

# INDEPENDENT TRAVANCORE

*Addressing a Press Conference at 10-30 A. M. on Wednesday, the 11th June, 1947, at Bhaktivilas, SACHIVOTTAMA SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, Dewan of Travancore, said :—*

*Friends :—*

I am greatly indebted to you for coming here and I propose with your permission to speak to you on recent events that have a bearing on the future of Travancore and also make an appeal to journalists, to the officials of the Travancore Government and to the non-officials. There will be no difference between officials and non-officials with reference to the programme I am indicating and the duties that I conceive will fall upon them, and I am appealing to their patriotism and their sense of nationality. I expect every official from the village officer up to the topmost ranks, to be either the propagandist of Travancore for the Travancoreans and an independent Travancore, but if the official thinks that the cry is wrong, that the call is mistaken, I shall ask the official to give up his place and take up any line that he proposes to take.

*The present is a critical juncture. The future for the next 100 years at least of Travancore is in the making. The question is whether the country is behind the Maharaja or not. The Maharaja does not act, has not acted, will not act as an autocrat. He conceives himself as the trustee and the spearpoint of Travancore's activities and of Travancore's will and I am making this appeal on behalf of the Maharaja and with his special, especial permission, and on behalf of the dynasty which he represents. There is no question that Travancore is not going to enter the Constituent Assembly. There is no question that Travancore*

*is not going to join the Indian Union. Travancore will be an independent State, and will function as an independent State from the 15th August. I have told the Viceroy—and this is no secret—that from the next day, next to the 2nd of this month on which I met him namely the 3rd instant, I proposed to prepare Travancore to fill its role and play its part as an independent State.*

## LABOUR FOR TRAVANCORE INDEPENDENCE

I know there is difference of opinion on the matter, and I propose with your leave to take sometime to explain matters fully. I hope that if you are convinced, you will explain it to your friends and to those whom you have the power to influence. I am asking the officers not to sit within their office premises but to go out and work and labour for the emergence of Travancore as an independent State. If they feel they cannot do so, if they feel conscientiously that they cannot work for the cause, their resignations may be placed in my hands. This is a time when official or non-official, Hindu, Christian or Muslim, who belongs to Travancore will have to make up his mind whether he is for this ideal or against. Those who are for this ideal will work for it. Those who are against it will do a great service in being clear and telling us that they are against it so that we might know exactly where we are. I am saying this deliberately, in order that I may emphasize this point.

this great experiment, this great venture, this assertion of independence can only succeed if the Maharaja and the people are at one. If the Maharaja has not got the people behind him and the people are not willing to work for, suffer for and if necessary, die for that ideal, this ideal will not come into fruition. We are coming to a stage in history, where the crisis is clear, where the alternatives are unambiguous. If the Maharaja has not the people behind him, I do not know what will happen. But I may tell you that the Maharaja is prepared for the worst that may happen. That is clear. Either this State fulfils its destiny as by its resources, by the intelligence of its people, by the equipment of its people, by the education of its people, by the history of its people, it is fit to do; or, on the other hand, if this State prefers inglorious existence, prefers to be submerged and suffocated, then His Highness is prepared for every step that may have to be taken, for every risk that may have to be faced.

#### INDEPENDENCE OF STATES

Now, before I go further, let me dispose of a few objections. A gentleman who was the Advocate-General of Madras and who has retired and is now functioning in the Constituent Assembly, gave an interview last evening. He said if the States do not join the Constituent Assembly, it is the duty of the people to force the Ruler to do so; or he implied—he did not say so in so many words, for, he is a very able lawyer and knows exactly, what he can say and what he cannot say and could only hint at—or, suggested, that the Ruler may be displaced or set aside. Yes, that is the fact. *It is the choice for Travancore: do they want the Ruler to continue and those ideals to be cherished or do they not? That is the real*

*choice and let there be no ambiguity about that.* Indeed, that gentleman, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, said that no State can be independent in his legal opinion, that it is not possible for States to have more than the present quasi independence unless they join the Constituent Assembly. Sir A. Krishnaswami Aiyar worked in my Chambers as a junior lawyer and I have great regard for his legal acumen and his legal attainments. But great as my respect and regard for Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar are, I think Stafford Cripps is also a lawyer, and he knows his law nearly as well as Sir A. Krishnaswami Aiyar.

