.

"Jede britische Niederlage eine Freude für die Inder," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 109, S.2, Berlin 18, Juli 1942.

"Jetzt wird Indien aufstehen: Ein Aufruf des Nationalistenführer Bose an das indische Volk" in: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Frankfurt, 28.2.1942.

"Kampf um den Preis und mit allen Mitteln", in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 62, S.2, Berlin 2, März, 1943.

"Kundgebung zum indischen Unabhängigkeitstag", in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 27, S.2, Berlin 27.1.1943, auch in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* vom. 27.1.1943.

MARTIN, BERNARD, *Deutschland und Japan, Im 2. Weltkrieg* Göttingen 1969.

"Neue Erklärung Boses — Gewaltiger Auftrieb der indischen Freiheitsbewegung," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 197, S.3, Berlin 16, Juli 1942.

PICKER, H., *Hitlers Tischgespräche 1941-1942*, Stuttgart, 1968.

ROTHERMUND, DIETMAR, *Die politische Willensbildung in Indien 1900-1960*, Wiesbaden, 1965.

RUGE, FRIEDERICH, *Entscheidung im Pazifik 1941-1945*, Hamburg, 1954.

SCHIELLENBERG, WALTER, *Memoiren*, Köln 1959.

SCHMIDT, PAUL, *Statist auf diplomatischer Bühne*, Bonn, 1949.

SCHNABEL, REIMUND, *Gebrauchte Mikrofone — Eine Dokumentation*, Wien, 1957.

SCHRENK-NOTZING, C., *100 Jahre Indien 1857-1900*, Stuttgart, 1961.

"Seid tapfer, haltet aus und kämpft weiter — Ansprache Boses an das indische Volk," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 228, S.1, Berlin, 16.8.1942; auch in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nr. 480/81, Berlin 8.10.1942.

SOMMER, THIEO, *Deutschland und Japan zwischen den Mächten, Studie zur diplomatischen Vorgeschichte des zw ersten Weltkrieges*, Tübingen, 1962

"Subhas Chandra Bose in Tokyo Der indische Führer über die Befreiungspläne", in: *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Berlin 20, Juni 1943.

"Subhas Chandra Bose spricht vor Vertretern der in — und ausländischen Presse," in: *Völkischer Beobachter*, Nr. 166, S.8, Berlin 14, Juni 1942.

Tiger und Schakal Deutsche Indienpolitik 1941-1943, Ein Dokumentarbericht, Reinhold Schnabel, 1968, Europa Verlag Wien.

Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, München, Jahrgänge, 1953 u. später.

Völkischer Beobachter, Berlin, Jahrgänge 1941-1943.

WEIZSACKER, ERNST V., *Erinnerungen*, München Leipzig, 1950.

Japanese

Burma ni okeru Nippon Gunseishi (Japanese Military Administration of Burma). Tsunezo Ota, Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1967.

Dai Toa Senso Zenshi (History of the Greater East Asia War). Takushiro Hattori, Masu Shobo, 1956.

H-Kikan — Inouchi Fuzuwara, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo, 1953.

Higeki no Eiyu (Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose). Tatsuo Hayashida, Shinju Sha, 1968.

Hikari Mata Kaoru (Hikari Organ). Masaki Tanaka, Nippon Shoho, 1958.

Igo 68 Kito sori (Sunk: Japanese Submarines). Mochitsura Hachimoto, Masu Shobo, 1953.

"Menam no Higashi (East of Menam: Inside Thailand during WW II)", Seiji Iwaki, Daini Shobo, 1957.

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Nippon Shusenshi (Annals of Japan's Surrender) — Committee of Historians, Yomiuri Shimbun, 1963.

Sensui Kantai (Submarine Fleets). Shojiro Iura, Nippon Shuppan Kyodo, 1953.

Taihōjiyo Senso no Michi (Road to the Pacific War). Japan Academy of International Politics, Asahi Shimbun, 1963.

