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PERSONALITY AND POLITICAL IDEALS

OF

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

IS HE FASCIST ?

BY

HIRA LAL SETH

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PREFACE

Suhas Bose's political views have given rise to fierce controversy. Ever since his escape from India he is said to have become a votary of Fascism and a "Lawrence of Arabia" for the Axis warmongers, to stir up trouble in this country.

"Is he Fascist"? This small book is an attempt at answering this question. His political philosophy has been subjected to an analysis; and his change of views has been traced to his European visit in 1933. But we cannot make a sweeping statement about him without defining Fascism. Does his praise of Nazis during 1933-35 and visit to Germany amount to his becoming a Fascist? That does not seem to be justified by events. What he learned from those countries was that certain features of Socialism and Fascism, if blended, might give India a political philosophy. When he returned to India he remained anti-Hitlerite and talked about Socialism with all his previous ardour of Trade Unionist days. Once having become absorbed in internal affairs, he did not give much attention to finding out a new philosophy for India. It was only after differences had broken out at Tripuri that he started Forward Bloc. And then gradually when the war broke out and

he had gone abroad, he reverted to his old praise for the Axis.

But should this be labelled Fascism? That depends upon what you think Fascism is. One can apply Fascism and Communism as economic and political doctrines and one can dub any cultural reaction, or swing towards extreme Nationalism as Fascism, and any flirtation with Socialism such as the Labour Party and the Trotskyists carry on as Communism. Angry Americans have called Mexico, alternatively a "Red" and a "Fascist," as it suited them, and when they saw that interests of the Yankee oil magnates were threatened by rise of Nationalism in that country. Similarly the South American States where there is a great German and Italian population have been sometimes bracketed as Fascists by Washington because a few local Germans or Italians were fool enough to play into the hands of Nazis and thus give the genuine Nationalist sentiments of people an appearance of a vast revolt engineered by foreigners.

The British have followed this policy of Fascism mongering in case of Palestine, and now the same is being done about India.

But such Nationalist outbreaks which took place in South America and Palestine cannot be dubbed as Fascist. Fascism, says John Strachey, is Capitalist-Imperialism, and as such it naturally follows that it is only in a highly industrialised country that Fascism can take deep roots. In other cases, it can only be a

temporary phase, as for instance it is in Germany's European Satellites—Rumania, Hunagary, Finland, Bulgaria. These small states had some genuine National grievances. They have allowed them to be exaggerated and have become tools of German Imperialism. They are thus near Fascists. As soon as the German yoke is taken off their heads they would give up the aggressive Fascist tendencies. The same is true of Subhas Bose. His policy of Nationalism has been pushed far, and it has become now to be the great embarrassment of all right-thinking Indians subservient to the Axis. It is unlikely however that this near Fascism is more than a temporary phase as in case of Rumania and the Balkan states. Once the German power is broken, as it must, Subhas Bose, the Trade Unionist, the Socialist and the Nationalist must turn to the country that gave him birth and adjust his views according to its traditions rather than those of Berlin and Rome.

30-3-1943

HIRA LAL SETH.

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

(Life Sketch)

Subhas Bose had an extremely restless early life. Like Joseph Stalin he was brought up in an intensely religious atmosphere and just as that great leader of the people had an orthodox mother who wanted Stalin to become a priest, Subhas Bose's mother inculcated the same spirit of spiritualism in the Bengali leader, though in this case the desire to lead the life of an ascetic was his own, his mother having a different career in view for him. Under influence of this asceticism, Subhas Bose left his home and wandered in forests trying to find a consolation for his soul. However priesthood was no more to be the be-all and end-all of Subhas's life than it was for Stalin. As the boy Stalin was destined to be the successor of Lenin and became afterwards the greatest man of his age, so Subhas Chandra Bose was to be the great leader of Bengal after C. R. Dass's death. His political philosophy and methods differed from Stalin, but several other incidents of their lives resembled apart from a religious childhood. Stalin had great opposition to overcome before becoming the leader of entire Russia and the working class of the world. Subhas Chandra Bose had also such barriers—his Trotsky was Sen Gupta while Gandhi represented

the same mediocre spirit outside the Bengal borders, which has been guiding the Socialist and Labour Parties of Second International and its leaders like Vandervelde Kautsky and Macdonald.

It took Stalin a decade before he was able to stabilise his position. Subhas Bose has still to measure swords with Gandhi, though he has won the first round, that is Bengal is behind him to a man.

Even so, it has not been a walk over for Bose. Bengal, the stronghold of extremism, has also been the chief bastion of British Imperialism. It was the first conquest of the adventurers from across the seas, and its city Calcutta remained capital of India for a very long time. Its lower middle class filled the Secretariat of the Government as clerks and "babus", much as Cossacks did the Czar's army. The British in Bengal showed great racial pride and though the army of occupation had long since left or had been reduced in number, the treatment meted out to Bengalis was same as that of Germans towards inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine after 1870, to those of Ruhr by the French in 1923 and to entire occupied France by Hitler's generals now. Subhas Chandra Bose like Jawaharlal Nehru as a boy experienced some of the arrogance of the master race. While a student he had a violent quarrel with the European Principal of his college who had been accustomed to treat Indian students much as an "Aryan" Principal would his Jewish pupils (if any are left by this time) in Berlin. Subhas Bose had protested against this

treatment, and the result was that he was accused of having assaulted the Principal and was expelled from the college. This interrupted his studies for a couple of years. But it left an indelible impression on his mind. At Cambridge, later on when he was able to see more of Englishmen, and feel for the first time the colour bar against Indians abroad, the old prejudices returned, and he felt that such arrogance was insufferable.

And while this young boy was faintly feeling the new urge in him to liberate his country, he had occasion to hear that remarkable Indian woman Sarojini Naidu, who had the voice of Passonaria, (and at the time the facial beauty of that Spanish leader too), the revolutionary ardour of Rosa Luxemburg and political acumen of Krupsayaka. Sarojini Naidu influenced Bose as Luxemburg and Krupsayaka influenced Lenin, and Passonaria many a youth of Spain or members of the international Brigade.

He went to England as an enthusiastic youth eager to imbibe the best spirit of that country, ready to forget his experiences of social arrogance.

He spent some years there goaded on by his relatives, who held dazzling prospects of life before him as an I.C.S. man on some "cushy" job.

But he hated such an easy path to power and glory. He had his eyes and ears open, and saw and heard things for himself. He returned a rebel.

The British, who have provided early education and

training to some of our Indian leaders deserve our gratitude, as much as the Japanese do of China for the inspiration which Sun Yat Sen and Chiang Kai-shek received in Tokyo before the war. It is no fault of the British and Japanese that young men of India, and China refused to walk into the traps that they had laid for them—the “service of people through the I.C.S. in India and working for “Greater” Asiatic order o. Japan” in China. These patrons have done everything to hoodwink our people. But our young men have been too clever for them, and Gandhi, Bose and Nehru, who had all been offered such baits preferred service of the country to those of their hosts. Subhas Bose returned in time to join the Non-co-operation movement. The first round was to begin with demonstrations against the Prince of Wales. Bose who had offered his services to C. R. Dass, had been appointed by that great patriot to direct the strike in Calcutta. He was arrested.

On his release, Deshbandhu had started Swarajist work. Bose became associated with it. He dabbled in journalism and was appointed chief editor of the “Forward.”

Then began the collaboration with Dass, which was to culminate in Bose’s becoming a popular leader in Bengal during Deshbandhu’s life-time. Elections to Calcutta Corporation were contested by the Swarajists. Dass became Mayor and Bose Executive Councillor. It was like elections of Petrograd Soviet, when Lenin

and Stalin headed the workers for the final assault against the most despotic Prince of World after Machiavelli—Czar Nicholas.

The elections proved to be a stormy affair. Not that there was internal opposition. But the bureaucracy was taking no chances. It was out to muzzle democracy. The white bureaucracy had no more desire to be lorded over by Indians in Corporation, than the Czarist army and Kerensky regime wanted to be dominated by Petrograd Soviet.

Then the axe fell. Subhas Bose was clapped in prison under a special Bengal Ordinance and deported to Mandalay.

While there he evolved his future course of action. His chief, Dass, passed away during Bose's imprisonment. Sen Gupta, his rival, had consolidated his power.

He came out and returned to the charge. This time not only Bengal but the entire India was his field of action. He went about the country, calling youth to action everywhere.

In Lucknow, at All Parties Conference he denounced Dominion Status. He wanted to prevent the elderly leaders from dominating Congress and making a deal with Britain. Thus began a new struggle in his life—the battle against reaction whether in Bengal or outside it.

In 1929 he carried on the campaign to Lahore

Congress and won initial success. Bengal passed on to his hands after Sen Gupta's leadership. The Congress had a radical President.

After Lahore Congress came imprisonment, and then deportation abroad.

There he met Vithalbhai Patel and carried on a campaign for India from Vienna, Switzerland and Italy. He observed the foreign movements, and was very much impressed by some of the features of Fascist and Nazi Parties.

These ideas he blended into his philosophy of Socialism and out of this amalgam emerged the "Sama Vadya Sangh," which became his political creed, and which has been discussed in this book. On his return he was clapped in prison, where he remained up to April 1937.

He was elected President in 1938. The elderly Congress leaders, too busy with the new Constitution to devote any attention to ideological differences with him, let him have his way. This precarious combination lasted for one year. Then came the parting of ways, Tripuri, Calcutta and finally resignation of Subhas Bose and starting of "Forward Bloc."

He wanted this organisation to be the spearhead of the left politics in this country, a parallel organisation to the rightists, who were to be dragged down the pedestal of power.

This effort had as much an abrupt end as his

dabbling in journalism in 1928. Since then he has led a restless life, with no respite except in prison or in that brief year 1938, when everything was peaceful in India. He was now to continue that tradition of restless life and face new horizons and bigger issues than that of leadership inside the Congress. The year of 1938, which was peaceful in India, had been an ominous one for Europe. War rumblings had begun when Nazi troops poured in Czechoslovakia. The war came in 1939.

Subhas Chandra Bose on outbreak of war forgot his factional feud with the Congress leaders and concentrated himself on India's demand for freedom. He was arrested for saying about Britain what Colonel Beck and Benes were allowed to proclaim loudly about Germany from London—that is India had as much right of self-determination as Poland and Czechoslovakia. He resorted to hunger strike, was released and then escaped, to where it has not been established till now though London papers insist that he is in Axis territory.

CHAPTER I

BENGAL IN FERMENT

To understand Subhas Chandra Bose, we must understand Bengal. The two are closely linked, and each has influenced the other. There is much in political growth of Subhas Bose that is typical of Bengal. His extremism, his revolt against Gandhist leadership, his spirit of what the French call integral nationalism are the familiar features of Bengal history.

Separatism has been a great force in Bengal even before Subhas Bose came into limelight. This province on the extreme eastern fringe of India has been a problem child. Its polarity towards anarchism and extremism, its faith in leader-principle, and the fanatical attachment of its people to each other in matters where the question is of Bengal *vs.* the rest, lift it above all other provinces. It has a keen resemblance to Catalonia, that hotbed of extremists in Spain, for ever trying to break away from the rest of the country, and at the same time trying to assimilate it. Whether Bengal will be absorbed into the rest of India temporarily as Catalonia has been into Spain by Franco is a matter difficult to foretell. One thing however is clear—it has the separatist and rebellious spirit which has inspired Catalonia. And it is essentially

paradoxical. For Bengal, like Catalonia, likes and dislikes the rest of the country. It wants to win it over and yet has often broken loose from it. Let us take its history from the time of partition of Bengal. We find that a strong province with a people deeply steeped in Western liberal, radical and even Sein Fein tradition provoked into a conflict with the British Government over the partition issue. The entire Bengal rises to a man to defend itself against this insult. Its press which is one of the most powerful in India, its bar which contains some of the ablest men of country, in short its all machinery of assault is set in motion. The Bengal caterpillar with its numerous hands and feet ; liberals, anarchists, pressmen, lawyers, Congressmen, is out to trample anything that comes in its way. This British Government yields, the partition is revoked and Bengal is triumphant. This struggle gives it a new consciousness, and as it lies there with its back towards China, arms declined on the edge of the Bay of Bengal, resting after the clash with Britain it looks at the rest of India with pride mingled with curiosity and pity, a yearning to inculcate the same spirit in India, and at the same time a suspicion about the debating club manners of the Indian National Congress. A group of its young men, violent, extremists, go forward, take their own particular message to the rest of India, organise parties and work for the liberation of the country. But a spirit of complacency had crept over the rest of Bengal which continued

till 1921.

Bengal staged a come-back in Indian politics, when Gandhi launched his struggle. It took great part in it, but the orders emanated from C. R. Dass, rather than Gandhi. Mahatma who had at the time a great hold over the entire country, enjoyed popularity in Bengal too but never equal to C. R. Dass. Dass was the real leader, the man who after Arbandhu Ghosh and Surendranath Bannerjee represented the true spirit of Bengal. It seems after such a prolonged inactivity. Bengal had found an outlet for its pent-up emotions, and C. R. Dass was its voice.

Subhas Bose returned to India when the struggle was on. He had thrown away his job of I.C.S., because, as he puts it, "he could not serve two masters at the same time"—that is India and Britain. He met Gandhi whom he put certain questions to which Gandhi could not give satisfactory answer: Bose was disillusioned. He felt Gandhi was utterly incapable of leading the movement of country's independence. He came to Bengal, met C. R. Dass there and found that Dass alone could be his leader.

Under his leader's orders he organised demonstrations on the Prince's visit to India, and was for a brief period put into prison too.

The Gaya split finally cut this link between Gandhi and those men who like C. R. Dass and Bose were sceptical about the methods of Non-co-operation as Gandhi had introduced. They wanted to form a Swaraj

party on Sein Fein model, which should go to the legislatures and carry on the battle against Britain from inside the Council Chambers. The party was avowedly anti-Gandhi. Subhas Bose writes about it as follows :—
“Considering the influence of Mahatma Gandhi in 1921 and 1922, the rise of Swaraj Party must be regarded as something unaccountably remarkable. Though the leaders and the rank and file of the party had the highest respect for the personality of the Mahatma the party was frankly anti-Gandhi Party, and it was strong enough to force the Mahatma to voluntary retirement from the politics.” The Swarajists had great success. In Bengal there was the same enthusiasm for the Swarajists swept the polls everywhere. In Municipal elections, they won majority of seats. C. R. Dass was elected Mayor and Subhas Bose, Chief Executive Officer.

(2)

The success of Bengal Swarajists in the Municipal elections was followed by similar success of Congress leaders in other Municipalities. Ahmedabad, Bombay, Allahabad and Madras corporations were all captured by Congress leaders. The years following the retirement of Gandhi from Indian politics are also the years of decay of Gandhist policy if not the Gandhi influence in the Congress. His constructive programme on which so much emphasis was laid at the Gaya Congress, receded into background before such events as the Bardoli struggle, Municipal elections, and the general increase in strength of the Swarajists in the country as

a result of great work inside Assembly by Pt. Moti Lal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and Mr. C. R. Dass. The centralised leadership of Gandhi was over. In every province the local chiefs were strong. Patel Brothers in Gujrat and Bombay, Rajgopalachariar in Madras, Lajpat Rai in Punjab, elder Nehru in U. P. and C. R. Dass in Bengal. So far as Bengal was concerned this retirement of Gandhi was a heaven-sent boon. They felt that the Civil Disobedience movement had been bungled by the old man. Subhas Bose's view was that Gandhi had lost the game, because he chose to follow his own wishes, rather than take advice from Pt. Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and Maulana Mohamed Ali. But not all Bengal subscribed to Subhas Bose's view. There were people who liked Gandhi and his ideas. So long as C. R. Dass lived, these people did not make much headway but with his passing away they raised their heads, the Gandhists outside Bengal abetted them in this. Deshbandhu's teachings were interpreted differently by Sen Gupta and Subhas Bose. Subhas Bose was arrested in 1924 and he was in prison when Dass died. Sen Gupta became Mayor of Calcutta Corporation and his influence increased in Bengal. This was the second partition of Bengal, and more grim than the first, because it was not geographical but mental. The minds of the Bengalis were divided in two.