Mr. Atlee, Prime Minister, is not a lawyer, but he knows what he is talking about. Lord Pethic Lawrence is no lawyer comparable to the eminent Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, but he has made a definite statement. On the 20th February 1947 this is what he stated with regard to the Indian States: "His Majesty's Government do not intend to hand over their powers and obligations under paramountcy to any Government of India. It is not intended to bring paramountcy as a system to a conclusion earlier than the date of the final transfer of power, but it is contemplated that for the intervening period, the relations of the Indian States with the Crown may be adjusted by agreement." Thus it is made perfectly clear that paramountcy goes to nobody else notwithstanding Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar. Sir Stafford Cripps speaking on this very matter has stated as follows:

"As we have repeatedly stated there is no intention of handing over our rights and obligations to paramountcy. When we transfer power to British India, these rights and obligations will lapse."

In other words, there will be no paramountcy. Sir Stafford Cripps is very clear. Lord Pethic-Lawrence has stated the same thing. And it has been repeated also in the most recent statement on the 3rd of June, that the Indian States will become independent. In other words, the Cabinet Mission's plan of 16th May will be upheld. What is that plan? Let me refer to it immediately.

Paragraph 14 of the Statement of the 16th May, states:

"It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence in British India, the relations which have hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States with the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government."

It is thus clear that paramountcy will come to an end on the 15th of August, the date now fixed by His Majesty's Government for the withdrawal of the British as a paramount power.

In other words, the British will quit India in the legal sense on the 15th of August. I mentioned to the Viceroy—and this, again, is not confidential—that before the 15th of August, the States must be in such a position as to protect themselves and bargain on equal terms with the rest of India. To that there was no dissent and the proposition was conceded, as indeed it must be. Now, I may go further and say that notwithstanding the opinion of Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar and people of his view, *it has been made clear that from the 15th of August no power on earth, short of an open warfare for which we are prepared, no power on earth can prevent Travancore from declaring independence. That independence has been declared.* Will the United Nations—Sir Alladi Krishnaswami

Aiyar makes another gibe.—"Will the United Nations recognize these States?" It is for the United Nations to decide that and Travancore will not ask for recognition unless she is sure that the United Nations are reasonable. But, I may make a present of this idea, that from the 15th of August, Travancore will be an international entity, exactly in the same position—people may laugh at us, people may deride us for the time being—but we shall be in exactly the same position as any other State in the world. If Switzerland, if Norway, if Sweden, if Denmark, can be independent, notwithstanding their small area, notwithstanding their small population, notwithstanding their small revenue, I do not see why Travancore should not be.

#### POLICY OF INDEPENDENCE JUSTIFIED

Now, I shall deal with a few matters by way of informing the people who do not seem to have fully grasped all the aspects of the question. What is the population of Travancore? The population of Travancore is 65 lakhs, its revenue this year will be about 9 crores, or a little more than that. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a very intimate friend of mine, whose only trouble sometimes is that his sense of rhetoric overcomes his sense of realism, has stated that Travancore is a small State and wonders how it can be independent? Let me analyse this a little more. Let us take the British Indian Provinces. Of course, they were supposed to be independent till the day before yesterday. Now the Union Committee says that the centre must be strong and the provinces have, therefore to be weak. That is another example of the usual reversal of policy of the Congress. Well, let us compare Travancore with other provinces. Sind: the population is 4½ millions, revenue is about 9 crores; Orissa: the

population is 8 millions, revenue 3 crores; Bihar : population 36 millions, revenue 11 crores. C. P. and Berar : (together) population 16 millions, revenue 9 crores. And the North-West Frontier Province.—The Congress sometimes wants All-India unity, sometimes it wants a Pathanistan. They say, the brave Pathans do not want to be subject to anybody else. Dr. Khan Saheb, in *The Hindu* of the 10th June, has stated: "We had stood for a United India, (United India is a casualty, the post-mortem is going on now) and fought the last election on that issue. But now we have been cut off from the rest of India on account of the partition of the Punjab. What should our attitude be under these circumstances? We want an independent status and would be satisfied with nothing less than that."