Teikoku Rikugun no Saigo (End of the Imperial Army). Masanori Ito, Bungo Shunju, 1961.

Tojo Hideki to sono Jidai (Hideki Tojo and his Era). Sotuzo Umemoto, Miyajima Shobo, 1968.

French

ROLLAND, ROMAIN, *Inde, Journal*, (1915-1943), Editions Vrineta, Paris Lausanne Bale, 1954.

INDEX

- Abad Khan, 108
 Ahmad, Lt. Col. Aziz, 200
 Ahuja, A. N., 182
 Ajit Singh, 21
 Akyab, 217
 Alsdorf, Prof., 124
 Amar Singh, 151
 Amory, L. S., 273
 Amin, Haji Mohammad, 100
 Andaman and Nicobar Islands,
 109, 293, 315
 Annaberg Camp, 184
 Anti-Comintern Pact, 146
 Anti-Compromise Conference, 07
 Anti-Imperialist Conference, 05
 Anushilan Samiti, 25
 Aoyagi, 223
 Arakan, 203
 Arisue, Lt. Gen. Seizo, 157, 190
 Arta, Hashiro, 145
 Assmann, 124
 Ataturk, Kamal, 56, 64, 65, 141
 Auchinleck, F. M. Sir Claude, 240
 Aung San, 171, 218, 219
 Axis declaration on India, 149,
 246, 281, 284, 286, 300, 311
 Ayabe, Lt. Gen. Kitsuju, 199
 Ayer, S.A., 221, 209
 Azad, Abul Kalam, 104, 201
Azad Hind (periodical), 128
 Azad Hind Government, 188, 189,
 190, 199, 205, 207, 298
 Azad Hind Cabinet, 200, 301, 316
 Azad Hind Flag and Anthem,
 129
 Azad Hind Radio, 107, 128, 180
 (Also see National Congress
 Radio.)
 Azad Muslim Radio, 128, 131
 Bahadur Shah, 235
 Bakshi, Satya Ranjan, 114
 Banerjea, Surendranath, 19
Banglar Katha, 18
 Bardoli, 41
 Ba Maw, 170, 178, 192, 210
 Benes, Dr., 290
 Bhagat Singh, 80, 88, 256
 Bhonsle, Lt. Col. J. K., 157, 190,
 209
 Birkenhead, Lord, 23
 Bishenpur, 208
 Blaxland, Maj. Gen., 235
 Bose, Anita, 53
 Bose, Ashoke Nath, 100
 Bose, Jagadish Chandra, 6
 Bose, Jankinath, 3, 4
 Bose, Kalyan, 132
 Bose, Prabhavati, 3, 4
 Bose, Rash Behari, 142, 154, 156,
 216, 299
 Bose, Sarat Chandra, 10, 43, 84,
 100, 105, 106
 Bose, Sisir Kumar, 105

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Bose, Subhas Chandra :

Birth, 3
Education, 4, 6, 8
In Cambridge, 8, 9
Quits I.C.S., 11
Works in Bengal Congress
Committee, 24
In Calcutta Corporation, 19
As Congress Volunteer Chief,
28
At Navajavan Bharat Sabha,
38, 255
As social worker, 17
As youth leader, 18, 20, 31
Elected Congress President, 70
Quits Congress Presidentship,
88
Disqualified as BPCC Chief, 93
Forms Forward Bloc, 91
On fast to death, 102
Figures at Congress Plenary
Sessions at:
Calcutta, 28, Haripura, 73,
Karachi, 38, Lahore, 38, Tri-
puri, 82, 84, 261
Talks with Indian and World
Statesmen : With Dr. Ba
Maw, 170, with Dr. Benes,
47, with Count Ciano, 138,
with de Valera, 64, with
Hitler, 138, with Jinnah, 78,
with Mahatma Gandhi, 13,
25, 98, with Mussolini, 60,
188, with Pibulsonggram,
185, with Roman Rolland,
67, with Shigemitsu, 215,
with Vithalbai Patel, 46,
with Tojo, 165 to 167, 181
with von Ribbentrop, 124,
Jail terms, 16, 21, 38, 37, 44,
69, 99

