COMPLETE FREEDOM FOR HYDERABAD

Majlis Leader's Demand

NEW DELHI, June 3: "With the cessation of Paramountcy, Hyderabad could not conceive of any other terms than complete independence, with full powers in foreign affairs and defence," says Mr. Abdur Rauf, President of the Action Committee of the Majlis-i-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen, Hyderabad.

He adds, "The question of Berar, the Ceded districts and Masulipatam are questions of treaties and not questions of territories at present. I also hope that the Congress agitation against the retrocession of Berar will have no bearing on what is a purely legal issue between a State and the Crown Representative."—A.P.I.

Sind's Public Services

From Our Own Correspondent

KARACHI, June 4: Sind's separate Public Services Commission will begin to function shortly. It is reliably learnt that Khan Bahadur Mahomed Daim, now a member of the joint Bombay-Sind Public Services Commission, will be the chairman of the new body and the other two members are Mr. Hasdasmal Hingorani, Secretary, Legal Department, and Mr. N. M. A. Siddiqui, Manager of Encumbered Estates.

For FILMS PLATES & PAPERS
SEE THE Gevaert DEALERS

TAMPAX
Sanitary Protection
WORN INTERNALLY
NO BELTS · NO PINS
NO PADS
Agents: M. L. Shahani & Co., Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi

DANTON I-WEEK SHORTHAND
Quickly gives 150-200 words per minute speed. FIRST LESSON FREE:—Pitman Shorthand School, (St. Albans), New Road, Post Box 43, Delhi 2.

FOR NEW AND ECONOMICAL TYPE OF
ROTARY OIL MILLS
SUITABLE FOR
CRUSHING GROUND-NUTS AND ALL TYPES OF OIL YIELDING SEEDS.
PLEASE WRITE TO:—
SHREE
JAM WIRE PRODUCTS CO., LTD.,
Post Box No. 48, Jamnagar.

Pin your Faith in Quality BEERS

ZENITH The Aristocrat of HOLLAND

Royal PRINCETON Canada's Queen

Crystal GENUINE BOHEMIAN from CZECHOSLOVAKIA
SOLE AGENTS:—
NOWROJEE ARDASEER & SONS
BOMBAY 1

Just Arrived!!
PERFECOLD COMMERCIAL REFRIGERATOR 30 cu. ft., Open Unit for 230 volt. 50 cycle Model 230 S. Width 54", depth 33". Height 75", barred type shelves two doors. Price Rs. 3,500/-.
MITCHELL AIR CONDITIONING UNITS Model M-10, overall dimensions 16½" high, 28½" wide, 26¾" depth, hermetically sealed compressor unit. ½ H.P. Motor, AC 230 Volt. Price Rs. 2,300/-.
Manufactured by
Perfecold Int. Inc., Los Angeles, Calif., U.S.A.
ORDERS ARE BOOKED IN STRICT ROTATION.
Write your requirements to Sole Distributors:
GOVINDRAM BROS. LTD.
139, Medows Street, BOMBAY. Phone: 30814.

"COMPLETE TRANSFER OF POWER THIS YEAR"

Britain Means To Quit, Declares Lord Mountbatten

NEW DELHI, June 4.

THE Viceroy, addressing a Press conference this morning, asserted that Britain meant to quit, and said: "I mean it sincerely when I say power will be transferred as completely this year as it ever would have been by June, 1948. I am sincere. I am not bluffing."

The Viceroy answered questions for nearly two hours and a quarter.

The conference was held in the Constituent Assembly Hall, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Information Member, conducted the proceedings. Lord Ismay, Sir Eric Mieville and Mr. V. P. Menon were also present.

The Viceroy reasserted that the British would leave when they were told to leave. They were here just to assist the parties, and nothing more.

The Viceroy, at the outset, briefly reviewed the events that had led to the announcement last night, and said that partition had not yet been effected. It was entirely a matter for the people to decide.

INDIAN STATES' FUTURE

"The Indian States cannot enter separately as Dominions", replied the Viceroy to a question on the future of the Indian States. Further elaborating the point, Lord Mountbatten explained that, with the lapse of Paramountcy, the States would be free agents either to enter the Constituent Assembly or make such arrangement as might be necessary. If any of the Indian States came to him asking for a separate treaty—economic or military—with H. M. G., he would transmit such a request to H. M. G., but the question had not so far arisen.