Well, to go back, what is the population of North-west Frontier Province? The population is 3 millions and the revenue is 2.76 crores, with an expenditure of 2.92 crores. Now, if Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, who is one of the disciples of Mahatma Gandhi, who is one of the highlights of the Congress, who is one of the staunch advocates of the pristine, unadulterated Congress, who is the sole repository of the confidences of Mahatma Gandhi, if he can say that they want independent status, and that for a province with a population of 3 millions and a revenue of 2.76 crores, why is it a cardinal sin for Travancore, with a population of 6½ millions and a revenue of 9 crores to ask for independence? Why should Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya hold up their hands in pious horror? That is a matter which I leave to them to deal with.

Now let us go further afield. I shall give some more figures. There is Norway with a population of 2½ million,

Sweden with 6½ million, Switzerland with 4 million, Denmark with 3.7 million, Holland with 9 million, Siam in Asia with 15 million, and Nepal in India, all remaining as independent units. If Nepal in the north can be an independent State with a population of 5,600,000 nearly and a revenue of about 10 crores and if the United States can send a trade mission to Nepal and enter into an agreement with it, as they have done 3 or 4 weeks ago, what is the great sin committed by the Maharaja and the Administration of Travancore if they decide upon the same independent status which Abdul Gaffar Khan has proclaimed. We shall see what his special reason therefor is. "We have been cut off from the rest of India on account of the partition of the Punjab." By whom? By the Congress. This cutting off from the rest of India is purely an act of the Congress, a voluntary act of the Congress, a Congress which has given up fight against Dominion Status, which has given up the fight for the unity of India. This is the Congress which has cut off the Punjab from the rest of India, the North-West Frontier from the rest of India. *If the North West Frontier Province can ask for an independent status, I do not see any particular reason why we should not ask the same. What matters in this question is the spirit, the ideal behind. What does Travancore want? Travancore wants to live its own life: Travancore wants to pursue its own ideals. It is distinct and separate from the rest of India by its culture. My friend Mr. Sivathanu Pillai looks at me rather savagely, evidently to emphasise his point that there is a Tamil Section. Very well. Let it be. But does he deny or will the Tamil section deny that the Tamil section and the Malayalam section are both parts of Travancore. I am sure they will not.*

Mr. Sivathanu Pillai and his friends do not want their Section to side with Tinnevely and Madura. (Mr. Sivathanu Pillai: Certainly not) Very well. If that is so, the insistence on a Tamil section and a Malayalam section is pointless. *We as a country have had a history of our own, traditions of our own. All that we want is to preserve that. I go further. I say that having regard to the possibilities of Travancore, Travancore may be the saviour of South India from many dire calamities.*

I am not an advocate of non-violence. I am for immediately re-organising our military forces. I am taking steps already in that behalf. I do not want to be unfriendly to anybody. Our actions will be on the defensive. You know what is happening in India. You know how life is not safe in the north of the Vindhya mountains. South India is different. In Delhi where we stayed very recently, I saw the spectacle of a man cycling a few hundred yards away from us being stabbed. In Bombay, where I lived some time ago, under the Congress Government, I witnessed a fellow standing at the balcony throwing acid at a man driving a car. Day after day such incidents are happening in important cities. The real truth of the matter is that the Central Government and the Provincial Government in the North of India have not been able to keep the peace. The only place where peace has been kept is in Indian States. I say that quite definitely. You may like or dislike it. But it is a fact. There is nothing like breach of the peace anywhere in Hyderabad, or Kashmir, or Mysore or Travancore or in any other States analogous to what is taking place in Indian cities like Lahore, Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta. I believe that is due to the fact that the traditions of the Indian States are Indian traditions. They are not