As founder of : Austrian
Indian Society, 46, Czech-
Indian Association, 47, Free
India Centre, 56, German
Indian Commando troops,
133, Indian Legion, 127,
Provisional Indian Govern-
ment, 188
Presides at Anti Imperialist
Conference, 95
Anti Compromise Conference,
97
Attitude towards Fundamen-
tal Rights resolution, 42
Contact with German National
Socialist Party, 52
Study of Sun Pein, 60, and
Kamal Ataturk's methods, 65
Eulogy by Tagore, 93
Escape from India, 106, Trek
from Peshawar to Afghan
border, 108, In Kabul, 110,
In German capital, 115
Memorandum to German Gov-
ernment, 121, Text, 281
First Speech on Azad Hind
Radio, 130
Contacts with Indian POWs,
135
Plan for governing India, 140
Submarine journey from Kiel,
143, 160
Message to Bangkok meet, 155
In Singapore, 175
Announces plan for provision-
al government, 176
Becomes its Head, 188
Takes over INA, 177,
Imphal Operation : Plan, 180,
Attack, 203

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Bose, Subhas Chandra .

Birth, 3
 Education, 4, 6, 8
 In Cambridge, 8, 9
 Quits I.C.S., 11
 Works in Bengal Congress Committee, 24
 In Calcutta Corporation, 19
 As Congress Volunteer Chief, 28
 At Navajavan Bharat Sabha, 38, 255
 As social worker, 17
 As youth leader, 18, 20, 31
 Elected Congress President, 70
 Quits Congress Presidency, 88
 Disqualified as BPCG Chief, 93
 Forms Forward Bloc, 91
 On fast to death, 102
 Figures at Congress Plenary Sessions at:
 Calcutta, 28, Haripura, 73,
 Karachi, 33, Lahore, 33, Trir-
 puri, 82, 84, 261
 Talks with Indian and World Statesmen: With Dr. Ba Maw, 170, with Dr. Bonos, 47, with Count Ciano, 138, with de Valera, 64, with Hitler, 138, with Jinnah, 78, with Mahatma Gandhi, 13, 25, 98, with Mussolini, 60, 188, with Pibulsonggram, 185, with Romain Rolland, 87, with Shigemitsu, 215, with Vithalbai Patel, 46, with Tojo, 105 to 107, 181 with von Ribbentrop, 124,
 Jail terms, 10, 21, 38, 37, 44, 60, 69

As founder of : Austrian Indian Society, 46, Czech-Indian Association, 47, Free India Centre, 50, German Indian Commando Groups, 133, Indian Legion, 127, Provisional Indian Government, 188
 Presides at Anti Imperialist Conference, 95
 Anti Compromise Conference, 97
 Attitude towards Fundamen-
 tal Rights resolution, 42
 Contact with German National Socialist Party, 52
 Study of Sima Fehn, 60, and
 Kamal Atatuk's methods, 65
 Eulogy by Tagore, 93
 Escape from India, 105, Trick
 from Peshawar to Afghan
 border, 108, In Kabul, 110,
 In German capital, 115
 Memorandum to German Gov-
 ernment, 121, Text, 281
 First Speech on Azad Hind
 Radio, 130
 Contacts with Indian POWs,
 135
 Plan for governing India, 140
 Submarine journey from Kiel,
 143, 160
 Message to Bangkok meet, 155
 In Singapore, 175
 Announces plan for provision-
 al government, 176
 Becomes its Head, 188
 Takes over INA, 177,
 Imphal Operation : Plan, 186,
 Attack, 203