Replying to further questions in regard to the States, Lord Mountbatten said: "There can be no negotiations between H.M.G. and the States. We hand back Paramountcy, and in the process, we offer our services in helping them to make the necessary contact with the Government of India and with the respective Constituent Assemblies to come together and make their agreements. But we (meaning H.M.G.) are not actually going to enter into any treaty negotiations: we are coming out of all our commitments. In the process of quitting power in India, we must try and approach it in as legally correct a manner as possible."

The Indian States, the Viceroy said, must be perfectly aware where their interests lie. He, as the Crown Representative during the remaining two months or so he exercised Paramountcy, would do everything in his power to help them to negotiate with other parties.

Lord Mounbbatten said that when he met the representatives of the Princes yesterday, he had offered his services and those of the Political Department to speed up all negotiations that could be taken in hand. The States were at liberty to send their duly qualified representatives to the existing Constituent Assembly, or if they so desired, to the other Constituent Assembly envisaged. They were absolutely free to choose, but he supposed that geography would play a large part in their decisions.

On H.M.G.'s plan, the Viceroy said: "I worked hand in glove with the leaders at every stage and step of the development of the plan, which came as no shock or surprise to them, for, although I did not actually produce a written plan, I continued to make notes of what they said and had asked them if this or the other was the right way until the plan was constructed. The plan obviously cannot meet with complete approval of everybody, because if it did, my services would have been quite unnecessary. Ages ago a solution would have been found between the leaders themselves. The only service I have given has been to try as fairly and as impartially as possible to reconcile the various opposite points of view and to find to what extent people would change their views to meet the views of others. It would have been a miracle if every party had thought this plan was perfect. It would have distressed me if they had said so because it would have been an insincere statement, not in keeping with the high integrity that the leaders have shown in the past."

LONDON TALKS

Lord Mountbatten, explaining the background to the plan, said that before he came out to India he held some preliminary discussions in London and it was settled that he would spend the first six months in becoming acquainted with the problem and then send his recommendations to H.M.G. to enable them, in due course, to prepare the necessary legislation early in 1948 in Parliament. When he arrived out here, however, he discovered, almost at once, that the one point on which every community was agreed, on which all the British officials agreed and with which he very soon agreed himself was that a decision at the earliest possible moment on how to transfer power was a prime necessity if they were to arrest the deteriorating communal strife and tension and bring back an era of peace and friendliness without which no progress could possibly be made. So he set to work, seeing as many people as possible first of all getting background material and asking for their views. His views he had publicly expressed last night on the question of a unified India. He tried his best to get the Cabinet Mission scheme accepted, a scheme which at one time or other had been accepted by every community and interested party in India. He, however, realised it could be worked only if there was sincerity and goodwill on the part of everyone.

PAKISTAN DEMAND

Congress Principle Of Non-Coercion

But the moment riots and bloodshed started and there was tension and strife, the prospects of making the Cabinet Mission plan work were obviously very remote. The Cabinet Mission's plan was not an enforceable plan. It depended on mutual goodwill and co-operation. So when it became clear that it could not be made to work with the complete free will of at least one of the major communities, he started looking round for alternatives. All the Muslim League leaders with whom he spoke made it absolutely clear that they desired partition. Once that fact was inescapably established in his mind, his next point was to see whether the Congress would agree to abandon the principle of unity to which they had owed allegiance so long. He found that the Congress stuck by the principle of non-coercion and said that any province or area which did not wish to come into the existing Constituent Assembly could go into a separate assembly. But, they very naturally insisted that no large non-Muslim areas should be brought into the new Constituent Assembly. When he spoke to Mr. Jinnah and other Muslim League leaders on the point, they were as much distressed as the Congress leaders. Mr. Jinnah then asked whether the same principle would be extended beyond the Punjab and Bengal. The Viceroy accepted that, of course, and so the idea of the partition of Assam grew up for Sylhet and possibly certain surrounding areas in which there was a definite Muslim majority.

THE SIKH COMMUNITY

Apart from the two main parties, the Congress and the League, there was another community, not numerous but of great importance, namely, the Sikh community, which had of course to be consulted.

He found that mainly at the request of the Sikh community the Congress had put forward a resolution on the partition of the Punjab. He sent for a map with the population of the Sikhs marked on it and he was astounded to find that the plan which they had produced would divide the community almost to equal halves. So he spent a great deal of time finding out a solution which would keep the Sikh community together.