an amalgam of Jainism and Christianity, they are not an amalgam of ill understood Christianity and ill understood Jainism. They are not part communistic or part socialistic or this morning's proof socialist and day to day anti-communist views. We are not in favour of Russian views to-day and just the contrary view the next day. We are always following a consistent policy. This morning's Indian Thinker has stated the policy of the Madras Government as adopted against the Labour Unions. They have been declared unlawful and funds have been forfeited to Government. If Travancore proceeds against the Labour Unions, it is stated there is curtailment of civil liberty, autocracy rampant and repression on the march. What has the Madras Government done now? Is this fair criticism, I ask? If Pandit Jawaharlal says, people may be bombed, he is declared right. If Patel says that non-violence can only be with defensive organisation, that is either oversight or the strong man of the Cabinet speaking. I ask you, Gentlemen, to realise that it is much better to go on in our own way rather than be at the mercy of people who do not know their minds from day to day. I go further. Travancore makes up its mind to keep aloof. "I do not ask you to help us; I do not ask your assistance; I am not aggressive. I do not want to worry you. But let me be aloof." The answer comes from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I deliberately mention his name to-day because the newspaper had not revealed the identity of the prominent leader of the Congress who had said that the ideal of independence is quixotic and that in six months' time the States that declare independence will have inside pressure from the States subjects and economic pressure from without so that the whole thing will collapse. Well, that is from Pandit Jawaharlal

Nehru whose ambassadors are now functioning merrily all over the world. And Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a great advocate of the United Nations Organisation. One of the fundamentals of the United Nations Organisation and the reason why it has been started is, that it banishes violence in public affairs. These threats of economic pressure from without and stirring up trouble from within are not part of the functions of the United Nations Organisation. I commend that for the consideration of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

### RECENT HISTORY

I want to make it perfectly clear that in all that I have said, I have only tried to assert the need for us to think clearly and closely over the questions that confront us and to make up our minds whether this policy of independence is justified or not. Let us recount exactly what recent history is. It was in the year 1917 that Dr. Beasant was the President of the Indian National Congress and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar the Secretary of that organisation. At that time the dispute was whether India should accept Dominion Status or not. I firmly believe that if Mahatma Gandhi and others who worked and thought with him had consented to Dominion Status at the time of the first Round Table Conference in 1931, the Second Round Table Conference in 1932 or at the Joint Select Committee in 1933 or in the years between 1933 and 1942, India would have got Dominion Status quite easily. That was not their idea. Some of us were driven out of the Congress on that issue. They said it was demeaning to India to accept Dominion Status. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his Discovery of India has given an unanswerable argument for not accepting that. He asks what is there common between India

and the other Dominions. They are people of the same blood; they are the white race. We are different. How can we form part of that Commonwealth? Therefore we shall have nothing to do with that Commonwealth. We want independence. That is contained in Pandit Jawaharlal's Discovery of India. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru sang a different tune not very long ago. Very few people noticed it at that time. The News Chronicle Correspondent, cabling from Mussoorie in an exclusive interview with Pandit Jawaharlal on the 27th May, reported thus and the same matter was reproduced in the Hindu dated 'London May 27th'. "There is no doubt that the Union of India was going to be a republic; but at the same time there was a strong desire among many people in India to have very close relations with the British Commonwealth. What forms those relations might take it was difficult to say now." That was the text of his view. This was the answer given while at London. The interview was given on the 27th May and the answer had been given duly. Naturally being a politician and being the Vice-President of the Interim Government and having created embassies throughout the world, he must be very careful about his language. He is careful when he is not careless. He is either extreme and on that occasion he was very careful. The point I am at is, mark his words, "what forms those relations might take it was difficult to say then." The 'climb down' had taken place already on 27th May. The Congress was willing to accept what it disliked if an agreement of peace in India could be achieved.