- Azad Hind Government Chief, 188
 Shifts government to Rangoon, 199
 Broadcast plea against India's partition, 215
 Indo-Jap Loan agreement, 216
 Joins INA troops at Irrawady front, 217
 Agrees to withdraw INA to Thailand, 219
 Marches to Bangkok with Jhansi brigade, 220
 Leaves for Singapore, holds Cabinet meeting, 220
 Message to Indians in East Asia, 321
 Special Order of the Day, 319
 Seeks Tokyo aid to leave for Russia, 221
 Disbands INA, 220
 Tragic End : Flight from Saigon, 224, Plane halts at Tourane base, takes off (18.8.1945) for Taipei and crashes, 226, Death in Taipei hospital, 280, Ashes kept in Renkoji temple, Tokyo, 230, Bose Enquiry Committee findings, 244
 Brezhnev, 250
 Burmese Independence Army (BIA), 171
 Burma gets freedom, declares war on Japan, 173
 Cambridge, 9, 11, 12
 Campbell, Sir Arthur, 206
 Carbonieri, 58, 59
 Casement, Sir Roger, 62
 Castro, Fidel 250
 Chand, Uttam, 111
 Chandia, Suresh, 132
 Chakravarty, Narendra Narayan, 274
 Chang Ching hui, 192
 Chatlerji, Gen. A C, 190, 215
 Chattopadhyaya, Virendra Nath, 58
 Ciano, Count, 138
 Chiang Karshek, 190
 Churchill, Winston, 87, 98, 150, 190, 216
 Chindwin, 197, 202
 Chudo, Vice Admiral Kan-ei, 218
 Congress, Indian National, 2, 71, 215
 Plenary Sessions : Gaya, 17, Madras, 25, Calcutta, 28, Lahore, 82, 93, 306, Karachi, 38, Lucknow, 69, Haripura, 72, Tripuri, 83, Bose's Address, 261
 Cripps, Sir Stafford, 149
 Dairen, 228
 Dalat, 222
 Dandi March, 84
 Das, C. R., 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22
 Das, Jatindra Nath, 30
 de Gaulle, 290
 de Valera, Eamon, 68, 64
 Desai, Bhulabhai, 43, 285
 Dhillon, G. S., 284
 Dimapur, 206
 Dobama Asalayone, (Thakin Party), 170

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- Dominion Status, 18, 28
Dutt, Batukeshwar, 80
- Eisenhower, Gen., 238
El Alamein, 134
- Forward Bloc, 91, 271, All-India Conference, 92
Forward, English Daily, 18
Free India Centre, 124, 126, 129, 130
Free India Government, 282, 284
Fujwara, Major, 153, 155, 156, 186, 288
Furtwaengler, F. J., 120
- Gandhi, Kasturba, 202
Gandhi-Irwin Pact, 38, 256
Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand, 12, 16, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36; 38, 39, 41, 43, 81, 86, 96, 98; 103, 106, 209, 241
Ganpulay, N. G., 128, 185
German-Indian Commando troops, 188
Ghosh, Aurobindo, 105
Ghuryo, G. S., 9
Goebbels, Dr. Joseph, 52, 54
Goering, Hermann, 54
Greater East Asia Conference, 190
Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, 147
Gulzara Singh, Lt. Col., 209
- Habib-ur-Rahman Khan, 54, 128, 215, 221, 229
Hachiyō, Teruo, 221
Hakim, A., 132
Harbick, Walter, 133
Harijan Weekly, 80, 93
Hassan, Abd, 144
Hatta, Dr. Mohamed, 174
Hayashi, Lt. Col., 196
Hayashida, Tatsuo, 221
Hershey, 239
Hikari Kikan, 104, 214
Hitler, Adolf, 51, 55, 94, 138, 146, 245, 258, 259
Ho Chi Minh, 250
Hoare, Sir Samuel, 39
Holwell Monument, 273
- Imphal, Operation Plan, 186, attack, 203
Independence Preparatory Committee for Burma, 106
Indian Legion, 127, 128, 133, 134, 136, 139
Indian Commando Group, 134
India Division of Berlin Government, 137
Indian Independence League, 142, 151, 175
Indian Independence Volunteer Army, 154
Indian National Army, 133, 136, 141, 153, 157, 158, 172, 203, 220, 231
Proclamation on INA entering India, 300-305
INA Trial : Newsleak of Court Martial, 231, Nehru's statement, 232, A.I.C.C. resolution,