The old paradox of Bengal came again on surface and the drama of a strong, politically advanced province in the cross currents of emotion—the desire to merge

with India and launch a united struggle against Britain and the equally powerful desire to break these bonds, and get away from visionary Gandhi's domination—these two conflicting desires were now surging afresh in Bengal's mind. Gradually these desires took a solid shape, and the Bengalis were arrayed in two different groups. Bengal's unity was broken, and those who ruled the Congress encouraged this tendency towards separation. The Swarajist cause which was to Subhas synonymous with his view about integral Nationalism, and anti-Gandhism was being compromised by Sen Gupta. Bengal without a leader looked across the borders towards the Congress high command for guidance. Subhas Bose had even in those early days a great faith in leader-principle. He continuously speaks in his writings about C. R. Dass as "the Leader." He felt a great devotion towards him, and it would be no exaggeration to say that during Dass's life-time, Bose was to him what Stalin was to Lenin. But unlike Stalin, Bose did not succeed Dass.

Trained in this leader-principle, Subhas Bose could not be a passive spectator, while Gandhism rode rough shod over Bengal and he saw before him collapse, not only the organisation, which Deshbandhu had built up, but also the ideas and visions for which he had laboured all his life.

CHAPTER II

THE EXILE RETURNS

Subhas Bose was arrested on October 25, 1924. He was deported in 1925 and released in May 1927. The imprisonment in Mandalay was the turning point in life of Subhas. The noted American Journalist Dorothy Thompson has remarked in an essay on Hitler, that it was a great mistake to put Hitler in prison, for it was in the narrow confines of prison cell that he thought about *Lebensraum*, i.e., 'the living space for Germany in which he included the entire world. Similarly it was a great mistake to put Subhas Bose in prison. For it was in Mandalay that he was able to evolve out his new programme of forming youth, labour and peasant organisations and starting inside the Congress a wing of the workers, peasants and youth. Before Subhas Bose was arrested he was an out and out follower of C. R. Dass and the main organiser of the Swarajists in Bengal. His nationalism was of a deeper hue than that of Gandhi. But he had no clear cut ideas of his own. It was in Mandalay that he thought out these plans. His extremism and integral nationalism ceased to be a mere ideal after Mandalay. He continuously analysed his mind, and also the situation in the country. He was considerably helped by the events in Bengal. We have said that

Bengal was gradually becoming a house divided and Gandhi's hold was tightening. Bose could not face this situation with equanimity. What was he to do ? Purge the Swaraj Party in Bengal of Gandhist element ? No, he had not come back to create civil war in Bengal. Swaraj Party was good enough so far as its ideals went, but it was not the be-all and end-all of his life. He had never been a parliamentarian himself. He had never gone to Assembly and apart from his post as Executive Officer he had held no office in those days. So long as C. R. Dass lived, Subhas had full faith in his parliamentary work. But now that he was gone, Subhas could not take up his place in Assembly. Dass's departure had created a vacuum which was not easy to fill. All that he could do was to give his moral backing to the Swarajist cause, and that he could do easily for he had still faith in Lala Lajpat Rai and Pt. Motilal Nehru.

His main task he realised lay beyond the narrow sphere of the Swarajist work.^c He had a double task ahead, strengthening the unity in Bengal, and making up for the loss created by the death of C. R. Dass, and putting forward before the country some programme which would appeal to all Indians. For unless there was some alternative to Gandhism, in Bengal, as elsewhere people who were disillusioned with Gandhi would have frittered away their strength in factional quarrels.

It was in Maharashtra that Subhas Bose outlined the plans he had evolved in Mandalay prison. He was called upon to preside over the Maharashtra Provincial

Conference, and he writes as follows about that conference :—

“The enthusiasm I met there was striking. In my speech I advocated some new lines of activity for Congressmen, which I had decided on during my prolonged incarceration in Burma. For instance, I urged that the Congress should directly take up the task of organising labour and that youth and students should start organisations of their own for their country. I also urged several political organisations for women in addition to their participation in the organisation.”

As a result of the above campaign youth and student organisations were formed in several places. To those leaders of the working class who had no love for M. N. Roy and the communists, this was a heaven-sent opportunity. It may be remarked here that the years 1924—30 were years of the Communist Party's rise in India. The strength and the popularity it had in those days has yet to be equalled by it. The anticommunist working class leaders welcomed this move of alliance with Nationalists. So far as the Congress was concerned Subhas Bose was the first to espouse the cause of working class. True. Gandhi had in 1918 interfered in Ahmedabad labour dispute, and his disciple Patel had made himself popular there, but neither of them had made a bid for capturing the sympathy of the entire working class. Subhas Bose had stolen a march over them. As a nationalist of a deeper

due than Gandhi, he knew that workers and peasants had to play a great role in India's freedom. Their strength lay dormant, unexploited, or exploited by communists only. He wanted to break the hold of the communists among them and at the same time to end the election of Gandhi's universal popularity by having the working class behind him.

Jawaharlal Nehru who began a similar work among the working class, sometime after the beginning Subhas had made, had not the same objects in view. He got involved in too many intellectual subtleties about the relative values of Capitalism and Socialism and Soviet Russia, which Subhas Bose with his integral Nationalism, and without the scientific Marxian trend of Nehru carefully avoided. Bose stressed the need of organisation among workers and peasants what he had in view to use them in conflict with Britain or against their employers but without resorting to the extremes the communist went in the labour *vs.* capital dispute. To the ordinary worker who was not educated like his leaders, nationalism of Bose with its militant note about emancipation of workers and the peasants had a magic ring. He was not so much class-conscious as yet and could easily be excited on National questions.

Other activities of Bose in the years 1927—30 include his founding of the Independence League in collaboration with Srinivas Ayanger and Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru though of essentially different outlook

than Bose in economic matters, was all for stiffening of the Congress programme. The object of this League was to persuade Congress to accept the programme of complete Independence instead of the Dominion Status. They carried on the battle inside the All-Parties conference and later on to the Calcutta Congress.

This strange team, however, could not for long work together. They were, no doubt united about "Independence," but all the three were of different mental background.

Bose and Ayanger were nearer to each other than either of them was to Nehru and their association lasted longer, but with the approach of 1929 Nehru was out of the trio.

In 1929 Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President. He was able to get the Independence resolution passed by the Congress. He could air his views on socialism in the open session. Though he still retained some differences with other Congress leaders, yet as a socialist he attached great importance to a concerted action with them. Besides, the rein of the Congress was in his hands and he felt that he could mould Congress on leftist lines. Subhas Chandra Bose still smelled rats and believed that Gandhi and other Congress leaders were not prepared to launch a struggle for independence. He felt Jawaharlal had deserted the cause of the leftists. To him Socialism was nothing.

if it did not mean aggressive action in the Nationalist cause in which was included the cause of the workers and the peasants. He moved a resolution in Lahore Congress for "immediate establishment of a parallel government." This resolution made him increasingly popular with the younger section. He addressed a meeting of students and Naujawan Bharat Sabha enthusiasts, where he denounced the Congress leaders and stressed that the only hope lay in a struggle by the youths, kisans and workers. In those days Naujawan Bharat Sabha was very popular in the Punjab and it represented the vanguard of the Socialist movement. The youths were all extremists. A wave of terrorism was surging over the country. There were conspiracy cases all over Northern India. The youth took great interest in these cases. While the Congress denounced the violent methods, and while Jawaharlal declared that the time for secret conspiracies was past and the entire Indian struggle was an open conspiracy against Britain, Subhas Bose remained either silent on this matter or denounced the British as responsible for these outrages.

His view was that they were committed to retaliation. The result was that he was carried on a wave of popularity, and paradoxical as it may seem he was popular in those circles which were communist or near-communist. The policy of the Socialists and Communists everywhere was a stern denunciation of bourgeois Nationalists.

This denunciation was being amply done by Subhas Bose, so he was the leader of the youth whether belonging to Naujawan Bharat Sabha or those out of it and belonging to extreme Nationalist group.

The Congress High Command no doubt considered him a malcontent and a rebel. They had won over Nehru, but they could not win over Bose. So they tried to ignore him. He was excluded from the Working Committee, so was Srinivas Ayanger. The latter was not of tough fibre as Subhas was and could not survive this disgrace.

He gradually lost interest in politics and finally retired from public life altogether. To Subhas Bose this exclusion from the Working Committee came as a natural climax of the struggle which had been going on between him and the High Command. It helped him further to win over the youths, peasants and the labourers to his side.

It has been remarked in the foregoing pages that the new programme of Subhas strengthened his position in Bengal. The landslide in his favour began with Calcutta Congress, where he carried on the main attack on Dominion Status stand of the Congress. J. M. Sen Gupta began to seem a liberal reformist Mayor before the rising personality of Bose. Motilal Nehru was the President of Calcutta session. He was the former colleague of Subhas's leader C. R. Dass and Bose had very great respect for him. But he knew that

ever since the All-Parties Conference at Lucknow where Dominion Status was accepted by the elder Nehru, the latter had gradually moved over to the Gandhist group. Though Motilal Nehru continued to display independence of judgment to the last serious illness of his, he had for some time past followed the policy of the Gandhists.// But Subhas Bose did not hesitate to denounce the Congress stand, because an old colleague of Dass was in the chair. The Congress accepted his policy only in a round-about manner at Calcutta but at Lahore finally came round to his view and passed the Independence resolution. Sen Gupta was in for a bad time. His party lost heavily in the provincial elections. Subhas Bose became the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and also the most powerful man in Bengal. Thus in 1930 he had not only become popular among youths, peasants and kisans all over India, but reached the climax of his power in his own province too. His rivals tried to pull him down. Complaints were raised at the Lahore Congress by Sen Gupta group about the legality of the elections in Bengal. Tempers rose high. The elder Nehru was deputed to go to Bengal and find out the truth. He made enquiries and gave this verdict in favour of Subhas. When he went away, the differences again broke up, and the two groups established separate Congress Committees in Bengal during Civil Disobedience movement. There was keen contest for Municipal elections, and even for Mayoral election.

there were two Congress candidates—J. M. Sen Gupta and Subhas Bose. But the star of J. M. Sen Gupta had set. He represented the old world, a strange blend of some Deshbandu's ideas with Gandhist pacifism, the ex-Mayor of Calcutta and the ex-president of B. P. C. C. had been there not because he represented the spirit of the times, but due to the fact that he had been propped up by the Gandhists, as a bulwark against the rising strength of Subhas Bose. The lie that Sen Gupta was true successor of C.R. Dass worked for some time, but it could not always. The entire Bengal had begun a searching of hearts and everywhere people were carrying on a fevering self-examination. There was the same tension in Bengal in 1929, which is found in a society, where the outworn social relations are crashing down under the hammer blows of the new productive forces.

Whatever one might think of Bose's new schemes there was no doubt about it that he had made a synthesis of C. R. Dass's teaching and his own experience about the unrest among the youth, peasants and labourers. All this talk about parallel government, organisation of youths, trade union etc., may have never taken the shape which Bose wanted it to give. But there was no doubt about it that he had done something and his ideas, because they were new and in harmony with the spirit of the times, carried weight with people.

In Bengal they felt this tension between old thoughts and the new sooner than elsewhere, and

threw away the old leadership. The mantle of Dass was laid on Bose's shoulders where it has remained since then. J. M. Sen Gupta suffered the same eclipse that men who are propped up as leaders without their support, or they themselves realising whether they are moving with the spirit of times, suffer—defeat ignominious and utter defeat—the defeat of a Kerensky, a Macdonald, Ebert or a Dolfuss. A few months after his defeat Sen Gupta passed away, and, although his faction remained, his name faded into background, and was gradually forgotten for he never represented any idea, he was merely an instrument in the hands of other people who were trying to give practical shape to their ideas.

The execution of Sardar Bhagat Singh and the signing of the Gandhi-Irwin pact further isolated the Congress leaders from the youth of country. Subhas Bose was not in favour of this pact and came out with a strong denunciation of it. He also criticised the election of Sardar Patel as president, and said that it was a stage-trick to get ratification of Gandhi-Irwin pact. This election of Sardar Patel had been done not by delegates but by the Working Committee. Subhas Bose declared that it was an illegal procedure.

Meanwhile preparations were made at Karachi to hold a separate Conference of all the extremists and the youths and Subhas Bose was to preside over it. Describing the Karachi Congress Subhas Bose writes :—

"The left wing to which I belonged had resolved previously to come to Karachi, survey the situation there, consider carefully what the Mahatma had communicated to me in Bombay as to his future attitude and then make their final decision. At Karachi it was quite clear that they would not have much support from the elected delegates, who alone could vote at the Congress, though among the general public and particularly the youths, they had larger support. There was another factor which had to be considered. If we were consistent and honest it would not do to merely oppose the pact and then go back home. We would have to give notice to the Government and start the movement again. What support would we get if we did so? There was no doubt that the response in men and money would be disappointing. There was therefore no possibility that if we continued the fight we would achieve better results than the Mahatma had done. If we were defeated as we were sure to be, our opposition would be futile. If we succeeded in throwing out the pact which was unlikely in the circumstances but failed to carry on a more vigorous campaign, the country would not gain by our opposition."

The campaign of Subhas therefore was confined to the Youth Conference and some speeches in the session denouncing the pact but not pressing the matter to a division. The Gandhists were too shrewd to be taken unawares. They had mobilised their full strength, and

such was their organisation that the father of Sardar Bhagat Singh, S. Kishen Singh, was called upon to speak in favour of resolution on the Lahore executions. Gandhi was triumphant at Karachi and was elected the sole Congress delegate for the Round Table Conference.

Jawaharlal Nehru's Fundamental 'Rights' resolutions was the only illuminating feature of these otherwise drab proceedings at Karachi. This resolution gave a practical shape to many of the ideas, which Subhas Bose had so laboriously advocated since his return from exile. Jawaharlal Nehru at once won over the sympathies of the working class for Congress, and at the same time vindicated the charges that he had gone over to Gandhists, since the Lahore Congress. He had also turned some unpopularity among the younger section as a result of his association with Gandhi-Irwin pact. This resolution was the Congress's magna charta for workers and made Nehru's position strong among all sections of the people.

But Subhas Bose continued to be popular among the workers. The reason was not that Subhas Bose's faith in the working class was founded on any intellectual conviction that socialism on Soviet model was inevitable, as Nehru believed. It was only a sentimental bond which united him to the workers. As has been remarked, the workers were more nationalistic than class conscious and had come under the spell of

Subhas Bose because of his extreme nationalist views and denunciation of Gandhi's milk and water nationalism. The revolutionary proletariat deprived of any communist leadership, due to their bad tactics, and finding Gandhism too weak a creed to carry on the battle of emancipation of either India or the working class followed Subhas Bose. He was elected President of the T. U. C. in July 1931.

The Roy group and the communists fell not between themselves as a result of which the latter left the Congress. This was the climax of Subhas's power among the working class. Then we find him gradually drifting away from them, just as Hitler did after achieving initial success. The Trade Union movement soon came into hands of the opportunists, who were neither Marxists nor extreme nationalists but only there to achieve domination for their particular group. If Subhas Bose had continued taking active interest in working class politics, the history of the Indian Trade Union movement, nay even the national movement, might have been different. We should then have the spectacle here of Republican Spain with socialists, communists and anarchists each having separate trade unions and using them for political action. Subhas Bose, however, turned his interests to other fronts. He was exceedingly worried about Gandhi and what he was doing in England. He wanted Gandhi to go.

He felt that Gandhi was incapable of representing

India in England. He was posing as "world teacher and Indian political leader", as the same time. The English were too clever for this simple saint from the East, who began to talk about solving communal problem first before any power was transferred to India.

In this way he played into the hands of the reactionaries in England who wanted to keep the communal question in the forefront. His speech in the Round Table Conference was too *saue* to have any effect. "He should have spoken like a Hitler or a Mussolini or a Stalin."