### WILL NOT ACCEPT DOMINION STATUS

Has an agreement of peace been achieved now? What is the number of arsons and murders in Lahore last



vening? To-day's papers have commented on it. Peace in India has not been achieved. Why? Because Jinnah is a strong man and has never yielded. Congress has yielded. There is no doubt about it. They have accepted Dominion status which could have been theirs and which some of us advocated long ago. *I shall not accept Dominion status if England offers it to us now. Travancore will not accept Dominion status. I make that plain.* Congress may accept Dominion status and say that it is only temporary. Mahatma Gandhi speaking last evening has said that criticisms have been levelled against people who have accepted Dominion status. But that is only a legal formula in order to achieve complete independence. When? How long is that formula going to last? When is that independence going to be achieved? Only time will show that. Every newspaper is full with that item. Supposing Jinnah says that he wants a dominion and the Congress say that they do not want to be a dominion, then Jinnah will be in a better position. Therefore they are not very anxious that there should be no Dominion. But if Jinnah insists on a Dominion, I do not know what new formula will be started to-morrow. Here we have a definite policy. We are following the policy pursued by the Congress from the year 1918 or 1919 up to the year 1947. Mahatma Gandhi is strongly against the partition of India. Mahatma Gandhi is strongly against Dominion status. He wants independence. But what does Mahatma Gandhi now say? "I have no following for my doctrine and so what can I do? If you want me to fast that is unreasonable." No body wanted him to fast now or at any time. But it is hardly an argument in dealing with the question. I may just refer to a message from New Delhi dated 9th June 1947.

"In a written message read out after the prayers to-day Mahatma Gandhi explained the reason for his not actively opposing the Congress acceptance of the new British Plan. When he opposed the partition of India, the message said, he was expressing the will of the people, but now he found that public opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of division and thus under the circumstances he could not persuade himself to coerce the people into accepting his personal views.

Now I am not here to judge Mahatma Gandhi. He is a very very great man and no Indian can feel anything but the liveliest sentiment of gratitude to a person who has been responsible for the association and unification of the self-respect of India. If to-day India is mentioned in the world's papers and by people all over the world it is because of the qualities of Mahatma Gandhi, it is because of the services of Mahatma Gandhi, it is because of the definite stand he has taken against his following in the past. Notwithstanding that, what is taking place now? In the case of the Dandi march, was public opinion in his favour? In the case of Champaran was public opinion overwhelmingly in his favour? He made statements leaving people behind. He created popular opinion. Now he says:—"I think the people are not behind me. I now find that some people ask me to fast. Do you think that I should fast?" Of course not. No body wants him to fast. The Congress has precipitated a crisis. In the Harijan dated 1st June 1947 it is stated:

"I had the privilege of being with Gandhiji for a week during his recent trip to Calcutta. It was very tragic to find that the Bengalis who had so valiantly resisted the division of Bengal in the early years of this century were now mad after partition."

### Mark the words, my friends.

"If there is to be Pakistan, Bengal must be divided," is their slogan: "But where is Pakistan?" asked Gandhiji? The usual replies were: "Jinnah Sahib is adamant on Pakistan; he will surely have his pound of flesh! Oh, there seems to be no other way out!" "Why do you silently submit to all the tyranny?" interrogated Gandhiji impatiently."

### To-day is 11th June 1947.

"Have you forgotten the technique of fearless civil disobedience that has been so successfully employed against the British?" But the people seemed to be in no fighting mood; they were overwhelmed with panic and a sense of utter frustration. Gandhiji was, indeed, deeply distressed to witness all this frustration and abject helplessness betraying a defeatist mentality."

This is a statement by one of the greatest followers and closest associates of Mahatma Gandhiji, Professor Agarwal

"And the pity of it all is that the Congress initiated the move for the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. Had we not been repeatedly assured by our national leaders that Pakistan was an idle dream and that it could never be established on the Indian soil? But the communal disturbances in Bengal and in the Punjab seem to have unnerved the people and, perhaps, even the leaders."