- 233, Gandhi's letter to Viceroy, talks with Auchinleck, 233, Congress plans joint defence, 234, Defence arguments, 236, Judgment, 239, Release of accused, 240, Release of all INA men 241
- Indian Independence League, 297
- Indo-German Society, 194
- Indonesia declares freedom, 174
- Iida Shojiro, 171
- Ipi, Fakir of, 283
- Irwin, Lord, 34
- Isoda, Gen. Saburo, 217, 219, 221
- Italy surrenders, 187
- Iwakura, Col. Hideo, 155, 156, 158
- Izu, Juichi, 100
- Jallianwalla Bagh, 9
- Jayakar, M. R., 24
- Jhansi, Rani of Jhansi Brigade, 182, 210, 220
- Jhowry, Veekam, 132
- Jodl, Col., 207
- Karim, Gani, 200
- Kawabe, Lt. Gen. Masakazu, 200, 207
- Kettel, Field Marshal, 207
- Koni, B.L., 132
- Kepler, Wilhelm, 123, 124, 144
- Khan, Abdul Ghaflar, 41
- Khan, D. M., 200
- Kiani, Lt. Col. M. Z., 290
- Kiel, 144
- Kimura, Gen. Heltaro, 210
- Kohima, 203, 205
- Koiso, Gen. Kuniaki, 174, 212
- Konoyo, Fuminaro, 147
- Kono, Major, 228
- Krappe, Lt. Gen., 136
- Kretshmar, Miss, 124
- Kruse, Mrs., 124
- Kunomura, Maj. Gen. Todai, 186
- Lakshmi, Capt. Miss, 299
- Laurel, Jose, 174, 191
- Left Consolidation Committee, 92
- Leipoldt, H. T., 123
- Lenin, 56, 270
- Lewinski, Baron von, 124
- Loganathan, Lt. Col. A. G., 196, 210
- Lytton, Lord, 17
- MacBride, Maud Gonne, 64
- Macdonald, Ramsay, 37
- Macmillan Harold, 245
- MacSweeney, Terence, 278
- Manchuria, 221, 248
- Majumdar, Ambique, 182
- Malhotra, Uttam Chand, 107
- Mao Tse-tung, 250
- Matruoka, Yosuke, 146
- Maquis, 238
- Maymyo, 202, 207
- Mazzini, 59
- "Mazzotta, Orlando", 113
- Meerut Conspiracy Case, 29
- Mein Kampf, 101, 138, 148, 250
- Miller, Webb, 36
- Melchers, Wilhelm, 122
- Messritz, 134

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- Montagu-Chelmsford Report, 15
Mookerjee, Grijā K., 131,
Mohan Singh, Capt., 154, 157,
186, 238
Moorthy, B., 182
Munich Pact, 262
Musenbergr, Werner, 144
Mussolini, Benito, 56, 60, 137,
138, 270
Mutaguchi, Lt. Gen. Renya, 171,
180, 197, 202
Myitkyina, 199
- Naidu, Alawanta, 132
Namblar, A. G. N., 53, 137, 143
Narayan, Jayaprakash, 85
National Congress Radio, 123,
131
National Front, 92
National Volunteer Corps, 15
Nazi Party, 122
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 2, 26, 28, 29,
86, 90, 134, 141, 191, 232, 236,
241, 261
Nehru, Motilal, 14, 17, 18, 26,
265
Nimiya, Takeo, 145
Nonogaki, 223
- Oaten, E. F., 7
Okawa, Dr. Shumai, 104
Oppenheim, 239
Oshima, General, 143, 149
Ottoman Empire, 285
Oudh Begums, 205
- Patel, Vallabhbhai, 261
Patel, Vithalbhāi, 33, 40, 64
Pibulsonggram, 181, 184, 191, 212
Pilger, Herr, 112
Pillai, Champak Raman, 53
Prasad, Dr. Rajendra, 88, 261
Pritam Singh, 151, 155
Provisional Government of Free
India, 127, 176
Prufer, Dr. 259
- Quaroni, Alberto 107, 113
- Radical Democratic Party, 92
Rai, Lala Lajpat, 21, 25, 30
"Rani of Jhansi" unit of INA,
182, Evacuation to Thailand,
219
Ray, P. C., 6
Reading, Lord, 16
Regenwurm, 133
Ribbentrop, Herr von, 124, 149
Richter, A. F., 123
Rolland, Romain, 46, 67
Roosevelt, F. D., 190, 210
Rosenberg, Dr., 259
Round Table Conference, 16, 32,
86
Roy, Dilip Kumar, 9, 11, 21, 44,
70, 241
Roy, M. N., 92
Roy, Raja Ram Mohan, 2
Russia declares war on Japan,
220