Subhas Bose was critical about his establishing too many personal contacts in England, and too little on the continent. He wanted him to have stayed longer in Italy and visited Germany and other countries. About Gandhi's visit to Italy he writes :—

"He was given a warm reception by the Government and the people of Italy, and was received in audience by the head of Government, Signor Mussolini. This meeting was certainly a historic one. The Dictator of Italy conveyed his best wishes for the success of the Mahatma's efforts. It was the only occasion on the continent that the Mahatma came into contact with a man who really counts in the politics of modern Europe. The Mahatma's attitude towards the Fascist authorities including his attendance at a demonstration of the Fascist boys (the Balilla) was severely criticised in anti-Fascist circles. But there is no doubt that from the

point of view of India, the Mahatma rendered great public service by his visit to Italy. The only regret is that he did not stay there longer and did not cultivate more personal contact."

From the above it would be clear which way the mind of Subhas Bose was moving. The reference to Mussolini, as the man who really counted in European politics and the wish expressed in the last sentence of wider relations with Italy, all these made it clear that Subhas Bose had developed a keen admiration for the system of Italy. Gandhi could not stay there for long. Subhas Bose who went to Europe, about a year after the return of Gandhi, did.

CHAPTER III

SUBHAS BOSE IN EUROPE

Early in 1938, Subhas Bose sailed for Europe. He had been ill in prison and when he was released he went abroad for treatment. When he reached Vienna, he met there another distinguished Indian leader, Shriyut Vithalbhai Patel, who was also ill. Together they embarked on a new campaign against Gandhist leadership. Vithalbhai Patel, who was an ex-President of the Central Assembly had in the past differed from Gandhi on several issues. Unlike his brother Sardar Patel, he held socialist and radical views. Mahatma Gandhi had in those days suspended his Civil Disobedience movement. Bose and Patel issued the following statement from Vienna about it :

“The latest action of Mr. Gandhi in suspending the Civil Disobedience is a confession of failure. We are clearly of the opinion that Mr. Gandhi, as a political leader, has failed. The time has therefore come for the radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle with a new method, for which a new leader is essential as it is unfair to expect Mr. Gandhi to work the programme not consistent with his life long principles. If the Congress as a whole

can undergo this transformation it will be the best course. Failing this a new party will have to be formed within the Congress, composed of radical elements. Discussing further the causes of his failure in his book, "Indian Struggle," Subhas Bose writes :—

"He has failed because the strength of a leader depends not on the largeness but on the character of one's following. With a much smaller following other leaders have been able to liberate their country—while the Mahatma, with a much larger following has not. He has failed because, while he has understood the character of his own people, he has not understood the character of his opponents. The logic of a Mahatma is not the logic which appeals to John Bull. He has failed because his policy of putting all his cards on the table will not do. We have to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's—and in a political fight the art of diplomacy cannot be dispensed with. He has failed because the false unity of interests that are inherently opposed is not a source of strength, but a source of weakness in political war are. The future of India rests exclusively with those radical and militant forces that will be able to undergo the sacrifice and suffering necessary for winning freedom. Last but not least, the Mahatma has failed because he has had to play a dual role in one person—the role of the leader of an enslaved people and that of a world teacher, who has a new doctrine to preach. It is this

duality which has made him at once the irreconcilable foe of the Englishman according to Mr. Winston Churchill and the best policeman of the English in India according to Miss Elien Wilkinson."

These criticisms of Gandhi's policy proved of great advantage to Bose in presenting the cause of India before the foreign countries. Much prominence was given to his ideas in European press. In Austria where a semi-Fascist government was in power and where the general trend of feeling among the people was towards Italy or Germany, rather than England or France, these ideas were welcome. Besides Subhas Bose displayed a keen interest in imbibing thoughts of all European movements. He had been in India associated with both the extreme nationalists and working class movements, and for him both the achievements of the Social Democrats of Vienna in sphere of municipal affairs, and the organisation of the Austrian Fascists, exercised unique fascination. This may seem paradoxical because the Austrian Fascists were sworn enemies of the Socialists ; but only if you look at the matter from European point of view. For a man like Subhas Chandra Bose who was trying to build up a new radical party in India such activity was natural. He saw the parade of the Austrian Fascists, as well as the buildings erected by Social Democrats, some of them the finest in Europe. Apart from that he was himself an ex-Mayor and he studied the municipal achievements of Vienna with a view to find out how far these could be introduced at home.

But the visit which brought about a marked orientation in life of Subhas Bose was his journey to Rome. Vienna set him thinking about the need of a new political party in India. Rome gave finishing touches to the scheme which was yet in embryo in his brain. He had no facilities to visit Germany and, besides, Germany was at that time in a state of flux, building a new order over the foundations of the old. In Italy on the other hand they had built up a corporate state, the differences between labour and the capital had been patched up, and now they were trying to realise the dream of Mussolini's Roman Empire. Italian youth was given military training and before the schoolboys imperialism and militarism were painted as ideals worth dying for. Subhas Bose visited Rome University. He met Mussolini and other leading Fascists. Italy's rising Imperialism considered England and France its rivals and therefore people like Subhas Bose, who were antagonist to Britain received greatest consideration in Rome. Indeed so much so that British Press commented on it ; and when Subhas Bose issued a statement from Rome declaring that India could learn much from Italy and that Indian youth movements should be organised on fascist lines, the campaign in Britain against him was increased. Explaining his stand Subhas Bose declared that he^A always stressed the need for Indians o' studying the foreign systems adopting all that was best in them: In this Italy could also be included.

Apart from Italy several other European countries were visited by Bose including Switzerland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Wherever he went in these Balkan countries, he received great welcome. These countries intensely nationalistic in outlook, and having a long tradition of hard struggle against the Czarist, Hohenzollern, and Hapsburg Empires could understand and sympathise with the nationalism of Bose. As a matter of fact Subhas Bose's province, Bengal, had much in common with these Balkan countries. Terrorism, which had found a favourite soil in Bengal was still the political creed of many Serb, Croat, Bulgarian, Macedonian and Rumanian political parties. Subhas Bose carried on vigorous propaganda against Britain in all these countries. Propaganda in foreign countries was in fact a part of the joint programme of Patel and Bose. Patel had bequeathed a big sum to the country for foreign propaganda and made Subhas Chandra Bose his trustee. There were twofold objects of this foreign propaganda. The one was to enlighten the European people about the conditions in India and counteract the propaganda of Conservatives whether British or Indian, and the other was to have friendly relations and increased contact with countries sympathetic to Indian aspirations. For both these leaders believed that the foreign policy of India should not be one of hostility to any Power, because of certain political systems of its which may be reactionary, fascist or communist. So far as India was concerned, she could

learn from all systems, and so she should be friendly to all foreign countries that happened to be favourably inclined towards her.

Thus began the doctrine of synthesis or "Samavadya Sangh," which later on became the political creed of Subhas Bose. It was during these years that he evolved this political philosophy and had it embodied in his book: "The Indian Struggle." It may be remarked in passing: that in those years, when Subhas Bose was advocating friendly relations with all Powers, Jawaharlal Nehru was laying the foundations of another foreign policy for Congress. This policy was based on hostility to Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism, and friendship towards U. S. S. R. Nehru's immense knowledge of foreign affairs and his great hold over Congress eminently fitted him for the task of framing the Congress foreign policy. If Subhas Bose had been in India he might have been able to offer some opposition to Nehru but, as it was, the latter had no difficulty in getting his policy accepted by the Congress.

Subhas Bose has, however, criticised this policy of Jawaharlal Nehru in his book "The Indian Struggle." In a press statement issued on December 18, 1938, Nehru had said :—

"I do believe that fundamentally the choice before the world to-day is between some form of Communism and some form of Fascism, and I am all for the former, that is Communism. I dislike Fascism intensely and

indeed I do not think it is anything more than a crude and brutal effort of the present capitalist order to preserve itself at any cost. There is no middle road between Fascism and Communism. One has to choose between the two and I choose the Communist ideal. In regard to the methods and approach to this ideal, I may not agree with everything that the orthodox communists have done. I think that these methods will have to adapt themselves to changing conditions and may vary in different countries. But I do think that the basic ideology of Communism and its scientific interpretation of history is sound."

Commenting on this Subhas Bose writes :—

"The view expressed here is according to the writer fundamentally wrong. Unless we are at the end of the process of evolution or unless we deny evolution altogether, there is no reason to hold that our choice is restricted to two alternatives. Whether one believes in the Hegelian or in the Bergsonian or any other theory of evolution—in no case need we think that creation is at an end. Considering everything one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world history will produce a synthesis between Communism and Fascism. And will it be a surprise if that synthesis is produced in India? This view has been expressed in the introduction that in spite of India's geographical isolation the Indian awakening is organically connected with the march of the progress in other parts of the world and facts and figures have been

mentioned to substantiate that view. Consequently there need be no surprise if an experiment of importance to the whole world is made in India—especially when we have seen with our own eyes that another experiment (that of Mahatma Gandhi) made in India has roused profound interest all over the world.”

After this Subhas Bose goes on to describe the points of resemblance between Communism and Fascism :—

“In spite of the antithesis between Communism and Fascism there are certain traits common to both. Both Communism and Fascism believe in the supremacy of the state over the individual. Both denounce parliamentary democracy. Both believe in party rule. Both believe in the dictatorship of the party in the ruthless suppression of all dissenting minorities. Both believe in a planned industrial reorganisation of the country. These common traits will form the basis of the new synthesis. That synthesis is called by the writer ‘Samavadya’—an Indian word, which means literally the doctrine of synthesis.”

In the plan of the New Party outlined by Subhas Bose, we find that it is essentially anti-capitalist and anti-Imperialist, and bears the stamp of ideas preached in Germany and Italy at that time. He lays down ten points of his programme :

“1. The party will stand for the interest of the peasants, workers, etc., and not for the vested interests,

that is, the landlords, capitalist, and money-lending classes.

2. It will stand for the complete political and economic liberation of the Indian people.

3. It will stand for a Federal Government for India as the ultimate goal but will believe in a strong central government with dictatorial powers for some years to come, in order to put India on her feet.

4. It will believe in a sound system or stateplanning for the reorganisation of the agricultural and industrial life of the country.

5. It will seek to build up a new Social structure on the basis of the village communities of the past, that were ruled by the village 'Panch' and will strive to break down existing social barriers like caste.

6. It will seek to establish a new monetary and credit system in the light of the theories and the experiments that have been and are current in the modern world.

7. It will seek to abolish landlordism and introduce a uniform land tenure system for the whole of India.

8. It will not stand for democracy in the mid-Victorian sense of the term, but will believe in government by a strong party bound together by military discipline, as the only means of holding India together and preventing a chaos, when Indians are free and are thrown entirely on their own resources.

-9. It will not restrict itself to a campaign inside India but will resort to international propaganda also, in order to strengthen India's case for liberty and will attempt to utilise the existing international organisations.

10. It will endeavour to unite all the radical organisations under a national executive so that whenever any action is taken there will be simultaneous activity on many fronts."

Let us now turn to the conditions in India, when Subhas Bose was advocating "Samavadya Sangh" in Europe. How did the Indians react to it? Writing in 1935 Subhas Bose strikes a very optimistic note about the future of "Samavadya Sangh" in India. He says :—

"To come back to the Congress. The present controversy between Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya is of passing interest as the issue is a very minor one. Neither the Congress Nationalist Party nor the official Congress Parliamentary Party has a role to play in future, because both of them are heterogeneous parties without any clear ideology or programme. It only remains to consider the future of Gandhism in India. It has been urged sometimes that Gandhism is an alternative to communism. The idea is, in the opinion of the writer, erroneous. Mahatma Gandhi has given the country (and may be the world) a new method—the method of passive resistance or Satyagraha or non-violent non-co-operation. He has not

given his country or humanity a new programme of social reconstruction as communism has—and the alternative to communism can be only another theory of social reconstruction. No doubt, the Mahatma has condemned the ‘machine civilisation’ of the modern world and has eulogised the good old days when men were content with their cottage industries and their wants were few. But that is a personal belief or idiosyncrasy. Whenever he has expounded the contents of Swaraj, he has spoken in the language of mid-Victorian Parliamentary democracy and of traditional capitalist economics. The ‘Eleven Points,’ which he enunciated in 1920 as connoting his substance of independence, will be unreservedly accepted by any Indian industrial magnate. One could therefore say that the Mahatma does not intend pulling down the modern structure if he were to get political mastery of his country nor does he desire to completely industrialise the country. His programme is one of reform—he is fundamentally a reformist and not a revolutionary. He would leave the existing social and economic structure much as it is to-day (he would not even abolish the army altogether) and would content himself with removing the glaring injustices and inequalities against which moral sense revolts. There are millions of his countrymen who accept his method owing to the pressure of circumstances, but not his programme of reconstruction and who would like to build up quite a different India if they had the power. As has been already indicated

the future of India ultimately lies with a party with a clear ideology, programme and plan of action—a party that will not only fight for and win freedom but will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction—a party that will break the isolation that has been India's curse and bring her into the comity of nations—firm in the belief that the fate of India is indissolubly linked up with the fate of humanity.”

Did the official Congress Parliamentary Party play no role in India and did Gandhism collapse as envisaged by Subhas Bose ?

The history of the Congress might have been different if all this had happened ; yet it did not happen not because the analysis of Subhas Bose about Gandhism or the Congress was wrong. Subhas Bose attacked Gandhism and the Congress Parliamentary activities from the same standpoint as Hitler did the Weimar Republic and the Social Democrats. Both Gandhism and the German Social Democracy were essentially pacifist, reformist, anti-militarist (one might say that the German Social Democrats were as non-violent as Gandhi if we judge from their complacent attitude towards the rise of Nazi Party in Germany) and both failed to satisfy the working classes and could be easily described as men trying to keep decadent capitalism in power. But beyond that the analogy does not go. Hitler struck the “right note, and taking advantage of the feud between the S. D. P.

and the German Communists consolidated his power and finally eliminated both. Subhas Bose was unfortunately in Europe when Gandhism, after the surrender of 1938, was on the point of collapse. If he had been in India there is very little doubt about it that he would have been able to form his "Samavadya Sangh", and would have if not dominated the entire Indian political scene at least formed a party of his own strong enough to meet any challenge from Gandhists. The psychological circumstances would have helped him, as they helped Hitler. There was a strong aversion towards Parliamentaryism after the sad experience of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms. Gandhism held no fascination for the youth. Non-violence as practised in Civil Disobedience did not interest them. There was as much restlessness in India in 1933-34, as there was in Austria, Germany and France. What happened? Subhas Bose's messages were flashed in newspapers. They were read with respect. His personal popularity remained but other political parties came on the scene and absorbed the tension and restlessness in the country. Congress Socialists came forward, and talked about socialism and decadence of Gandhism, and the youth flocked to their banners. Jawaharlal Nehru as early as 1933, when he was out of prison for a while, began his campaign against Fascism and in favour of Communism, and was responsible for giving several recruits to the C. S. P. as well as the communists. At the same time, his

personal popularity sky-rocketed and his name began to loom large in international socialist circles.

And the Gandhists ? Of course they rehabilitated their strength. Gandhi stood out of the Congress, but he had eminently practical and realist lieutenants, who scented tension in the air, as well as Subhas Bose did, who knew that while the old man Gandhi may be allowed to talk in the manner he liked, Gandhism and Parliamentarianism in the old sense were over. A revolution was surging over the world, in which Fascism must give way to a militant outlook and a stiff upper lip in politics, and democracy should pave the way for dictatorship. It would be wrong to characterise the Congress Parliamentary activities after 1933 as democratic. The entire Congress Parliamentary machine was run on dictatorial lines and the dictator was Vallabhbhai Patel. This man, whose power of organisation is superb, introduced a high standard of discipline and efficiency in Congress. He was assisted by other able lieutenants of Gandhi, Azad and Rajinder Parshad, and the great landslide in favour of Congress in the Central Assembly elections was due to the immense work of these three leaders. The Congress Assembly Party was controlled by them. They declared that Congress was out to fight the new constitution in the Assembly as well as out of it. The Congress Assembly Party was to check the functioning of "sham democracy" which helped bureaucracy to pass the bills rejected by the Assembly.

yet certified by Viceroy. Viewed from the nationalist point of view this act was a part of the Congress battle against Britain. But if we remember that the world was at that time passing through a tension, in which democracy and capitalism were everywhere attacked then the Congress action was also a manifestation of anti-democratic spirit in India. The Congress Assembly members behaved exactly as the Nazi members of Reichstag did after their majority in 1932 elections. The relative difference between the German Social Democracy and "British democracy" in India is not under discussion. There is no doubt about it that both were decadent, and in both countries the reaction against them as manifested in actions of the Nazi Party and the Congress Party was only a prelude of the coming dictatorship. In Germany it took the form of ruthless and all-powerful-one-party rule. In India, where British rule remained, the Congress ministries were subjected to outside dictatorship which was quite as ruthless.