### THE REAL POSITION IN INDIA

We have now in India a position where Pakistan and Hindustan have been established. That Pakistan and that Hindustan are in a position of unstable equilibrium because Mr. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim

League, has said more than once, and the Muslim League resolution is clear, that they have not accepted and are still protesting against the partition of Bengal and the Punjab. There is no doubt to a man of commonsense that the programme of the Muslim League will be to undo that partition by some means or other. I do not go further into the question. It is quite clear that the frontiers of Western Bengal and Eastern Punjab will be in constant fight where non-violence will not be the law that is employed. That is my personal opinion. I may be wrong. God grant that I may be wrong. But the position is this. Union of India which was contemplated was in independent India and not two Dominions. Very much scorn has been poured upon me and others who have said that they are for a united India and for the States joining the Constituent Assembly of a united India. I say that again and I shall repeat it a hundred times. *If there is a United India, that is an ideal worth fighting and dying for if necessary.* To die for the achievement of that ideal is a great thing. The civil war of America was for that purpose. *That is a thing in which Travancore would have been glad to take part—for effecting union of India.* But that was not done and people who say that the opinion of the common people should be heeded have turned in favour of two dominions. So you need not worry about it. What happened? Here is a matter which is often forgotten. The Constituent Assembly has met. On the first day of the Constituent Assembly they brought what is called the 'Objective Resolution'.

It was a grandiloquent, lofty-toned resolution whose idea was that there was to be an Independent Sovereign Republic of India, not a dominion trotting after either Canada or



Australia or Newzealand. They wanted that. Some of us pointed out that there are these unfortunate Maharajas in whose absence various resolutions are being brought in. Pundit Nehru made his comments. If the republic is not immediately proclaimed where shall we be?; where shall our services be?; where is the dignity of India?; where is the honour of India? So a republic was proclaimed. That was on the first day of the Constituent Assembly. Some people are very brave. When the division of India and the handing over of power to Jinnah are considered, that bravery, however, does not appear. That line of conduct has given them two dominions.

#### TRAVANCORE WILL CO-OPERATE WITH REST OF INDIA

Let us analyse the two dominions set up further. His Excellency the Viceroy definitely stated that from the 15th August the Viceroy of India will be only the Governor-General. It is fairly clear from the information at my disposal that there is the likelihood of two Governors-General, one for Pakistan and the other for Hindustan. It cannot but be. Pakistan will be having a foreign policy exactly opposite to that of Hindustan. Both Pakistan and Hindustan will have to send their own ambassadors wherever they want. You will find that in the matter of trade relations, in the matter of diplomatic relations and in the matter of foreign policy, Pakistan can have nothing to do with Hindustan. If there is to be the same Governor-General, he must follow what both the Premiers and both the legislatures say. The net result of what has happened will be the formation of two dominions, which mean two different tariff policies, customs policies and foreign policies and trade policies on which there might not be a common agree-

ment reached. If that is the case, what is the great objection in Travancore remaining independent. Travancore is willing to enter into any agreement without which India will be ruined. I want the members, the Press and public to realise that. *In the first place, Travancore would not have declared independence or have taken this line if there was a United India and a Government operating for a United India.* There is going to be a divided India which leaves necessarily many chances of differences of opinion and conflicts. So we came to the conclusion that if there are to be two dominions, two independent sovereign republics, why not a country like ours be also independent? But, having said that *I want to make it perfectly clear that it will be the object of Travancore to work wholeheartedly in co-operation with the rest of India and evolve a common joint dominion policy, a common trade policy and a common tariff policy. Travancore has given proof of that already.*

#### MINERAL POLICY

Within the last 15 days a very important agreement has been entered into between the Government of India and the Government of Travancore. A lot of nonsense was talked about our selling away to European agencies our valuable mineral sands. The local Congressmen spouted a great deal on that matter. The fact of the matter was that the European interests were stopped. They were told that they had no rights. All the rights were taken by the Travancore Government and the Europeans were ejected. They were made our contractors or agents and they will be paid for their services. That is all what has happened. The Travancore Minerals Company and two or three other Companies were told that hereafter the mineral sands are