- Sahay, A. M., 290
 Sahgal, P. K., 234
 Saipan, 212
 Salto, Fred, 207
Samyavada, 250
 Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 285
 Saraswati, Swami Sahajanand, 266, 272
 Sarkar, A. N., 299
 Sato, Lt. Gen. Kotoku, 208
 Satyagraha Movement, 18, 15, 42
 Seifriz Adalbert, 184, 185
 Sengupta, Pramode, 132
 Shah, Mian Akbar, 107
 Shah Nawaz Khan, Capt., 234, 299
 Sharma, P. B., 132
 Schenkl, Emilie, 56
 Shidel, Lt. Gen. Tsunamasa, 222
 Shigemitsu, Mamoru, 167
 Shintori Toshio, 145
 Simon, Lord, 25
 Sinyetha (Poor People's Party), 171, 172
 Sirkar, Nilratan, 19
 Sitaramayya, Pattabhi, 80
 Sittang River, 210
 Slim, Gen. Sir William, 206
 Slocombo, George, 86
 Soviet Russia, 221, 246, 247, 250
 Spengler, Oswald, 141
 Shradhanand, Swami, 24
 Stahmer, Heinrich, 192
 Stalin, 56, 216
 Stalingrad, 134
 Sukarno, 174
 Sukhtankar, Y. N., 11
 Suzuki, Keiji, 171
 Swami, N. G., 128
 Swaraj Party, 18
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 9, 83, 86, 93, 129
 Takizawa, Major Saburo, 228
 Talwar, Bhagat Ram, 107
 Tamura, Col. Tsutomu, 151
 Tamura-Pritam Singh Note, 152
 Tanaka, Lt. Gen. Shinichi, 199
 Teraoka, Capt. Masao, 160
 Terauchi, Gen. Count Juichi, 176, 212
 Thierfelder, Franz, 53, 258
 Thivy, J., 299
 Thoman, Herr, 112
 Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, 3, 21
 Tito, Marshal, 250
 Tojo, General Hideki, 129, 137, 148, 156, 165, 168, 180, 191, 193, 200, 208
 Torbung, 204
 Trott, Adam von, 116, 124, 130, 141, 143
 Velu, Thampi, 295
 Versailles, Treaty of, 285
 Vivekananda, Swami, 5
 Vyas, M. R., 128, 132
 Wafd Party, 262
 Waithayakon, Prince Wan, 191
 Wales, Prince of, 15, 16
 Wang Ching-wei, 191, 216
 Wehrmacht, 133
 Werth, Dr. Alexander, 116, 141, 144
 Willingdon, Lord, 39
 Wingate, Brigadier Charles, 188
 Wirsing, Dr. Giselher, 124

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

- Yalta Conference, 216
Yamamoto, Satoshi, Col., 136, 143, 158, 214
Yamauchi Masafumi Lt. Gen., 208
Yanagida, Lt. Gen. Motozo, 204, 208
Yellappa, A., 200
Young India Weekly, 29
Youth Congress, 23
Zhukin, Pya, 91
Zitzewitz, Baron von, 124