He had not been able to see any solution but whatever step was taken was based on the Congress resolution on the subject which, he pointed out, was passed at the insistence of the Sikhs.

The Viceroy hoped that the leaders of the respective communities would appoint a committee to draw up the terms of reference of the Boundary Commission, which should have representatives of the interested parties on it. So far as it was humanly possible there would be no interference, let alone dictation, from any British official. "This is your country and it is upto you to decide what to do," he said.

The most gratifying part of the whole plan of procedure was the absolute determination of every responsible leader that whatever solution was finally adopted it was going to be adopted peacefully without further bloodshed and they were going to throw the whole weight into the scale to prevent any further riots, commotion and bloodshed. Every single member of his Cabinet, individually and collectively, had expressed to him the strongest possible wish that the armed forces of India should be used to ensure that there was no further bloodshed.

After consulting the Home Member, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, aside the Viceroy revealed that the Interim Government had recently unanimously decided "that we shall not tolerate any more violence or strife."

"There are many times more troops in the troubled areas than before. The Centre is already there intervening in the most effective way possible by adopting a unanimous decision in the Interim Government not to tolerate any more violence."

Up till now, the Viceroy said, the distribution of the armed forces had been on the normal basis throughout India. Now Government knew where disturbances were going to break out or were most likely to break out, and so Government were taking the risk of denuding the other parts of India of the armed forces and concentrating them in those particular areas.

The Viceroy said that the British Prime Minister had promised him the services of two constitutional experts from England. Besides a number of constitutional experts were available in this country for assistance during the transition.

Lord Mountbatten said all the leaders were anxious to assume their full responsibility at the earliest possible moment and he was eager to help them do so, because once the decision had been taken there was no reason to wait. Waiting would only mean that he should be responsible ultimately for law and order and the general conduct of Government. In point of fact, however much you might use the Interim Government, it would never be the same thing unless they were legally in control of the responsibility.

LEGAL CONUNDRUM

Constitutions Not Yet Formed

How to produce that very quickly was a legal conundrum of the first order. "You cannot transfer power to one or two separate Governments unless these Governments had formulated their constitutions. One of the Governments is not even in being. No one is certain whether it is coming into being."

His search to find an answer had led him to the Government of India Act 1935 which was regarded as a masterpiece. This Act under which India had been governed since 1935, was the Act under which it would be governed until power was transferred when the two respective governments could make up their minds on the type of constitution they wanted.

PARLIAMENTARY LEGISLATION

The Viceroy referred to his negotiations in London when he asked Mr. Attlee how long it would take to get the necessary legislation through Parliament. Mr. Attlee said it would take six or seven months to frame the necessary Act and introduce legislation and get it accepted. The Viceroy then asked the Premier whether he would kindly introduce legislation through the current session of Parliament—within the next two months. The following day, the Lord Chancellor had ready a rough outline of the proposed legislation. The only thing that would delay the framing of the Act was the uncertainty of what the provinces were going to decide and until the people of India had outlined their own future, the final terms of the Act could not be drawn up. But once this was known, the legislation would be rushed through in record time.

Answering questions, Lord Mountbatten said the position of Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League with regard to the plan was that under the League constitution no final decision was taken until the League Council had had an opportunity of discussing it. He was not going to say anything today which would prejudice free discussion in that Council.

Asked what he would do if the League Council rejected the plan, Lord Mounbatten said if ever the occasion arose "come and see me and I will tell you what I would do".

"I am the person responsible for going ahead with this plan. If I go ahead it is because I feel it is the right thing to do. I have taken, if you like, a risk in doing so. But I have spent the last five years in what we call taking calculated risks".

FUTURE OF CALCUTTA

In view of the speeches made in Bengal by Muslim League leaders, including Mr. Suhrawardy, that if, when Bengal was partitioned, Calcutta went into the Hindu zone, the city would be reduced to ashes, the Viceroy was asked whether he would not take over the administration of the province under Section 93, he answered no. He had seen both Mr. Suhrawardy and Mr. Kiran Shanker Roy, Calcutta was the last thing which Mr. Suhrawardy wished destroyed.

"Would it be open to any province to state than it will not join either of the Constituent Assemblies?"—

"After discussing this particular point with the leaders of both parties, I found the leaders did not wish to have any option other than to join one or the other of the Constituent Assemblies for the good and sufficient reason that they did not wish this plan to encourage what I might call Balkanisation of India".