As for the Congress talk about "real democracy" on achieving Swaraj—that was a mere euphism. The age of the real democracy was over in the world. Now if the Congress achieved more power the government could not be what Subhas Bose called democratic in the mid-Victorian-sense of the term. The one party dictatorship as Subhas Bose envisaged may not be the aim of other Congress leaders, but there is no doubt about it that the Congress High Command had adopted

many of his ideas. While he only talked about dictatorship the Congress leaders acted and introduced it. So that when he returned to India, they presented him with a *fait accompli*. Gandhism was staggering in 1933. By 1937 it was strong enough to rule seven provinces with a Parliamentary Board, which had the powers unprecedented in parliamentary history of the world.

Subhas Bose's differences with the Congress High Command were not confined to Gandhism and the Gandhist policy of Congress. About Communal Award too he had crossed swords with them. He had during his brief visit to India in those days denounced the official stand of the Congress about Communal Award. In this he had the entire Bengal behind him. The Bengal Hindus were to a man opposed to it. The Congress did not change its attitude out there was one effect of all this agitation and that was Subhas Bose's position in his province became unassailable and the group of the followers of late Mr. Sen Gupta could not make much headway.

The Congress High Command was not the only opponent of Subhas Bose. He had during his visit abroad hit at all political parties. The Communists and the Congress Socialists both came in for criticism at his hands. Writing about communists, he said :—

“There are several reasons why communism will not be adopted in India. Firstly, communism to-day has no sympathy with nationalism in any form and the

Indian movement is a nationalist movement—a movement for the national liberation of the Indian people. (Lenin's thesis on the relation between communism and nationalism seems to have been given the go-by since the failure of the last Chinese revolution). Secondly, Russia is now on her defensive and has little interest in provoking a world revolution though the communist international may still endeavour to keep up appearances, the recent pacts between Russia and other capitalist countries and the written or unwritten conditions inherent in such pacts as also her membership of the League of Nations, have seriously compromised the position of Russia as a revolutionary Power. Moreover Russia is too preoccupied in her internal industrial reorganisation and in her preparations for meeting the Japanese menace on her Eastern flank and is too anxious to maintain friendly relations with the great Powers to show any active interest in countries like India. Thirdly, while many of the economic ideas of communists would make a strong appeal to Indians there are other ideas which will have a contrary effect owing to the close association between the Church and the State in Russian history and to the existence of an organised church, communism in Russia has grown to be anti-religious and atheistic. In India, on the contrary, there being no 'organised church' among the Indians and there being no association between the Church and State there is no feeling against religion as such. Fourthly, the materialistic interpretation of

history which seems to be a cardinal point in communist theory will not find unqualified acceptance in India, even among those who would be disposed to accept the economic contents of communism.

Fifthly, while communist theory has made certain remarkable contributions in the domain of economics (for instance the idea of State-planning), it is weak in other aspects. For instance, so far as the monetary problem is concerned, communism has made no new suggestion but has merely followed traditional economies. Recent experiences however indicate that the monetary problem of the world is still far from being satisfactorily solved.

While, therefore, it would be safe to predict that India will not become a new edition of Soviet Russia one may say with equal strength that all the modern socio-political movements and experiments in Europe and in America will have considerable influence on India's development, India of late, has been taking and in future will continue to take more and more interest in what goes on in the outside world."

So far as the communist policy about nationalism is concerned about the time Subhas Bose's book was published in England the Comintern in its September, 1935 meeting called upon all communist parties of the world to form a united front with all such bourgeois or nationalist parties who were willing to line up against fascism and war. As a result of this policy the communist attitude towards Indian National Congress changed. Previously too the communists of India had stood for

an alliance with the Congress ideal, the communist theory of revolution presupposes an alliance with nationalism up to the national democratic revolution. Temporarily as in China (1927—36) and India (1922—36) the two parties might pull differently but unity is inevitable so far as foreign Imperialism is concerned. This prophecy of Subhas Bose about the Indian communists' relations with Nationalism was thus falsified by the circumstances, for in the years following Comintern's declaration the relations between Congress and the communists improved.

As for the materialists interpretation of history and the communist attitude about religion it has certainly proved a drawback to the communists but only when they have ignored Stalin's advice on the attitude of colonial countries toward religious matters. Stalin has laid emphasis on the communists in such countries as India and China steering clear of religious disputes and avoiding display of their anti-religious disputes and avoiding display of their anti-religious zeal. According to him the main propaganda should be centred round economic issues and opposition to Imperialism. The communists have often forgotten this advice and got into trouble but on the whole there has been a tremendous increase in the adherents of communist party in this country since 1935, although the party has been illegal till the spring of this year. The party played a prominent role during the years 1937—39 in Indian politics and many of the suspicions and misunderstand-

ings that cropped up between Subhas Bose and the communists in those days originated with the earlier anti-communist utterances of Subhas Bose.

About the Congress Socialists who had absorbed a good deal of the anti-Gandhist element in the country Subhas Bose wrote:—

“The Socialist Party in the form it has assumed to-day cannot make much headway. The composition of the party is not homogeneous, and some of the ideas are out of date. But the instinct that has urged the formation of the party is right. Out of this left wing revolt there will ultimately emerge a new full-fledged party, with a clear ideology, programme and plan of action.”

And also :

“The Congress Socialists appear at the moment to be under the influence of Fabian socialism and some of their ideas and shibboleths were the fashion several decades ago. Nevertheless the Congress socialists do represent a radical force within the Congress and in the country. Many of those who could have helped them actively are not available at present. When their assistance will be forthcoming, the party will be able to make more headway.” Compared to his attacks on the Congress High Command and the Communists, this was a part on the back of socialists. They were uneasy at his criticism, but they took it much as a schoolboy takes the admonition of his teacher. The Congress socialists, themselves a

strong group, lacked a man of all-India fame as their leader. Jai Parkash Narayan and Acharya Narend^ora Dev were as yet only popular in their provinces and in their party. The socialists were often either under the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru or Subhas Bose, or both.

In spring of 1937 when Subhas Bose was released the C. S. P. was the only organised party of the Left, hostile to Gandhist tradition. From that time onwards began between Bose and C. S. P., a strange political marriage of convenience, a sort of what the Germans call *Schadenfreude* or love-hatred in which both parties though knowing that they hated each other, stuck fast because each knew that it could not do without the other—this wedlock lasted up to Tripuri.

CHAPTER IV

WHOSE DICTATORSHIP

Subhas Bose was released in the summer of 1937, It was the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the Congress. The man whom Gandhists feared most was back at his old command. How did they react to his presence, the parliamentary chiefs, and the men, who were taking over, from Britain some of the control of India's administration? We have seen that both sides had plans of dictatorship, that the Congress High Command had consolidated itself and now that Congress was entering into second phase of its parliamentary activities the Parliamentary Board was assuming a more authoritarian tone. How did the relations between Bose and the High Command develop? For this purpose we will examine the situation in the country in summer of 1937. The Congress Parliamentary Board was at that time measuring strength with the British Government over the safeguards of Governors. Its struggle ended in triumph for it. It also revealed that Parliamentary Board was all powerful. The President of the Congress was usually in agreement with its decisions, though in practice the Parliamentary work was disposed of by the Board alone. It seems Gandhists' conscious of the fact

that Congress Presidentship might come in the hands of men not altogether subservient to Gandhist doctrine, hit upon the idea of forming this all-powerful Parliamentary Board.

The Parliamentary work was divided into three zones, each in hands of Rajinder Parshad, Azad and Patel. John Gunther has aptly described these three as "Zonal Chieftains". The "Zonal Chieftains" found their path of dictatorship easy, because they had in all provinces those men as Premiers who were firm believers in Gandhism. Some of them had previously been prominent members of Congress Central Assembly party and had occasion to work under the instructions of Congress Parliamentary Board. The question of their being above all things representatives of the electorates did not trouble them much. They had occupied offices under the orders of the Board and Gandhi. They would leave it any day Gandhi wanted them to. The Congress Socialists or the Left Nationalists held no offices. Having fought so long the Congress High Command on issue of office acceptance, they had all of a sudden come round to the orthodox Congress view and dropped their campaign when the All India Convention decided on acceptance of offices by Congressmen. They could now occupy offices and become ministers. That would make them part and parcel of the Congress Parliamentary machine, and ruin all their backing in the public. The task to which Subhas Bose and the Congress Socialists set themselves in the summer of 1937, was two fold, the

one was the opposition to the Congress High Command if it yielded to the British on Federation issue, and the other was safeguarding the rights of the workers and peasants under the Congress regime. Gandhism had strengthened itself since 1933, but there remained a great element of politically conscious Indians outside its fold. Subhas Bose was the leader of this element. He was also the leader of Bengal, and the spokesman of the C. S. P. without being a member of that body. Gandhists had so far not thought of appeasing Jawahar Lal Nehru and the Congress Socialists and thus isolating Bose. They were too much drunk with power and proud of their efficient organisation and dictatorship to think of the struggle in India on ideological basis. Besides they had too much work on their hands. The political prisoners had resorted to hunger-strike in the Andamans, and the entire nation was disturbed over this strike. While it was assumed by the Congress High Command that it was strong enough to force the Government to concede this point, the constant delay in forcing the issue had led too much searching of hearts among people. They had begun to doubt even the advisability of forming ministries. As a matter of fact the period between the summer 1937 and the crisis in February 1938, over the release of political prisoners should be considered as an interval of trial of the Congress ministries. Everything was in a state of flux then. There was no clear cut programme before them. The youth was bewildered and frustrated. Subhas Bose's popularity rose high in this

period of restlessness.

His health, which was ruined as a result of prison life, did not permit him to stay for long in India. Towards the end of 1937 he sailed for England via Germany. Once in England he took there every opportunity to denounce the stand of the British about Federation. He addressed numerous meetings and press conferences. While in London he declared : —

“We demand full freedom and a constitution framed by the people. Nobody wants a conflict for the sake of conflict, and if a compromise can be reached which can satisfy our demands it would undoubtedly be accepted.” Reviewing the recent progress Mr. Bose said . — “ The ministers have made a good beginning, but have not achieved enough to satisfy the rank and file of the Congress. It is a mistake to assume that they have accepted office permanently, regardless of what they have achieved. There will be stock taking after the end of year. I am not very optimistic as regards the future.”

The view above expressed was not the view of Congress High Command, who could not tolerate any disparaging remarks about their ministers. It certainly represented an independence of spirit in Bose, who knew that a major part of the country backed him. He was elected President, while still in London.

Interviewed on return he declared that the average Englishman was very much ignorant about the conditions in India. As for the danger of war in Europe

he said that it was much less at that time than a year ago. Germany was sobered and Spain had opened the eyes of the world to the horrors of modern war.

The Congress leaders swallowed all the criticism he had made of ministers in England, and they merely nodded their heads when he assumed an authoritative tone about Federation. Never was contempt for a rival better concealed than in the attitude of the Congress High Command towards Bose in 1938. They made his election unanimous and his arch-opponent Vallabhbhai Patel took on himself the task of arrangements of reception for him at Vithalnagar, Haripura. The High Command conscious of the constitutional crises ahead and the restlessness in the country wanted to let him have his way.

His election in a way helped them. The confidence of people, which had been shaken by lack of any stable programme before the ministers, was renewed when Subhas Bose became President. In the hands of such a man they felt the fruits of election victory were secured. His youth and vitality, his extremism, and his trenchant criticism of Federation inspired the people.

Subhas Bose too for the time being forgot his differences with the Gandhist leadership. As Vithalnagar resounded with shouts of "Bengal Kesari² ki-Jai", and Durbar Gopal Dass and Sardar Patel came forward to receive him, the past differences faded and both sides saw before them a vision of the future in which there could never be any conflict. There is no

hint in the address of Subhas Bose about "Samavadya Sangh" or some new party or new leadership to replace the Gandhi. In fact he assumes that such a change should be brought about in the Congress itself. Once in power he thought he could translate into action all those schemes which he had perfected in Europe.

He began his address with a scathing criticism of the British Empires. The empires had everywhere broken up into free federal units. The Austro Hungarian Empire had collapsed. "British Empire must fall or transform itself into Federation of free Nations;" said Bose. "The Czarist Empire collapsed in 1917 but out of its debris, sprung the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There is still time for Great Britain to take a leaf out of Russian history. Will she do so?" He further declared that the freedom of British people lay only in becoming a Socialist State and they could not become a Socialist state unless they freed the Empire. "There is an inseparable connection between the capitalist ruling classes in Britain and the colonies abroad. As Lenin pointed out long ago, "Reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of a number of nations. The British aristocracy and bourgeoisie exist primarily because there are colonies and overseas dependencies to exploit. The emancipation of the latter will undoubtedly strike at the very existence of the capitalist ruling classes in Great Britain and precipitate the establishment of a Socialist Republic in that country. It should therefore be clear that a

Socialist order in Great Britain is impossible of achievement without the liquidation of colonies and that we who are fighting for the political freedom of India and other enslaved countries of the British Empire are incidentally fighting for the economic emancipation of the British people as well." Although the emphasis on establishing a new party on foreign model was absent yet there were passages in his address which had obviously the imprint of his visit to Italy and Germany. Discussing the importance of Air Forces in modern warfare, he writes :—

"To-day Britain can hardly call herself mistress of seas. Her phenomenal rise in 18th and 19th centuries was the result of her Sea-power, her decline in the 20th will be the outcome of the emergence of a new factor in the world history, Air Force. It was due to this new factor that an impudent Italy could successfully challenge a fully mobilised British Navy in the Mediterranean."

He said that London could easily be bombed from any city of the continent.

This view about the relative importance of Air Force in modern war and the vulnerability of London from air attack should not be assumed to be inspired by anti-British sentiments. What Subhas Bose said was exactly what leading British Scientists like J. B. S. Haldane, and military experts like Lidell Hart were saying. During his European visit, he stressed the need of an independent foreign policy for India. India.

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 views may be." He said : "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 would feel sympathetic towards India."

He favoured bilateral trade agreements with countries like Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy and the United States of America. This however India could not have under the existing constitution. He wanted India to prepare for a fight in future and in order to do that "it should put its house in order." Subhas Bose's conception of this "order" had some German touch about it. A tremendous wave of national awakening was surging all over the country and the problem was "of mobilising this phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and directing them along proper lines." "But 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, and for our promising young workers? The answer to these questions is too patent to need elaboration. We have not yet provided all these

requirements of a modern political party, but it is high time that we did. A disciplined volunteer corps manned by trained officers is exceedingly necessary. Moreover education and training should be provided for our political workers so that we may produce a better type of leaders in future. This sort of training is provided by political parties in Britain through Summer schools and other institutions and is a speciality in totalitarian states... Everybody must have observed how some European countries have been dealing with this problem. Though our ideals and methods of training are quite different from theirs it will be admitted on all hands, that a thorough scientific training is requisite for our workers. Further an institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study, and with suitable modification may prove beneficial to India."

The above plan though essentially inspired by his foreign visits was not the part of the scheme of "Samavadya Sangh." That plan he was holding in abeyance. He wanted gradually to bring the Congress round to his view. We observed that in "Samavadya Sangh" plan he advocated one-party state. At Haripura he took a different stand. Discussing the role of Congress Party in the future state he said that Congress Party could not wither away after political freedom was won. "On the contrary, the party will have to take power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil

its role. If it were forcibly to liquidate itself, chaos would follow. Looking at post-War Europe we find that only in those countries has there been orderly and continued progress where the party which seized power undertook the work of reconstruction. I know that it will be argued that the continuance of a party in such circumstances standing behind the state will convert that state into a totalitarian one ; but I cannot admit the charge. The state will possibly become a totalitarian one if there be 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 itself will 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 upon the people from above but are elected from below."