- 233, Gandhi's letter to Viceroy, talks with Auchinleck, 233, Congress plans joint defence, 234, Defence arguments, 236, Judgment, 239, Release of accused, 240, Release of all INA men 241
- Indian Independence League, 297
- Indo-German Society, 194
- Indonesia declares freedom, 174
- Iida Shojiro, 171
- Ipi, Fakir of, 283
- Irwin, Lord, 34
- Isoda, Gen. Saburo, 217, 219, 221
- Italy surrenders, 187
- Iwakura, Col. Hideo, 155, 156, 158
- Izu, Juichi, 100
- Jallianwalla Bagh, 9
- Jayakar, M. R., 24
- Jhansi, Rani of Jhansi Brigade, 182, 210, 220
- Jhowry, Veekam, 132
- Jodl, Col., 207
- Karim, Gani, 200
- Kawabe, Lt. Gen. Masakazu, 200, 207
- Kettel, Field Marshal, 207
- Koni, B.L., 132
- Kepler, Wilhelm, 123, 124, 144
- Khan, Abdul Ghaflar, 41
- Khan, D. M., 200
- Kiani, Lt. Col. M. Z., 290
- Kiel, 144
- Kimura, Gen. Heltaro, 210
- Kohima, 203, 205
- Koiso, Gen. Kuniaki, 174, 212
- Konoyo, Fuminaro, 147
- Kono, Major, 228
- Krappe, Lt. Gen., 136
- Kretshmar, Miss, 124
- Kruse, Mrs., 124
- Kunomura, Maj. Gen. Today, 186
- Lakshmi, Capt. Miss, 299
- Laurel, Jose, 174, 191
- Left Consolidation Committee, 92
- Leipoldt, H. T., 123
- Lenin, 56, 270
- Lewinski, Baron von, 124
- Loganathan, Lt. Col. A. G., 196, 210
- Lytton, Lord, 17
- MacBride, Maud Gonne, 64
- Macdonald, Ramsay, 37
- Macmillan Harold, 245
- MacSweeney, Terence, 278
- Manchuria, 221, 248
- Majumdar, Ambique, 182
- Malhotra, Uttam Chand, 107
- Mao Tse-tung, 250
- Matruoka, Yosuke, 146
- Maquis, 238
- Maymyo, 202, 207
- Mazzini, 59
- "Mazzotta, Orlando", 113
- Meerut Conspiracy Case, 29
- Mein Kampf, 101, 138, 148, 250
- Miller, Webb, 36
- Melchers, Wilhelm, 122
- Messritz, 134

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Montagu-Chelmsford Report, 15
Mookerjee, Grijia K., 131,
Mohan Singh, Capt., 154, 157,
186, 238
Moorthy, B., 182
Munich Pact, 262
Musenberg, Werner, 144
Mussolini, Benito, 56, 60, 137,
138, 270
Mutaguchi, Lt. Gen. Renya, 171,
180, 197, 202
Myitkyina, 199

Naidu, Alawanta, 132
Namblar, A. G. N., 53, 137, 143
Narayan, Jayaprakash, 85
National Congress Radio, 123,
131
National Front, 92
National Volunteer Corps, 15
Nazi Party, 122
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 2, 26, 28, 29,
86, 90, 134, 141, 191, 232, 236,
241, 261
Nehru, Motilal, 14, 17, 18, 26,
265
Nimiya, Takeo, 145
Nonogaki, 223

Oaten, E. F., 7
Okawa, Dr. Shumai, 104
Oppenheim, 239
Oshima, General, 143, 149
Ottoman Empire, 285
Oudh Begums, 205

Patel, Vallabhbhai, 261
Patel, Vithalbhai, 33, 40, 64
Pibulsonggram, 181, 184, 191, 212
Pilger, Herr, 112
Pillai, Champak Raman, 53
Prasad, Dr. Rajendra, 88, 261
Pritam Singh, 151, 155
Provisional Government of Free
India, 127, 176
Prufer, Dr. 259