BOUNDARIES ISSUE

Population Transfer Likely

"In your broadcast yesterday you had said the ultimate boundaries of the partitioned provinces would be 'almost certainly not identical' with those which have been provisionally adopted. Why?"—

"For the simple reason that in the district of Gurdaspur in the Punjab, the population ratio is 50.4 per cent. Muslims and 49.6 per cent. non-Muslims. The difference is .8 per cent. You will see at once that it is unlikely that the boundary commission will place the whole of the district in Muslim majority areas. Similarly, in a district in Bengal, the reverse is the case. It has a very small fraction of a non-Muslim majority. I shall be astounded if the Boundary Commission places the whole of that district in the non-Muslim area. The point is we have taken the districts for one purpose only—it was the only simple way by which you can derive the number of members for each of the legislatures. I do not want inhabitants of those districts to assume it as a foregone conclusion that they would be going into an area in which their community is not in a majority".

"Do you foresee any mass transfer of population?—

"Personally I don't see it. There are many physical and practical difficulties involved. Some measure of transfer will come about in a natural way. That is to say I have a feeling that people who have just crossed the boundary will transfer themselves. Perhaps Governments will take steps to transfer populations. Once more, this is a matter not so much for the main parties as for the local authorities living in the border areas to decide".

Answering another question the Viceroy said His Majesty's Government could hardly be expected to subscribe to partition on the basis of landed property. "Not at all events, this British Government. (Laughter). I think the question must therefore be left to Indians."

The Governors of the Punjab and Bengal had already received instructions to put into effect Clause 9 in H.M.G.'s statement providing for "national" division. No time would be lost in getting on to this as quickly as possible. The administrative arrangements were really matters for the legislative assemblies of these two provinces to fix up in conjunction with their Governors. His personal view was they could not do better than have coalitions in both the provinces.

The Viceroy said in respect of the N.W. F. Province, that the procedure of referendum was adopted because the minorities there had been given more weightage than in any other province. Out of 50 seats in the Provincial Assembly, something like 12 or 13 went to the minorities, who were actually less than five or six per cent. of the population.

When his attention was drawn to the demand for an independent Pathan State, the Viceroy said that the question was raised as a matter of principle as to whether any province should be allowed to vote for independence or whether they would be obliged to vote for one or other of the two Constituent Assemblies. But it was turned down by the leaders of both the parties on the very admirable plea that they did not wish to encourage Balkanisation. "Has not the Congress Party supported the demand of the Frontier people for a Sovereign State?"

"Where should we be if we agree to each request by one party? What is the basis of agreement?"

"Are the Frontier people free to select the issue on which they will vote in the referendum?"

"If they can get the High Commands of the two parties to agree to it, and if they want to vote for independence, I will agree. If on the other hand only one wishes it, then we stick to what we agreed on originally."

The Viceroy said he was proposing to select British officers from the Indian Army who spoke the language of the Frontier and who had never had anything to do with politics to go to the Frontier during the referendum. He was trying to get the most impartial men he could find to ensure that the referendum was completely impartial.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL FOR DOMINIONS

Indians Eligible

Asked whether the future Governors-General would be appointed on the advice of the Dominion Government or Governments of India, and whether there was any bar to Indians being eligible for the appointment, the Viceroy said the Governor-General in a Dominion was chosen by the Prime Minister of the Government of the Dominion concerned, who would submit the desired name to the King. The King, being a Constitutional Monarch primarily, acted on the advice. So far as he knew there could be two States with separate Governors-General in India, and it could be anybody they liked. The Dominions had complete freedom to decide what they wanted.

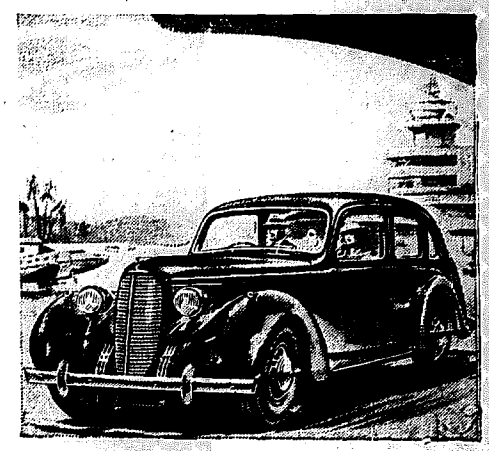
He had been asked, the Viceroy went on, what provision His Majesty's Government would make for the protection of minorities. H.M.G.'s plan had not referred to this point. The British Government's decision to quit was not insincere. Since this was so, they had no legal means to enforce any protection for the minorities, but he had talked to the leaders of the country and was absolutely certain that so long as they were in power, "they personally mean to look after the interests of the minorities as a matter of conscience, honour and fairplay." While he was still here, his services would also be available for this purpose. He had the greatest faith in the future of India and he believed that the minorities were going to have "a decent chance and fairplay."