Towards the socialists too his attitude was friendly. They were being attacked by the Gandhists. He defended their right of existence inside the Congress :—

"There has been a great deal of controversy over the question of forming a party, like the Congress Socialist Party within the Congress. I hold no brief for the Congress Socialist Party, and I am not a member of it. Nevertheless, I must say that I have been in agreement with its general principles and policy from the

very beginning. In the first place, it is desirable for the leftist elements to be consolidated into one party; secondly, a leftist bloc can have a *raison d'être* only if it is Socialist in character. There are friends who object to such a bloc being called a party, but to my mind it is quite immaterial whether you call that bloc a group, league or party within the limits prescribed by the constitution of the Indian National Congress it is quite possible for a leftist bloc to have socialist programme, in which case it can be very well called a group, league or party. But the role of the Congress Socialist Party, or any other party of the same sort, should be that of a left wing group. Socialism is not an immediate problem for us—nevertheless, socialist propaganda is necessary to prepare the country for socialism when political freedom has been won. And that propaganda can be conducted only by a party like the Congress Socialist Party, which stands for, and believes in, socialism.”

The address was concluded by a touching reference to Mahatma, as a sop to his followers :—

“In conclusion, I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our nation for many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people 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. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism, but against world Imperialism as well, of which the former is the key stone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved. *Bande matram.*" A few days after the Haripura session the Congress ministries were able to get their demand of release of political prisoners accepted. The ministries in U. P. and Bihar began to function again. The plans of reform and national reconstruction which had been postponed due to crisis were given practical shape. Parliamentary Board's dictatorship was established once again. Subhas Bose also took active part in some of the reconstruction work, such as the national planning commission, but the Parliamentary Board was supreme everywhere. It purged all those elements from Congress which were hostile to establishment of dictatorship. First the axe fell on Nariman. He had been like Subhas Chandra Bose an extremist and a left Nationalist, had and quarrelled with Sardar Patel in 1934 about elections in which he was pushed out in favour of Mr. B. G. Kher. Subhas Chandra Bose has in his book spoken highly about Nariman, and it is obvious he did not like the action of the High Command, but neither did he wish to interfere as he had adopted a programme of compromise with Congress leaders. Later on when Khare was turned out of Congress and office, with bell, book and candle, Subhas Bose went so far as to endorse the action

of the Parliamentary Board. He declared that if Khare were born in Germany he would have been shot. All these actions strengthened the hands of the Board. Without entering into any discussion about the advisability of action against Khare and Nariman, it may be observed that it was only a foretaste of what was coming. It was as if Danton had been guillotined and the next turn would be Robespierre's. And just as Danton said to Robespierre, Khare might have said to Bose : " To-day it is my turn, to-morrow it will be yours."

Subhas Bose offered his support for the political death sentence on Khare. A few months after the exit of Khare from Indian political scene, the Congress Parliamentary Board turned its attack on Bose. They were gradually realising that it was no use keeping a facade of unity with him. They were strong enough to face him now, why not do it? Subhas Bose who had been mentioned as the President for 2nd time in succession soon learned that the Gandhists did not want his re-election. They could not tolerate any strong man to be President, who should veto their actions if the occasion arose. They wanted a backbencher like Pattabhai Sitaramayya to be made president, so that they should have smooth sailing.

After much mud-flinging and mutual recriminations, elections were fought, which resulted in a victory for Subhas Bose. But once his victory was achieved, he could not consolidate it. It was now a

question of the survival of the fittest between himself and the Congress leaders. They could not co-operate with him. He could not let them rule in the dictatorial manner they ruled the previous year. But there was one difference between him and Gandhists. They had behind them a party organisation. He had behind him the people. They were masters of political manoeuvres, intrigues and purges. He knew how to appeal to the people and excite their passions to a frenzied pitch. He had excited them over federation issues during the elections and won. He could not do such a thing every day. Once elected President he had to face the delegates, the A. I. C. C., the Subject Committee, and of course his old Working Committee of the Congress leaders who were against him. Here the leader of the people was defeated by the leaders of the parties. The Congress Socialists who had so far supported him were "afraid now of a split in Congress" and fearing a dictatorship of Bose in place of a dictatorship of the Gandhists chose the lesser evil, and remained neutral. When it came to a question of alternative leadership they remembered that Subhas Bose had been in the past, while in Europe, critical of the C. S. P. They also remembered all his talks about "Samavadya Sangh" and felt that in interests of Indian freedom, a united front with Gandhists was essential. They were now strong enough to exist without the leadership and co-operation of Bose. Their leaders like Jai Parkash Narain and Acharya Narindra Dèo

had assiduously built up a place for themselves in Indian politics. Like the Gandhists, they could afford to break-away from Bose. But they did not entirely leave him. They talked about danger of national front being broken up, and straddled on the fence, while both sides exhausted themselves in a mortal combat. Their neutrality was undoing of Bose. He lost first at Tripuri, then at Calcutta. The Bengal delegates, and the left Nationalists failed to stem the rot. Subhas Bose resigned. With it ended the epoch of conciliating the Gandhists and Congress Socialists and the attempt to organise the entire Congress according to his own ideas. After Calcutta Subhas Bose returned to his previous stand which he had taken against the Congress High Command during his European visit.

CHAPTER V

SOCIALISM, FASCISM AND FORWARD BLOC

When "Forward Bloc" was formed after the Calcutta Session of A. I. C. C. Subhas Bose : declared that its object was to consolidate all the Leftist elements under its banner so that the Left might be able to have alternative leadership in the Congress. The Rightists, he said, had refused to co-operate with them, and therefore it was necessary to have a separate party which should offer opposition to the programme of Rightists, *i.e.*, the devotion to Parliamentary activities to the exclusion of all other forms of political action. A Left consolidation committee was formed in which the Socialists, the Communists, the members of Roy group and the Left Nationalists of Bose group participated. But this coalition met the same fate in India which fell to left parties in Germany on the rise of Hitler. German S. D. P. which had been talking about general strike if Hitler assumed power. ("If there is to be a dictatorship, it will be ours." Otto Wells, the S. D. P. leader), capitulated without firing a shot. That role was played in India by the C. S. P. For so long actively remaining anti-Gandhist it could not unite with other left parties when the crucial

moment came. But there the analogy ends. It must be remarked here that Subhas Bose had failed to satisfy them on certain vital issues. They were doubtful about the future policy of Forward Bloc. They disliked its foreign policy, and whereas in Germany, the differences between Hitler's Policy and those of the communists were vital, which the S. D. P. ignored, the differences between policy of Bose and the Congress High Command appeared to the socialists as slight. They had in spite of their past association with Bose never looked upon him as one of them. They had respected him as a great patriot with mildly socialist views, and faith in extreme Nationalism. To understand why the Forward Bloc was cold-shouldered by the socialists we should remember the view of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru had declared that all sorts of people had come into the Forward Bloc opportunists, people who had one or other grievances against Congress High Command, extreme Nationalists, and men 'who if the war broke out in Europe would favour the countries which politically inspired them, namely Germany and Italy.' Thus the Forward Bloc would be pursuing a policy which may not be the policy of the Congress. The result of the opposition of the socialists was that Forward Bloc was isolated from its very inception. The left consolidation broke up without doing anything.

How far did the Forward Bloc represent the spirit of Germany and Italy, and how did it react on Indian

politics. We have discussed elsewhere that Subhas Bose had a mind to establish "Samavadya Sangh" in India. Political events for sometime prevented him from doing so. And much had happened in India since the "Indian Struggle" was written. "Anti-Fascist and Anti-Nazi" sentiment was on the increase ever since the Italo-Abysinian war, and the adoption by Congress of an anti-Fascist attitude in its foreign policy under the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru. Thus Bose had found in 1938-39 the Congress following a foreign policy entirely different from what he had enunciated in "Samavadya Sangh." He accordingly adjusted himself and we find that his main plank of attack on Congress High Command was that it was Rightist, Hitlerite and pursuing Fascist methods just as the Liberals had won the elections in 1918 in England on the slogan "Hang the Kaiser," so Subhas Bose had won Tripuri election on the slogan of "End Fascism in Congress." It is a strange irony of fate that the man who had so much praise for Hitler's organisation when abroad should have to launch his campaign in India by calling his political opponents—Hitlerites! He was not wrong in that. The Congress High Command was using Hitlerite methods; but if he had been in power, he would have done the same only more ruthlessly and more efficiently.

But we have digressed from the subject. Subhas Bose had condemned Hitlerism and he continued to condemn it. In this sense his present stand was

different from 1935. But only about Foreign Policy. About "Forward Bloc" it may be said that after it had tried to get other left parties inside it and failed, it struck to one province—Bengal, with minor following in other parts of India. There it was organised and run on the lines Subhas Bose wanted his "new political party" to run. It believed in leader-principle, organisation of youth, military discipline, changing the standard of living of the workers and peasants to a high level, one party state, and most of other doctrines of "Samavadya Sangh."

It was thus a synthesis of Socialism and Fascism, which was what Bose wanted. While the party was run on these lines from April 1939 to October 1939 Subhas Bose as previously carried on a campaign against "Hitlerism inside and outside the Congress." With the outbreak of war the situation slightly altered. Subhas Bose was called to attend the Working Committee, although he was not its member. The Gandhists did not wish to ignore him at such a time. Subhas Bose soon discovered that the Foreign Policy which Congress wished to follow was not his, but of Jawaharlal Nehru, who had flown all the way from China to take part in Working Committee meeting. He wanted India to make best use of this opportunity. The Congress wanted to denounce German action and negotiate with Britain. Subhas Bose left the meeting, because he felt his presence was of no use there.

His view about the war crisis was that he was

opposed to Hitlerism but he liked to turn this opportunity to India's advantage. Speaking at Delhi on October 12, 1939, he said :

“ I am opposed to Hitlerism whether in India, within the Congress or any other country, but it appears to me that socialism is the only alternative to Hitlerism. I do not think Britain and France are to welcome the rise of socialists to power in Germany as they were already supreme in Russia. All European countries would come under the influence of socialists if they came into power in Germany and France besides Russia.”

Thus he believed in socialism as late as October 1939, but it was not the socialism of Nehru, the C. S. P. or the Communists. It meant taking some of the doctrines of socialism, and applying them in a one party state—socialism as far as it was laid down in the principles of “Forward Bloc.” This fact is important because while the socialism of Nehru, C. S. P. and the Communists led them to analyse the war as an Imperialist war, Subhas Bose who was extreme Nationalist and anti-British above all things, did not look upon the situation as they looked. After the first few weeks' denunciations of Hitlerism he became more and more interested in what India was going to get out of the war. We will be able to understand his stand much more clearly if we take example of Rumania after the Russians had occupied Bessarbia. General Antonescu who was the leader of Rumanian Iron

Guard, *had been all along critical of the German regime and though his organisation was run on the Nazi model, he did not like German permeation in Rumania. Russia's occupation of Bessarabia changed the entire situation. He forgot his hatred for the Germans and we find him now an ally of Hitler to take back, not only what Rumania lost, but much more from Russia.

The merits of Subhas Bose's action are not under discussion. But there is no doubt that there is much in common between Bose and Antonescu, and the policy of the "Forward Bloc" continued to [its logical conclusion as the policy of "Iron Guard" which means in the end giving up of hatred against Germany and becoming "near-Fascist."

APPENDIX I

EUROPE—TODAY AND TOMORROW

BY

Subhas Chandra Bose

It is customary in modern Politics to classify the different nations as the 'Haves' and 'Have-nots.' The 'Haves' are those, like Great Britain and France, that have profited as a result of the Treaties of Versailles, Trianon and Neuilly, following the Great War. The 'Have-nots' are those that have lost territory under some of these treaties or have specific grievances against their provisions. In Europe, Great Britain, France, as well as the succession states that have been carved out of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire are among the 'Haves'. On the other hand, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria are among the 'Have-nots.' Though Russia lost much of her territory as a result of the last War, she is now interested in maintaining the *status quo* and is therefore classified among the 'Haves.' And though Italy acquired territory from the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the War, she is nevertheless regarded as a 'Have-not' because she was expecting a greater share of the spoils of war. Italy was cajoled into joining the Allies in 1915 by the terms of the Secret Pact of London, wherein Britain and France promised her several things including the Dalmatian Coast which later on was

assigned by the Peace Conference to Jugoslavia (called in the Peace Treaty the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).

Though Austria should be one of the principal 'Have-nots' she seems to have resigned herself to her fate and does not cherish any irredentist dreams. Austria is therefore no longer an explosive force. The Government Party, led by Chancellor Schuschnigg, which has the backing of the Catholic Church and a section of the peasantry, is interested in maintaining the integrity of Austria's present frontiers. The younger generation who do think and dream of a change, look forward to an 'Anschluss' or Union with Germany. Occasionally one hears that the Government Party is thinking of reverting to the monarchical form of Government with Archduke Otto as Emperor. Though Austria is not herself an explosive force, she is unwittingly a disturbing factor, inasmuch as Germany wants to annex her, while France and Italy want to preserve her independence. And behind both these parties, moves the youthful and sinister figure of Archduke Otto, who from his Belgian retreat, plots and schemes for the throne of his ancestors.

Of the other 'Have-nots,' Bulgaria is the quietest. She lost territory to all her neighbours (Roumania, Greece and Serbia—now Jugoslavia) as a result of the Balkan War of 1912 and the Great War as well. But she nurses her grievances in secret and sighs for better days, though she feels helpless within a ring of hostile

powers. Hungary is more active, so far as propaganda goes. Her protagonists roam all over Europe and endeavour to canvass support among the Big Powers for revision of her frontiers. From the military point of view, Hungary is not an important factor today, having lost more than half of her former territory and population to Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia (formerly Serbia) and Rumania.

Till recently, Soviet Russia would have been regarded as an explosive force of gigantic proportions, busy in stirring up revolution all over the world. But such is not the case today. After the death of Lenin and the elimination of Trotsky, Soviet Russia under the guidance of Stalin is interested only in building up Socialism within the Soviet frontiers. The sudden insurgence of Germany has helped to accentuate this tendency. Russia has therefore joined the League of Nations, which by the way, is dominated by the capitalist powers, under the slogan of 'Collective Security and Peace,' is doing everything possible to prevent a disturbance of the *status quo* in Europe.

The really explosive forces in Europe today are Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Ranged against them are Britain, France and Soviet Russia. On the complicated chess-board of Europe interminable moves are going on and the scene is changing from day to day.

Before the Great War, the *status quo* was preserved by maintaining the 'Balance of Power.' The powers

interested in preserving the *status quo* would have a secret alliance among themselves and would endeavour to play against one another the potentially hostile ones who refused to join them. The League of Nations which was constituted in 1919 was meant to put an end to secret diplomacy and to the division of the world into rival groups of powers, which served to keep up the bogey of war. In its place, was introduced a new technique, whereby all nations were to be brought into the League and made jointly responsible for the maintenance of 'Collective Security and Peace.' Both the League of Nations and its new technique seem to have failed in their objective, because there are powers that do not feel interested in preserving the *status quo* and among them, Japan and Germany, are no longer members of the League—while the most powerful factor in international politics, the U. S. A., has never been a member.

To understand the meaning and purpose behind the recent disturbances in Europe, one has to comprehend the aims of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Since Mussolini came to power in 1922, Italy has been thinking aggressively of expansion—of a place in the sun—of a revival of the Roman Empire. But till January, 1935, Italy did not herself know which direction her policy of expansion should follow. She had grievances against Yugoslavia who had robbed her of the Dalmatian Coast. She was snarling at France who had taken the Italian Districts of Savoy and Nice and

was in possession of Tunisia, in North Africa, with a large Italian population, and of the Island of Corsica which belongs geographically to Italy. She was hostile to imperialist Britain who was in control of Italian 'Malta' and had French acquiescence, converted the Mediterranean Sea into a British lake. The tension between Italy and France was particularly acute, with the result that both sides of the Franco-Italian frontier were heavily fortified and guarded. Then in 1933, the Nazi Colossus suddenly appeared on the scene and changed the whole aspect of Europe. France rushed to England for support and alliance against the new danger. But Britain was noncommittal. Perhaps in her heart of hearts she relished the idea of a check to French hegemony on the Continent. Perhaps she was simply following her traditional policy in international affairs. However, France was nettled and in annoyance, she turned to Italy and Soviet Russia. France wanted to withdraw her troops from the Italian frontier, and concentrate them against Germany and she wanted, further, an ally on Germany's Eastern flank. Thus there came into existence the Laval Mussolini Pact and the Franco-Soviet Pact.