Quaroni, Alberto 107, 113

Radical Democratic Party, 92
Rai, Lala Lajpat, 21, 25, 30
"Rani of Jhansi" unit of INA,
182, Evacuation to Thailand,
219
Ray, P. C., 6
Reading, Lord, 16
Regenwurm, 133
Ribbentrop, Herr von, 124, 149
Richter, A. F., 123
Rolland, Romain, 46, 67
Roosevelt, F. D., 190, 210
Rosenberg, Dr., 259
Round Table Conference, 16, 32,
86
Roy, Dilip Kumar, 9, 11, 21, 44,
70, 241
Roy, M. N., 92
Roy, Raja Ram Mohan, 2
Russia declares war on Japan,
220

- Sahay, A. M., 290
 Sahgal, P. K., 234
 Saipan, 212
 Salto, Fred, 207
Samyavada, 250
 Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 235
 Saraswaty, Swami Sahajanand, 266, 272
 Sarkar, A. N., 299
 Sato, Lt. Gen. Kotoku, 208
 Satyagraha Movement, 18, 15, 42
 Seifriz Adalbert, 134, 135
 Songupta, Pramode, 132
 Shah, Mian Akbar, 107
 Shah Nawaz Khan, Capt., 234, 299
 Sharma, P. B., 132
 Schenkl, Emilie, 56
 Shidel, Lt. Gen. Tsunamasa, 222
 Shigemitsu, Mamoru, 167
 Shintori Toshio, 145
 Simon, Lord, 25
 Sinyotha (Poor People's Party), 171, 172
 Sirkar, Nilratan, 19
 Sitaramayya, Pattabhi, 80
 Sittang River, 219
 Slim, Gen. Sir William, 206
 Slocombe, George, 36
 Soviet Russia, 221, 246, 247, 250
 Spengler, Oswald, 141
 Shradhanand, Swami, 24
 Stahmer, Heinrich, 192
 Stalin, 56, 216
 Stalingrad, 134
 Sukarno, 174
 Sukhtankar, Y. N., 11
 Suzuki, Keiji, 171
 Swami, N. G., 128
 Swarnj Party, 18
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 9, 83, 86, 93, 129
 Takizawa, Major Saburo, 223
 Talwar, Bhagat Ram, 107
 Tamura, Col. Tsutomu, 151
 Tamura-Pritam Singh Note, 152
 Tanaka, Lt. Gen. Shinichi, 199
 Teraoka, Capt. Masao, 160
 Terauchi, Gen. Count Juichi, 176, 212
 Thierfelder, Franz, 53, 258
 Thivy, J., 299
 Thoman, Herr, 112
 Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, 3, 21
 Tibo, Marshal, 250
 Tojo, General Hideki, 129, 137, 148, 156, 165, 168, 180, 191, 193, 200, 208
 Torbung, 204
 Trott, Adam von, 116, 124, 130, 141, 143
 Velu, Thampi, 295
 Versailles, Treaty of, 285
 Vivekananda, Swami, 5
 Vyas, M. R., 128, 132
 Wafd Party, 262
 Waithayakon, Prince Wan, 191
 Wales, Prince of, 15, 16
 Wang Ching-wei, 191, 216
 Wehrmacht, 138
 Werth, Dr. Alexander, 116, 141, 144
 Willingdon, Lord, 39
 Wingate, Brigadier Charles, 198
 Wirsing, Dr. Giselher, 124

Biography of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

Yalta Conference, 216

Yamamoto, Satoshi, Col., 136,
148, 158, 214

Yamauchi Masafumi Lt. Gen.,
208

Yanagida, Lt. Gen. Motozo, 204,
208

Yellappa, A., 200

Young India Weekly, 29

Youth Congress, 26

Zhukin, Taya, 91

Zitzewitz, Baron von, 124