DEFENCE OF DOMINIONS

Answering a question on the defence of the future dominions, the Viceroy said basically each State, when it got independence, was wholly and solely responsible for its own defence. Mechanically, the process of partitioning the forces, if it had to be done without collapse of morale and disintegration, must be done in an orderly, well-disciplined and careful manner. When partition was complete, the two States were absolutely free to decide whether they wanted to get together for the defence of India or whether they wanted to make their own separate arrangements.

The Viceroy concluded on the following note: "I really am sincere in my desire to help India. I really believe that the leaders of both parties are equally sincere to do what they can to help me. In fact, I think that we are going to see a reversion of feelings; and, whereas before there was mistrust, bitterness and strife, I think we are going to see the leaders come together in a friendly spirit of co-operation."

Sir Ushanath Sen, President of the Delhi Press Association, thanked the Viceroy for the courtesy with which he had answered the questions and congratulated him on the daring manner in which he was handling the Indian problem. It reminded him, Sir Ushanath added, of the days when Lord Mountbatten commanded the South-East Asia theatre.—A.P.I.



Built for the roads of India

From the Khyber to Cape Comorin, the Hillman Minx has proved itself an outstandingly successful car upon the roads of India . . . successful because of its brilliant blending of light-car economy with the effortless performance, the comfort and good looks of cars far higher in horsepower rating. Your nearest Hillman distributor will give you details.

HILLMAN MINX
DISTRIBUTORS IN INDIA:
BOMBAY Dadajee Dhackjee & Co., Ltd., Sandhurst Bridge
Ahmedabad - The Motor House (Gujarat) Ltd., Mirzapur Road
Calcutta - Walford Transport Ltd., 71-73, Park Street
Delhi - Allied Motors Ltd., Scindia House, Queensway, New Delhi
Jaipur - Rajputana Trading Co., Sharma Bldg., Sir Mirza Ismail Rd.
Kathiawar - Coronation Motors, Jamnagar and Rajkot
Karachi - John Heming & Co., 9, Mcleod Road
Lahore - Modern Motors, 5, Mall Mansions, The Mall
Lucknow - Oriental Motor Car Co., Hazratganj
Madras - Simpson & Co., Ltd., Mount Road and at Bangalore, Ootacamund and Trichinopoly
Nagpur - Combine Motors, Kamptee Road
Peshawar - Khyber Automobiles, The Mall
Rawalpindi - Khyber Automobiles, The Mall
Secunderabad - Patny & Co., Ltd., Oxford Street, Kingsway
ROOTES GROUP REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE: 71, Park St., Calcutta 16.
A PRODUCT OF THE ROOTES GROUP

JODHPUR COMMERCIAL BANK, LTD.
(Incorporated in Jodhpur State: Liability of members is Limited.)
Head Office: JALORI GATE, JODHPUR.
Chairman: NARAYANLAL BANSILAL.
ISSUED CAPITAL .. — Rs. 1,00,00,000
PAID-UP CAPITAL .. — Rs. 50,00,000
RESERVE FUND .. — Rs. 1,50,000
Branches:
MARWAR: Stock Exchange, JODHPUR; JODHPUR CITY, KUCHAMAN CITY, NAGAUR, MERTA CITY.
BOMBAY: Tamarind Lane, FORT; KALBADEVI ROAD; Kazi Syed St., MANDVI; BHIWNDI (Dist. Thana).
AHMEDABAD: Gandhi Road and Maskati Market.
CALCUTTA: 1/1-A, Mission Row; SECUNDERABAD: Kingsway.
MADRAS: Govindappa Naick St.; KARACHI: South Napier Road.
Branch at THANA Opening Shortly. U. H. DIVANJI, Manager.

PL/220.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.