The Laval Mussolini Pact in January, 1935, decided for Italy the direction of her future expansion. Italy squared up her difference with France and gave up territorial ambitions in Europe. In return France agreed to give her a free hand in Africa. The result was the rape of Abyssinia.

After the conquest of Abyssinia, Mussolini made

a speech in which he declared to the world that Italy had now become a 'satisfied' power. The annexation of Abyssinia had been regarded by Britain as an encroachment on her preserves in Africa and the speech appeared as a pointer in the direction of the renewal of an Anglo Italian friendship. That expectation was not fulfilled, however. Though Britain had at first challenged Italy over the Abyssinian question and then beaten a quick retreat before the bluff and swagger of Mussolini—she had not forgotten the humiliation. In order to repair the damage done to her prestige among the Mediterranean and Near Eastern nations—she set about strengthening her naval and aerial bases in the Mediterranean. The first Lord of the Admiralty, Sir Samuel Hoare, went on a tour of inspection in the Mediterranean and concluded it with a public declaration that Britain would not withdraw from that zone. Other Cabinet ministers, like Anthony Eden, also made pronouncements to the effect that the Mediterranean was Britain's life line—that it was not merely a short cut, but a main arterial road. It is this determination on the part of Britain to maintain her position in the Mediterranean and to strengthen it further which has irritated and antagonised Italy—for Italy is equally determined to increase her influence in the Mediterranean through the expansion of her Navy and Air Force and this could take place only at the expense of Britain. It should therefore be clear that the present Anglo-Italian tension is not a product of Il Duce's ill-

humour nor is it a passing phase. It will continue until the question of the future hegemony over the Mediterranean is finally solved through the voluntary withdrawal or defeat of one of the two rival powers. Fraternising letters may pass between Neville Chamberlain and Signor Mussolini, Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers may shake hands—but a political conflict born of objective factors and forces will continue, so long as the causes remain.

Italy's reply to Britain's renewed interest in the Mediterranean is her intervention in the Spanish Civil War. It would be puerile to think or suggest that Italy has plumped for Franco because of her sympathy for the latter's Fascist aims or her hatred of Communism. Political sympathy she would have for Franco in any case, but she is pouring out her blood and money for Franco primarily for strategic reasons. The same is true of Germany and whoever does not realise this, understands nothing of the Spanish Civil War.

In spite of her progress in rearmament, Italy is no match for Britain. British rearmament throughout the world has made Italy's position weaker since the end of the Abyssinian War. In any case, Britain through her control of Gibraltar and Suez can, in the event of a war with Italy, bottle up the Italian fleet and carry out an economic blockade which may prove disastrous to the latter. Italy has to import most of her raw materials like coal, iron, oil, wool, or cotton etc., and two-thirds

of her sea-borne trade comes from the Atlantic, while eighty per cent of her imports come over the Mediterranean. Her coastline is long and vulnerable and she can maintain contact with her African possessions, Libya, Eritrea and Abyssinia, only if she dominates the Mediterranean. For all these reasons, an economic blockade combined with an attack from British naval stations, like Malta and Cyprus, can create havoc for Italy and even strangle her. She may retaliate by attacking British possessions in the Mediterranean or British trade passing through that sea, but she can neither attack Britain nor touch Britain's sources of raw materials and food which lie outside the Mediterranean zone. Thus, matched against Britain in war, Italy is virtually helpless and can play but a primarily defensive role. And as long as Spain remains friendly to Britain, or even neutral, Italy's helplessness will remain unrelieved. Only with the help of Spain can Italy escape from her fatal strategic position. With Spain under her control, Italy could take the offensive against Britain. She could destroy Gibraltar and menace both the trade routes of Britain—the Mediterranean route and the Cape route. What is more, she could get over the blockade by using the land routes over Spain in order to bring imports from the Atlantic side. As the advent of Air Force more than compensated Italy for the weakness of her navy, *vis-a-vis* Great Britain, during the Abyssinian campaign, so the control of Spain, or even a foothold in Spanish territory, would

enable her to convert her present, fatally weak and defensive, position into a strong, offensive one in the event of a future war.

Thus Italy is fighting Great Britain. She is helping Franco in order to get a foothold in Spanish territory.

After considering these strategic factors, one need not be surprised that Italy is so greatly interested in Franco's success. Rather, it is surprising that there should be people in England who sympathise with Franco and the rebels. As Captain Liddell Hart, the well-known British strategist says in *Europe in Arms*,

"Strategically the danger (to British Interest) is so obvious that it is difficult to understand the eagerness with which some of the most avowedly patriotic sections of the British public have desired the rebels 'success.'"

This is probably a case of political prejudice (*viz.* hatred of the Socialists and Communists) overriding the dictates of self-interests.

Notwithstanding all that I have just said, it has to be pointed out that Italy today is on the whole a satisfied power. She resents British supremacy in the Mediterranean and she thinks that, as in days of yore, the Mediterranean should be a Roman lake. But she will not go to any extreme in her conflict with Great Britain. Intervention in the Spanish Civil War is all right for her, because she knows fully well that none of the big Powers is yet ready for an International War. Mussolini is far too shrewd a politician to stake his

position or the position of his country in a risky adventure in the near or distant future. Therefore, we may rest assured that Italy will not take the offensive in disturbing the peace of Europe—nor will she enter into a war unless she is pretty sure of victory.

But Germany under Hitler is an incalculable factor, despite the sober and cautious policy of the Reichswehr, the German Army. Nazi Germany has been dreaming dreams which can be fulfilled only through the arbitrament of war. Moreover, the economic crisis within Germany has been growing so acute that many observers opine that the day is not far off when she may have to launch on a war abroad, in order to stave off discontent at home. To understand the future of Germany, we shall have to probe a little deeper.

Since the Great War there has been a French hegemony on the continent. Not content with crushing Germany, France erected a diplomatic wall around Germany through alliances with Poland and with the Little Entente—the succession states, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania. She followed this up by establishing cordial relations with Turkey which was formerly within the German orbit of influence. Germany looked on helplessly while she was thus diplomatically isolated from the civilized world. Her only reply to this policy of encirclement was the treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia.

French hegemony in post-war Europe has been anathema to Germany whose influence on the Continent

had been paramount since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, resulting in the ignominious defeat of France. Since then, Germany had been expanding in several directions. Outside Europe she went in for colonial expansion. In the sphere of trade she had fair to be a rival to Great Britain and the U. S. A. She built a powerful navy which was looked upon with suspicion by Britain. She brought Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey within her sphere of influence and planned the Berlin-Baghdad Railway which was regarded as a thrust at Britain's Eastern possessions. But the war smashed all these achievements and aspirations and for a decade Germany lay in the slough of despair, while her thinkers began to philosophise about the decline of the West and Spengler wrote his *Untergang des Abend-Landes*. Then came the new awakening through the emergence of the Nationalist-Socialist or Nazi Party.

The political doctrine of the Nazi Party can be summed up in one phrase—'Drang nach Osten'—or 'Drive to the East.' The doctrine was first propounded by Mullet von den Bruck in his book, *Das dritte Reich*, or 'the Third Empire.' He did not live to see the establishment of the third Reich under Hitler in 1933, for he committed suicide in 1926 in a fit of despair. His idea was, however, taken up by Hitler and amplified in his (Hitler's) book *Mein Kampf*, or "My Struggle," which he wrote in prison in 1923. The essence of the above doctrine is that Germany should give up the idea of being a naval or colonial power. She :

should remain a Continental Power and her expansion should take place on the Continent—towards the East. It was pre-War Germany's greatest blunder to go in for colonial expansion and thereby come into conflict with Great Britain.

The new social philosophy of the Nazis, as expounded by Hitler, advocates the purification and strengthening of the German race through elimination of Jewish influence and a return to the soil. "Blut and Boden," or "Blood and Soil," is the new slogan for the German people. In foreign policy, the Nazis advocate the unification of all German-speaking peoples and the acquisition eastwards of more elbow room for the prolific German race. In practical politics, the above objectives amount to the annexation (1) of Austria, (2) of Memel which she has lost to Lithuania, (3) of Danzing which has been made a free city under the League of Nations, (4) of the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia with a population of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, (5) of the Polish Corridor and the Silesian coal-fields which she has lost to Poland, (6) of the rich grain-producing lands of Soviet Ukraine and (7) possibly also of the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, Italian Tyrol and other adjoining countries.

Since no country will oblige Germany by handing over any of the above territories, it goes without saying that she can realize her political objectives only through war and bloodshed. Germany herself is fully alive to this fact and that is why she has been rearming at a

terrific rate on sea, land and air. Having repudiated the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles in March, 1935, and having occupied the Rhineland in March, 1936, Germany has recovered her self-respect and her full national status as an independent State. Her continued rearmament under these circumstances can have but one meaning—*viz.*, preparation for war. Her rearmament has driven the last nail in the coffin of international disarmament and in sheer panic the whole of Europe is now engaged in rearming. When such frantic preparations for war are going on all round, the slightest incident may one day light an international conflagration.

It now remains for us to consider to what extreme Germany will go in achieving her aims. At what stage will she go in for war and with whom?

Political prophecy is always a difficult job—but, thing is certain. Germany has not forgotten the lessons of her last defeat. Hers was not a military defeat, but an economic one. And it was the British Navy which was primarily responsible for starving her to submission. It is therefore certain that Germany will not enter into a war if she knows that Britain will be against her. In 1914, Germany foolishly enough did not believe till the last moment that Britain would take up the gauntlet on behalf of Belgium and France. It is now generally admitted by historians that if Britain had made her intentions known to Germany beforehand, the latter would probably have kept aloof from

the Austro-Serbian conflict and thereby averted—or at least postponed—the World War.

Though in his book, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler asked for a final show down with France, Germany's foreign policy has been modified since the Nazis assumed the reins of office. Germany no longer wants to get back Alsace-Lorraine from France or Eupen-Malmady from Belgium. In other words, Germany does not demand a revision of the frontiers in Western Europe. The reason for this is not far to seek. Germany knows quite well that an attack on France or Belgium or Holland will bring Britain into the arena at once and there would probably be a repetition of the last war. Germany has therefore been continually offering to sign a Western Pact which would guarantee the *status quo* in Western Europe. For a large number of British politicians this offer is a tempting one, because it removes once for all any possible threat to British interests. Germany while making this offer has been striving hard to drive a bargain at the international counter, her demand being that Britain and France should cease to interest themselves in Central and Eastern Europe so that Germany may have a free hand in rearranging the map of that part of the world.

Germany is now preparing in three directions. Firstly, she is going in for an all-round rearmament. Secondly, she is trying to make herself self-sufficient as regards the supply of food and basic raw-materials. (This is provision against a future economic blockade).

This work was started last year in accordance with Germany's Four-year Plan. Thirdly, she is trying to persuade the Western Powers to agree to neutrality in the event of a war in Central or Eastern Europe. Until all these preparations are complete, it is extremely doubtful if Germany will voluntarily launch on a war.

To win over Britain to an attitude of neutrality, Germany has launched on a large-scale propaganda in that country and she has already attained a fair measure of success. In this effort, Germany has exploited the general hatred of Communism which can be found among the richer and middle classes in Britain. The Franco-Soviet Pact has come handy and the Nazis continually emphasize that for Britain to be tied up with France means fighting a war in Eastern Europe on the side of Soviet Russia, though Britain has no interests in that zone. Alongside of this, the Nazis pledge themselves not to harm British interests in any quarter of the globe. As a result of this endeavour, there is an influential pro-Nazi group in Great Britain—with supporters in the House of Lords, in the City of London and generally among the ruling classes and the fighting forces. There are supporters even among the Labourites, though they are attracted by different reasons. It is generally believed that Montague Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, Premier Neville Chamberlain and Sir Robert Vansittart, the strong man in the Foreign Office, are all pro-Nazi. It is even averred that Neville

Chamberlain has inherited his pro-German attitude from his father, Joseph Chamberlain who more than forty years ago wanted to enter into an alliance with Germany.

It is too early to say if Britain's foreign policy will ultimately follow a straight line or if it will continue to wobble, as it has often done in the past. At the present moment, British public opinion is terribly confused. Firstly, there is the pro-Nazi group, referred to above, who want a Western Pact and no commitments in Central and Eastern Europe. Secondly, there is the anti-German Conservative Party represented by Winston Churchill who are distrustful of the Nazis and apprehend that when Germany is once supreme in Europe, she will challenge British interests abroad. They point out in this connection that outside Europe, British and French colonial interests are everywhere bound up together. Thirdly, there are the Socialists and Communists who on ideological grounds are anti-German and pro-French in their general attitude.

In the midst of this confusion, the British Foreign Office, despite Anthony Eden, is following a definite policy viz., to persuade France to give up her interests in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of Vanisttart's policy is to force Germany to be and to remain a European Continental Power That is why Britain has acquiesced in Germany rearmament, made the Naval Agreement with Germany in June 1935, advised

France to ignore German military occupation of the Rhineland in March 1936, warned France not to help the Spanish Government though she was clearly entitled to do so under international Law. It is further alleged by those who are in a position to know diplomatic secrets that the British Foreign Office encouraged Poland in 1933 to come to terms with the Nazi Government. (The German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact was adopted the next year). It also encouraged Belgium to break the alliance with France and return to neutrality and Yugoslavia to make friends with Italy and Germany, against the advice of France. It further encouraged the pro-Nazi Henlein Party in Czechoslovakia and intrigued for breaking or at least slackening, the bonds of the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania) and of the Balkan Entente (Yugoslavia, Rumania, Greece and Turkey) which are under French influence.

It would not be improper to conclude from the above facts that the British Foreign Office has been secretly working contra-France at least in Europe, and French hegemony on the Continent is distasteful to Whitehall. Perhaps because of this, French politicians of the right were greatly annoyed with Italy. Great Britain and Laval proceeded to make alliances with and Soviet Russia, independently of Britain. In fact, Laval's foreign policy might, from one point of view, be regarded as anti-British. But French politicians of the left follow blindly the policy of the British Foreign Office, believing

that France and Britain should hold together through thick and thin

At present the German Foreign Office is playing an aggressive role, while France is busy trying to counteract the former's moves and activities. Outside Britain, the Nazis have been remarkably successful in Belgium. A pro-Nazi Party (the Rexists) has come into existence in Belgium and Nazi propaganda is active among the Flemish speaking people of Belgium. The Belgian Government has broken away from the alliance with France and will in future adopt an attitude of neutrality in the event of war in Central or Eastern Europe. The treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Russia has virtually lapsed since the Nazis came to power in 1933, but as if to compensate Germany for that, the Nazi-Government entered into a Non-Aggression Pact with Poland. This Pact served to undermine greatly French influence in Poland. Last year, France made gigantic efforts to recover her influence in Poland and a number of visits took place on both sides. But it seems probable that the Franco-Polish Alliance will never become a living force again and that in future Poland will follow an independent foreign policy—that is, a policy of neutrality in the event of a Franco-German or Russo-German conflict.

In addition to the above activities, Germany is now exceedingly busy in trying to weaken France by slackening the bonds of the Little Entente and Balkan Entente and by getting a foothold in Spanish territory.

With the help of several alliances and friendly contacts, the position of France today is exceedingly strong and as long as this position continues she will never agree to withdraw her interest in Central and Eastern Europe. She will continue to insist—as Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, also does—that peace is indivisible and this there should be one European Pact to guarantee collective security to all the states under the aegis of the League of Nations. Failing this, besides the Western Pact, there should be another Pact to guarantee peace in Central and Eastern Europe. To this, Germany does not agree and will not agree.

France has fortified herself with military alliances with Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia. The two latter powers have also a military alliance between themselves. Consequently, these three powers will always be found together in the event of an international emergency. Czechoslovakia has an understanding with the other Little Entente powers, Yugoslavia and Roumania. And Yugoslavia and Rumania have an understanding with Greece and Turkey through the Balkan Entente. Germany hopes that by weaning away Yugoslavia and Roumania, she will isolate Czechoslovakia in Central Europe—for help from Russia can reach Czechoslovakia only through Rumania or through Poland. Poland is no longer a problem to Germany because of the Non Aggression Pact. Germany is trying to bring Austria under her influence through the instrumentality of Italy.

Through Britain, she is trying to persuade France that as a military factor, Soviet Russia is not of much consequence and that France should give the go-by to the military clauses of the Franco-Soviet Pact. The recent execution of eight Army Generals in Russia has given a handle to the capitalist powers and they are carrying on a terrific propaganda to the effect that the Soviet military machine is reeking with indiscipline and cannot be relied on in the event of war. Last but not least, Germany is trying her level best to obtain a foothold in Spanish territory, so that in the event of war with France she could stab her in the back by cutting off her communications with North Africa, from where France always obtains large supplies of men and materials, when war breaks out in Europe. Germany hopes that by weakening France on all sides and by putting pressure on her through the British Foreign Office, she will ultimately make her agree to a Western Pact, giving Germany a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe. If France does not agree to this and if she ultimately goes to war with Germany on the side of Soviet Russia, she will find herself considerably weakened compared to what she was in 1914.

But will France fall in with Germany's plans? Ostensibly not. For Britain it is immaterial who dominates the Continent—France or Germany—for Britain's interests lie outside Europe. But France cannot so easily give up her hegemony in Europe for unlike Britain, she is a Continental Power, besides being

a Colonial Power. Moreover, France is fighting not merely for power and prestige, but also for her national safety. She has not forgotten the tragic defeat of 1870. Her population is stationary and is about two-thirds of that of Germany, whose population is still growing. Consequently, France has a genuine horror of German invasion, while Britain has not, as long as the German Navy keeps to the prescribed limits of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. To crown everything, there is in France, a deep distrust of German aims and aspirations which has been accentuated by violent denunciations of France in Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf*. As a writer has put it succinctly, in France the right hates Germany, the left hates Hitler. In these circumstances, it is extremely doubtful if France will ever give up her allies and alliances in Central and Eastern Europe as long as the violently nationalistic Nazi Party remains in power.

The issue of the Spanish Civil War is hanging in the balance and it is too early to say how far German diplomacy will succeed there. But in Central and Eastern Europe it has made considerable headway. In Rumania, the King and the Cabinet are, on the whole, pro-German and the Francophile ex-Foreign minister, Titulescu, has lost considerable influence. There is an anti-Semitic pro-Nazi Party, the Iron Guard, led by Codreanu, which is behind the Government. In Yugoslavia, the Premier Stoyadinovitch is pro-Nazi, as also his Government, while the royal family is under

British influence. In Greece, the Premier, General Metaxas, who has made himself the Dictator, is undoubtedly under German influence. And Greece is important to Germany, because should the Russian Fleet in the Black Sea enter the Mediterranean through the Dardanelles, it could be attacked from a base in the Grecian Islands. Then Hungary and Bulgaria, being 'Have-not' powers, are expected to line up with Germany, if they see any chance of having their national grievances redressed thereby. Thus it appears that Germany has stolen a march over France throughout the Balkan Peninsula and she has been throwing out commercial baits in profusion.

But in international politics there is no finality. France is following on the heels of Germany everywhere. It is difficult to predict how long the Governments of Metaxas in Greece or Stoyadinovitch in Jugoslavia will last. The pro-French party in Rumania, though out of power for the time being, is not negligible and the Balkan temperament is proverbially changeable. Moreover, Germany finds pitted against herself, one of the finest diplomats of modern Europe, President Eduard Benes of Czechoslovakia.

The scene is changing from day to day and political forecasts are any thing but easy. One thing is certain. If war comes, it will come as the result of a German challenge to the *status quo* in Central and Eastern Europe. But will it come? The answer rests primarily with Britain. Germany will not repeat the errors of

1914 and will not go into a war, if she knows that Britain will be against her. She might be trapped into it as she was in 1914, thinking that Britain would keep out of it. If France and Britain agree to be neutral in a conflict in Central or Eastern Europe, war will break out in Europe, as sure as the sun rises in the East, the moment Germany is ready for it. Even if France lines up with Soviet Russia, with Britain remaining neutral, there may be war, though the upshot of it will be doubtful.

At the present moment, two scenes need watching—Spain and the Balkans. If Franco wins, it will be a victory for Italy and Germany and will mean the end of British hegemony in the Mediterranean and dark days ahead of France, if war should break out on the Continent. In the Balkans, if Germany succeeds in isolating Yugoslavia and Rumania from Czechoslovakia, she will in the event of war, be able to occupy Prague in six hours and overrun Czechoslovakia within a few days. But the bigger problem will remain—Russia. The Russian Colossus has often proved to be an enigma. It baffled Napoleon—the conqueror of Europe. Will it baffle Hitler?

APPENDIX II.

JAPAN'S ROLE IN THE FAR EAST.

BY

Subhas Chandra Bose.

Every now and then we open our daily papers to read about some clash between the China and Japan. Many pass over the columns as something happening too far away to interest us in India. Others go through the columns as a matter of routine. But I wonder how few of us understand the significance of the happenings reported.

The islands which form the homeland of the Japanese race are overpopulated. They have to support population of about 70 millions with the result that there is over-crowding and too much pressure on the land. But that is not the end of the trouble. The Japanese are exceedingly prolific and their population has been growing by leaps and bounds. The number of people per square mile in China is 100. In Japan it is 113. Moreover, Japan's birth-rate is twice that of Great Britain. Hence Japan wants more territory for her children to settle in—more raw materials for her growing industries and more markets for her finished goods. No one will make her present of these three things—hence the resort to force. The only other

solution for Japan is to restrict her population through birth-control and live within her own resources—but that solution does not ostensibly appeal to her. This is, in short, the *raison d'être* of Japanese in imperialist expansion.

Japanese expansion can take place only in the face of Chinese, Russian, British or American opposition. If she expands on the Asiatic mainland she is bound to incur the wrath of China or Russia. If she expands southwards—towards the Philippine Islands or Australia—she is bound to come into conflict with the United State of America or Great Britain. As far as one can judge, Japan seems to have decided in favour of the first course, notwithstanding the appeal made by the Lt.-Commander Ishimaru in his book *Japan must fight England* to the effect that she should make up with China, Russia and the U. S. A. and concentrate on fighting England. On the Asiatic mainland the territory on which Japan can cast her eyes belongs either to Russia or to China. To attack Russia would be folly reawakened. She, has, moreover, a first class military machine, both in Europe as well as in the Far East. Therefore, the only alternative left to Japan for satisfying her imperialist ambitions is to expand at the expense of China. But though she may expand at the expense of China, that expansion can take place only in the teeth of Russian opposition, for reasons that will be explained below. So far as Britain is concerned however much she may dislike the growth of Japanese power

on the Asiatic Continent, she will put up with the nuisance, knowing fully well that the only alternative to it would be expansion to the south, bringing Japan into direct and unavoidable conflict with her, and in her present mood, the U. S. A. will certainly not go to war with Japan over her "interests" in the Far East.

Being an Asiatic country and living in close proximity to a huge continent, it is but natural that Japan should look primarily to the mainland of Asia to fulfil her imperialist requirements. There she finds a huge state—formerly the Celestial Empire and now the Republic of China—ill-managed and disunited and with more natural resources than she can herself develop. The vastness, the potential richness and the internal weakness of China constitute the greatest temptation for Japan.

The conflict between the two Asiatic countries is more than forty years old. It began towards the end of the last century. By that time, Japan had modernised her state-machinery with the help of modern methods and had modern weapons of warfare. She found that all the big European Powers had begun to exploit China and to enrich themselves at her expense. Why, then, should not Japan, an Asiatic Power living next-door, do the same and keep out the Western Powers from draining the wealth of East? This was the imperialist logic which started Japan on her race for expansion.

During the last forty years, Japan has not lost a

single opportunity for wrestling concessions. From the Chinese Govt. and during this period she has been undermining the influence of the Western exploiting powers slowly and steadily. Her greatest rivals were Russia, Britain, the U. S. A. and Germany. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, she was able to checkmate the Czarist Empire. During the Great War she was able to wipe out Germany from the map of China. But she has not been able to tackle Britain and the U. S. A. And in the meantime Russia, which was once beaten, has come back into the picture as a Soviet State; newly armed and considerably strengthened.

The disintegration of China began during the latter half of the nineteenth century. European powers like Britain, Russia, Germany, etc., and the U.S.A. put pressure on China and obtained "treaty-ports" like Hong Kong, Shanghai, etc., which virtually amounted to annexation of Chinese territory. Just before the end of the last century, Japan appeared on the scene and also adopted western tactics in her dealings with China. The island of Formosa lying to the south-east of China was acquired by Japan in the war of 1894-95 with China. Port Arthur in Southern Manchuria and the southern half of Sakhalin Island, then belonging to Russia, passed into Japanese hands after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. About the same time Japan took over the Kwantung Railway and she is violently anti-Communist and since the split in the Kuomintang (Chinese National Party) in 1927, when

southern part of the Chinese Eastern Railway running through Manchuria thereby making South Manchuria a Japanese sphere of influence, Korea, formerly Chinese territory, was annexed by Japan openly in 1910 and it is interesting to note that Japan had professed to secure its independence when she went to war with China in 1894. During the Great War, Japan declared war on Germany and immediately proceeded to seize Tsingtao and other German possessions in the Shantung peninsula. In 1915, when she found all the Western Powers up to their neck in the war, Japan presented 21 demands to China and extorted several concessions from her. After the war, Japan received as her share of the spoils, the mandate for the ex-German Pacific Islands, the strategic importance of which lies in their position athwart the direct sea-route from the United States to the Philippine Islands. Then there was a lull in Japanese expansion for a period, since Japan wanted time to assimilate what she had annexed. The next period of feverish activity began in 1931 with the conquest of Manchukuo (Manchuria) when Manchukuo, formerly as a Chinese territory, was set up as a nominally independent state, just as Korea was in 1895. The present expansionist drive which has been continuing since 1931 can be traced to the now famous (or rather notorious) Tanaka memorandum of 1928 in which plans for Japan's future expansion on the Asiatic mainland were clearly laid down. From this brief historical survey it should be clear that Japan's determination to find more elbow-room for herself in this

planet of ours is unshakable. Outward circumstances can hardly thwart this imperious drive and can at best determine the direction and speed of her expansion.

A scientific examination of the internal economy of Japan will clearly explain Japan's military aggression since 1931. It is easy to understand her need for fresh territory when her population is growing and her existing territory is already too scanty for her present population. Looking to her industrial system, one finds that Japan has to import all her important raw materials. *viz.*, cotton, wool, pulp, iron, oil, etc., from a great distance. The expansion of her industrial system, like her need for territory, is necessitated by the growth of population. Therefore, to maintain her large population, Japan requires a safe and regular supply of raw materials. The expansion of industries, again, requires new markets. Now, how are all these needs to be fulfilled? Will China or her own accord give up territory for colonisation to Japan? Will she allow Japan to exploit her vast resources in raw materials and her extensive market? Certainly not. Both national honour and self-interest will stand in the way. Further, the European Powers and the U. S. A. will not voluntarily permit Japan to monopolise China—her resources and her market. They will insist to the last on the "Open Door" policy in China which permits all powers to share the Chinese spoils. Hence Japan has to seize Chinese territory by force. She has

been doing this by stages, biting off one place at a time and taking time to digest it. Each attack is preceded by certain border-incidents, which are carefully stage-managed in order to serve as a pretext for Japanese aggression. The tactics are the same, whether one observes the north-western frontier of India or Walwal in Abyssinia or the Manchurian frontier in the Far East.

Japan's imperialist needs and demands in the Far East can be fulfilled only if she can establish her political hegemony—over China to the exclusion of the white races and by virtually scrapping the "Open Door" policy. Time and again, her politicians have said as much in so many words. For instance, Japan's spokesmen have often said that she has special interests in the Far East which cannot be compared to those of any other Western Power—that it is Japan's mission to umpire the Far East and maintain peace in that quarter, etc., etc. No doubt, besides the purely economic motive, the Japanese are inspired by the desire to found an Empire and the consciousness of being an unconquered race whets their imperialist appetite. Incidentally, the foundation of an Empire abroad enables the fascist elements in Japanese society to get the upper hand.

If China could however persuade herself to accept the political and Economic suzerainty or patronage of Japan, the Sino-Japanese conflict would end in no time. This is what Hirota, Japan's foremost diplomat has been trying to achieve for the last three years. His

speeches have been "extremely conciliatory on the surface, with a constant appeal for Sino-Japanese co-operation. Now, what is the objective of this co-operation? Obviously, the enrichment of Japan and the virtual enslavement of China. But this naked truth cannot be blurted out—hence the slogan is "Co-operation in joint defence against Communism." This slogan not only serves to cloak Japanese motives, but at the same time conciliates all anti-socialist elements whether in Japan, China or elsewhere. Thus, the Indian papers of the 7th August, 1937, gave the following account of Hirota's foreign policy :

"Declaring that a major point in Japan's requests in China was co-operation in a joint defence against communism, M. Hirota in the House of Representatives said, he believed that Sino-Japanese co-operation was possible in the radical elements in China, particularly the Communists, were effectively controlled. He added, the Japanese Government wished to settle the North China incident on the spot and at the same time to effect a fundamental readjustment of Sino-Japanese relations,"⁸

And similar statements in similar language have been made ever since Hirota first became Japan's Foreign Minister a few years ago.

⁹ Can China submit to this demand even if it brings her peace? My own view is that left to himself, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, the Dictator of the Nanking Central Government, would have done so. At heart

he managed to establish his supremacy, he has spared no pains to exterminate the Chinese Communists and their allies. But Marshal Chiang has encountered consistent opposition from two quarters. The Western provinces of China, known as the Chinese Soviet, being practically independent of Nanking, have kept up the fight against Japan and, on this point, have faithfully echoed the feelings of the Chinese masses. Secondly, the Western Powers with their vast interests in China, and with their prestige to maintain before the Eastern races, cannot easily persuade themselves to scuttle. The foreign investments of U. S. A. in China are, in point of magnitude and importance, second only to its investments in Latin America (Central and South America). Regarding investments in China, the following extract from the London *Times* of the 19th August, 1937, is illuminating :—

“British direct interests in China are worth about 250 million pounds, made up of 200 million pounds in business investments and 50 million pounds in government obligations. Of the total sum, about 180 million pounds is tied up in Shanghai and of this 180 million a high proportion is in the Settlement district north of the Soochow Creek. This is the district now being most heavily shelled and bombed, It is where most of the Public Utility offices and works and most of the large mercantile businesses are established.”

The *Times* writer goes on to point out with dismay that whilst previously this district has been policed

under British superintendents, the police stations have been evacuated and occupied by the Japanese. The white races are consequently alive to the fact that Japanese hegemony over China will mean not only the subjection of the latter but their own exclusion from the Far East.

Since the geography of a country often determines military strategy, it is necessary to note the salient features in the geography of China.

China's most important lines of communication are her three great rivers: the Hwang-ho (or Yellow River) in the North, the Yang-tse in the Centre and the Si-Kiang in the south. The entrance to the Si Kiang is controlled by the British port of Hong-Kong; to the Yang-tse by Shanghai, which is jointly held by the foreign powers with Britain and America predominating. The entrance to the Hwang-ho is dominated by Japan, entrenched first in Korea and now in Manchuria (Manchukuo) as well. The one practicable land route into China is that from the north. Along this route the Mongols and the Manchus entered China proper, and in the years preceding the great War, both Russia and Japan had their eyes on it. Since 1931, Japan has been aiming at the possession of this route and the country adjoining it and since July 1937, fighting has been going on in this area. It should be remembered in this connection that high mountains separate China proper from the western part of the Republic (*viz.*, Sinkiang or

Chinese Turkestan). The consequence of this is that the land route to China proper is from the north and we find that historically the power which has controlled Manchuria has always been in a strong position to dominate China.

In order to understand in their proper perspective the events in the Far East since 1931, it is necessary to understand the broad lines of Japanese hegemony in China. Though peaceful penetration was not possible, Japan laid down her plans for a military conquest of China, or at least for military pressure on her. To achieve this objective, Japanese strategy had to work along two lines—firstly to break up Chinese unity and secondly to make it impossible for any other power to come to the aid of China. This purpose could be served only if Japan could seize the entire northern part of the Republic, including Manchukuo, Mongolia and northern China proper. These territories taken together form a compact mass, cutting off Russian Siberia from China proper (The Valleys of Hwang-ho, Yang-tse and Si-Riang rivers). A reference to the map will show that if Japan holds this area, she can in the event of war with Russia, penetrate through Outer Mongolia and cut the trans-Siberian railway at Lake Baikal. And if Russia can be effectively isolated, no other country can come to China's rescue in an emergency. We shall see how Japan has progressed in the task of absorbing this area since 1931.

It is necessary to note at the outset that Japan never

lays all her cards on the table and she proceeds with her aggression cautiously, taking care that she is not attacked by any other power when her own hands are full. Moreover, she always manages to stage some "incident" in order to give her a pretext for seizing Chinese territory. The first "incident" was staged on September 18th, 1931, by Lieutenant Kawamoto of the Japanese Imperial Army who was reconnoitring along the South Manchuria Railway track. This led to the seizure of Mukden the next day and of the whole of Manchuria within a short period. At that time, the whole world was in grip of an acute economic depression and Russia was feverishly pushing on her first Five-Year plan. Japan was, therefore, sure that there would be no effective challenge to her predatory moves. The Lytton Commission sent out by the League of Nations reported against Japan and following that, the League Assembly condemned the Japanese seizure of Manchuria. But Japan snapped her fingers at the League and walked out. This was followed by the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manchukuo by the Soviet Union in 1933, and in 1934 the Russo Manchukuo Waterways Agreement was adopted. Though Manchukuo was not given *de jure* recognition by the other powers, she obtained *de facto* recognition from most of them.

Manchukuo is a huge territory with plenty of room for colonisation, though the climate is severe, it is rich in several raw materials including coal. Moreover, it is exceedingly useful as a jumping-off ground for

Japan in the event of war with Soviet Russia. Many people thought it would take Japan years to develop Manchukuo and in the meantime, there would be peace in the Far East. But they were mistaken. Both on economic and on strategic grounds, Manchukuo cannot stand by itself. Only part of the raw materials desired by Japan can be found there and the Manchukuan market is not big enough for Japan. Moreover, strategically Manchukuo is exceedingly weak, there being hostile territory on all sides. Consequently, to satisfy her economic needs and to ensure the safety of the new state, Japan had to continue her aggression further.

In 1932, another "incident" was staged in Shanghai and the Shanghai war between China and Japan started. The upshot of it was that China was forced to demilitarise a certain area near Shanghai and submit to a few other Japanese conditions. The strategic importance of Shanghai was not so clear in 1932, but the present war (1937) has brought it to light.

By 1933, the consolidation of Manchukuo under the puppet Emperor, Pu Yi, was complete and Japan was ready for a further extension of her frontiers. Fighting took place in North China outside the frontiers of Manchukuo. The Japanese troops seized Jehol and a slice of Chahar and marched up to the gates of Peking (now called Peiping). Vanquished in battle, the Chinese had to bow to the inevitable and see another slice of their territory annexed by Japan. The war ended with

the Tangku truce in 1933.

The year 1934 was comparatively uneventful but hostilities broke out again in 1935. As always happens with Japan, a fresh act of aggression was preceded by conciliatory speeches and a show of moderation in foreign policy. On January 23rd, 1935, Hirota delivered an address, advocating a policy of non-aggression and the adoption of a "good neighbour" policy with a view to effecting a rapprochement with China. This time, the slogan adopted by the Japanese was an autonomous North China (like an autonomous Manchukuo) and the Central Government of Nankihg (new capital of China) was told not to interfere with Japanese activities and negotiations in North China. But Nanking could not wholly oblige Japan and the people of North China did not want to walk into the Japanese trap as blindly as the Manchurians had done in 1931. The result was that the Japanese plans did not succeed. Nevertheless, when the conflict was finally liquidated, it was found that China had virtually lost another portion of her territory. In 1933 Jehol and a part of Chahur had been absorbed by Manchukuo. Now, a demilitarised zone was created in Hopei province with its capital at Tungchow, 12 miles east of Peiping called the East Hopei autonomous area. In charge of this area was a Chinese renegade, Yin Ju-Keng, and the territory was under Japanese domination. (Later on, large-scale smuggling went on within this area, presumably with Japanese connivance, with a view to evading the Chinese

customs.) Further, the remaining part of Hopei (which contains Peiping and Tientsin) and a portion of Chahar were combined into a separate administrative unit under the Hopei-Chahar Political Council, headed by general Sung Cheh Yuan, the strongest leader outside Nanking. This Council, while afraid to oppose Japan openly, did not sever its connections with Nanking.

In February, 1936, there was a military revolt in Tokyo and, for a time, the Japanese Government had its hands full at home. Nevertheless, it was not altogether inactive. With a view to strengthening her position internationally, Japan entered into a Pact with Germany --the German-Japanese-Anti-Comintern Pact.. Towards the end of the year, in November, 1936, an attempt was made to push into Inner Mongolia down the Peiping-Paochow Railway, but the Mongol-Manchukuo mercenaries of Japan were held at bay in the province of Suiyan by General Fu Tso I, with the aid of Nanking's troops.

It should be clear to any student of history that since 1931, Japan has been growing increasingly assertive not only in the Far East, but also in world affairs in general. If she had not felt strong in the international sphere, she would never have ventured an aggression against China. We have already referred to her withdrawal from the League of Nations after the seizure of Manchuria. Prior to this she had allowed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to lapse, probably because she felt that

she was powerful enough to do without it. In the Washington Naval Treaty, Japan had agreed to the ratio 5 : 5 : 3 in the matter of warships etc. as between Britain, U. S. A. and herself. When this treaty lapsed in 1935, Japan insisted on parity and since this was not agreed to by the other Powers at the London Conference, she contemptuously walked out of it. When Britain wanted to bring about an economic understanding with Japan in the matter of world-markets, Japan refused to discuss any markets except those which were directly controlled by the former, and the London Conference of 1935 between the two Powers broke up. From all these facts it will be clear that when 1937 dawned, Japan was morally and internationally prepared for a major conflict in the Far east.

. But sometimes even the most well-informed are led astray. Between March and July 1937 Japan lulled the whole world into the belief that she was passing through an economic crisis and was therefore unable to launch on any military aggression against China. Articles appeared in several American journals to show that while the rest of the world was enjoying an economic recovery, in Japan it was the reverse. Owing to this recovery, the price of all raw materials had gone up considerably. Japan had to buy them at a high price and so her cost of production had gone up—making it virtually impossible for her to compete in the world-markets successfully. (This statement is disproved by the remarkably low prices of Japanese textiles in

India at the present time.) American journalists took pains to argue that because of this economic crisis Japan had decided to go slow with China and was therefore offering her the hand of friendship. It was further argued that owing to the same reason, extreme militarists were out of favour for the time being and moderate politicians were getting the upper hand in Japan. It now appears that Japan's moderation was simply a cloak to hide her real intentions in order to lull her enemies to a sense of security. Japan chose this particular moment for attacking China for obvious reasons. Neither the U. S. A. nor Britain nor Russia is yet ready to challenge Japan in war. All of them are preparing feverishly and are piling up armaments and two or three years later, the outlook for Japan may be gloomy. It was therefore a case of "now or never" for Japan, and she struck. She carefully prepared for this attack by a period of sober talk and moderate action. And when everybody felt convinced that Japan was thinking in terms of peace, she launched her attack. Thus, writing on April 24th, 1937, the well-known journal of New York, *The Nation*, said : "The prospects of peace in the Far East are greater than at any time since 1931." Writing on June 26th, the same journal remarked that there was a lull in Japan's offensive against China. But little did the writer know then that it was merely a lull before the storm.

Apart from Japan's general preparedness for an-

other drive, certain factors precipitated the present crisis in the Far East. The Scian coup and the kidnapping of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek in December 1936, prepared the ground for a "United Front" policy in China. There seems to be little doubt now that before Chiang was released by his captors, an understanding had been arrived at between the Chinese Soviets and the Nanking Government on the basis of a common resistance against Japan. This understanding meant the completion of the unification of China for the first time in recent history. The Chinese Soviets were to give up their Communism and Separatism and submit to the direction of Nanking. Chiang was to lead united China against Japanese aggression and the Communist leaders, Chow En-lai and Chiang's own son, were to fall in line with him. Japan came to know of this and attacked, before united China could proceed further with the work of consolidation.

This time is opportune for Japan in many ways. Though British, Russian and American rearmament is proceeding apace, as already stated, neither of them is yet ready for a conflict. It will still take time for Britain to complete her Singapore base. The Neutrality Act adopted by the U. S. A. is a clear indication that she wants to keep out of every international conflict. The Russian Army, according to Fascist reports, is seething with discontent and in any case is not as formidable as it appeared twelve months ago.

The clash on the Soviet-Manchukuo border followed by the withdrawal on July 4th 1937, of the Soviet troops from the disputed islands which belonged to Russia under the 1860 Agreement with China—was a further proof that the Soviet Government was not prepared for a war.

Three days after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Amur River, a fresh "incident" was staged near Peiping and the attack on North China was resumed on July 8th, 1937.

Man is proverbially wiser after a calamity has befallen him. It is now reported by well-informed journalists that Japan had been preparing for this war for some time past. She is not satisfied with the occupation of Manchukuo. This country is too cold for Japanese immigrants. It has contributed only a small proportion of the raw materials needed by Japanese industry. It has, no doubt, brought some increase of trade to Japan, but this has been offset by the cost of administration and the losses incurred as a result of the competition of Manchurian products in the Japanese market. On the other hand, economically North China (*viz.*, the provinces of Shantung, Hopei, Chahar, Shansi and Suiyan) offers far more than Manchukuo. There are iron deposits in Chahar, Sahansi and Southern Hopei. Shansi has also highgrade coal. Moreover, tin, copper, gold and oil are scattered throughout the five provinces. The Yellow River (Hwang-ho) valley is suitable for the cultivation of cotton which is now imported into Japan from India

and America to the value of 400 million yens annually. And the climate is more favourable to Japanese immigrants than that of Manchukuo, as well as to cattle-breeding.

The Japanese drew up plans for the exploitation of this territory some time ago, but Japanese capital was loath to come in as long as the area remained under Chinese sovereignty. Hence, militarism had to come to the aid of capitalism.

Apart from the economic urge behind the present aggression, there lurks the psychological factor. American journalists were partly right when they wrote during the earlier part of this year about the economic crisis in Japan, but their conclusions were wrong. Contrary to what they wrote, economic difficulties may instigate a "totalitarian" government to launch on a war abroad in order to stave off discontent at home. (The same crisis may overtake Germany in the not distant future.) In the case of Japan, it may be averred that the economic difficulties which she encountered in the recent past as a result of her declining trade balance, made a revival of war psychology necessary.

Further, since the defeat of the Japanese-directed expedition against Suiyan (a province in North China) in November, 1936, it became apparent that the strategic area of Inner Mongolia could only be obtained if the whole of North China were brought into subjugation. Without controlling Chahar and Suiyan, in particular,

it is impossible to push into Inner Mongolia from the direction of Manchukuo.

Why is Japan so keen about Inner Mongolia, a barren country of little economic value? The reason is strategic rather than economic. It has been remarked above that Japan has been aiming at a compact mass of territory comprising Manchukuo, North China and Mongolia. Now, in the meantime, Soviet diplomacy has not been idle and two big provinces of the Chinese Republic have passed under Russian influence—Sinkiang (or Chinese Turkestan) and Outer Mongolia (the upper portion of Mongolia adjoining* Soviet Russia). Sinkiang is not of much strategic importance to Japan (though it is to Soviet Russia owing to its proximity to India)—but Outer Mongolia is. With Outer Mongolia under her control, Soviet Russia can easily descend into North China. The only way to prevent this and cut off Russia permanently from China proper is to seize Inner Mongolia (the Southern part of Mongolia) and North China and thereby form a compact corridor from West to East, separating Russian Siberia and Outer Mongolia from China proper. To annex this territory is at present Japan's objective. Once she succeeds in this effort, her next endeavour would be to build a strategic railway through this newly acquired territory from East to West. If she is able to consolidate her position there, she may then think of moving into Outer Mongolia. What would then happen, it is difficult to predict. At present, Outer Mongolia is a Russian sphere of

influence and the Soviet Government have declared very plainly that any move on the part of Japan within this territory would be tantamount to a *casus belli*.

But Japan has not given up all hope of uniting the Mongols under her suzerainty sometime in future. Hence, Japanese agents often talk of "Mengkukuo" as a worthy political ideal for all the Mongols. This plan, if it ever materialises, will be a counterpart of Manchukuo. It will give the Mongols their own state, with the Gilbertian facade of autonomy of course, but in reality under Japanese tutelage. There are approximately five million Mongols in the Far East. Two millions live in the Hsingan province of Manchukuo. A million live in Outer Mongolia—a territory half as large as the United States, but mostly desert. Another million live in Inner Mongolia while about a million are scattered in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), Tibet and Soviet Russia (Buriat Republic). The nucleus of the future Mongol State of "Mengkukuo" has already come into existence with a Mongolian Political Council. Among the Mongol leaders who are under Japanese influence are Li-Shouhsein and Prince Teh.

But while an "autonomous" Mengkukuo may be a future project for Japan, an autonomous North China is her immediate objective.

Since the annexation of Manchukuo, Japanese influence in North China was steadily growing and this

must have led them to hope that without a major conflict, another puppet state would be set up in the near future comprising the five provinces of North China. But the absorption of Canton province, within Nanking's zone in the recent past, followed by the reported understanding of Marshal Chiang with the Chinese Communists in December last must have dashed Japanese hopes to the ground. A strong and united China was, at long last rising before the world's eyes and that China would not give up her northern provinces without a fight. Since January 1937, Nanking began to assert its influence over North China officials. She interfered with the Japanese—protected smuggling through East Hopei. She dared to order the suspension of the new Tientsin-Tokyo air-line, established by Japan without Chinese consent. In Northern Chahar there was a small-scale rebellion of Manchukuan and Mongolian troops against Japanese domination. Anti-Japanese incidents were thus occurring with increasing frequency and not settled by abject submission to Japan's demands. To crown all, there was the report of an understanding between Nanking and the Chinese Communists which would bring into the field against Japan, the 90,000 seasoned soldiers belonging to the latter.

On July 3rd, 1937, the Japanese Ambassador, Shigeru Kwagoe, started negotiations with Nanking. Japan trimmed her sails and proposed the relinquishment of Japanese political control in North China,

provided that Nanking would recognize Manchukuo *de jure* and undertake "economic co-operation" with Japan. Nanking is reported to have rejected this proposal and her counter-proposals fell short of Japanese requirements. No further proof was needed that a new China had come into existence which would soon exercise its full authority over the northern provinces. Therefore, Japan struck without delay and an "incident" was staged at Lukouchaio, about 18 miles west of Peiping (Peking) when Japanese troops engaged in night-manoevres clashed with units of the Chinese Twenty-Ninth Army stationed in that area.

Looking at this incident legally, there can be no doubt that the Japanese were in the wrong. Though the Boxer Protocol of 1901 entitled them to station troops in the Peiping Legation quarter and at certain points in the Peiping-Tientsin railroad, they sent their troops outside the specified areas and obstructed rather than maintained communications with the sea—the purpose for which the protocol was designed. However, soon after the clash, the Japanese Government made the following demands :—

- (1) Withdrawal of the Twenty-Ninth Army from present lines west of Peiping.
- (2) Punishment of the Chinese responsible for the conflict.
- (3) Adequate control of all anti-Japanese action in North China ; and.
- (4) Enforcement of measures against Communism.