our own property and they are only our agents or contractors. If we get their services they will be paid. That is the agreement that we have reached. Now that was misconstrued, twisted and into a kind of handing over the treasures of the State to other people. Then the Government of India said that these are valuable minerals and they are interested, and that we shall work together, so an agreement has been entered into and a committee consisting of 9 members of which 3 are to be nominated by the Government of Travancore has been constituted, which will conduct all the research work in regard to thorium and the possibility of the creation of atomic energy from thorium. This shows that Travancore Government is quite willing to enter into any agreement which will be of any help for the good of India. I have said that publicly and without any reservation. *We are always willing to co-operate with the India Government and to come to any agreement either on trade or on commerce or on exchange or on currency or on posts and telegraphs. In this respect we are going not half the way but three quarters of the way.* Actually they are a big entity and we are a small entity. But we have our self-respect. We claim essential equality. We concede that they have big interests and we will go on that basis.

Now I remember the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that people who will not come and enter the Constituent Assembly will be treated as hostile. I trust that second thoughts would persuade him not to make speeches of that kind. Let me sum up what I have got to say. Travancore has decided to be independent; her history has been special and peculiar; she has never been conquered; she has got all the essentials of a

nation; she can work and function as a nation; there may be Tamilians in the South and Malayalees in the North, but that would not affect her functioning as a nation.

#### "AIKIYA" KERALA

Now, a word about "Aikiya Kerala." I am very glad to say that there is every sign that "Aikiya Kerala" is dying a natural or shall we say, unnatural death. Not long ago when I was at Ootacamund many of my Christian friends who would perhaps never see me in Trivandrum saw me and expressed the opinion that in an "Aikya Kerala" the Christians would be no where. What they said was perfectly correct. The Christians are 1/3rd of the total population in Travancore, a little more than 1/3rd in Cochin and they are about 1/8th in Malabar. Such being the position, if there is *Aikya Kerala* the Christians would become a small minority. But it was essential that the new idea should be enthusiastically kept up, and the Press whose representatives are before me here had to cater to this temporary public opinion.

The Maharaja of Cochin was described as the direct descendant of Cheraman Perumal and it would be only fit and proper if Travancore is also brought under his sovereignty. Here the treaties of Mavelikara and Suchindram whereby Cochin sought protection from Travancore were forgotten. I pointed out that there was no objection for Travancore joining in a Federation or sub-federation. In any case, I made it clear that Travancore could not be part of one province or district.

Regarding Muslims, some of my Muslim friends also met me at Ootacamund. They too pointed out that the

Muslims form minorities in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar and as such the *Aikiya Kerala* would not confer on them any benefit. From this one could understand that the *Aikiya Kerala* agitation has been disowned by these communities though not publicly. The time is not far when these minority communities will disown *Aikiya Kerala* agitation in public. This may come from Cochin itself but it may take some time to express itself openly the logic of events is clear. However much Mr. T. M. Varghese may say that he may even lead an army for *Aikiya Kerala*, I feel absolutely certain that neither the Christian nor the Muslim Community will go in for *Aikiya Kerala*. I put this to you, my friends and I want you to think over it, ponder over it. We have got a revenue of Rs. 9½ crores and a population of about 6½ millions. Cochin has got a revenue of Rs. 2 crores and a population of 2½ millions. Malabar has got a revenue of 2½ crores and a population of 3 millions. And in the Legislature, whether of adult franchise or any other franchise, Travancore will be in a permanent majority. As a result, in the Executive also Travancore will be in a permanent majority. We are now in the forefront in the matter of schools, general education, roads, supply of hydro electric power, and industries. Malabar is in a very backward condition. In an *Aikiya Kerala*, do you mean to say that Malabar will not like to improve its position? For improving its position will it not ask its bigger brother Travancore to help it? They will say that out of 9 crores, say, about two crores may be given to Malabar. But I fear that after a year or two, human nature being what it is, the cry will be raised "Travancore for Travancoreans" In an *Aikiya Kerala* Legislature our identity will be lost and we shall

be losers in the merger because there is no consideration yet paid to social and economic factors of the situation.

The next question is, if *Aikiya Kerala* is not there and if Travancore is entitled to live its own life what are the advantages and what are the disadvantages in entering the Dominion Status. People may say that I am purposely and mischievously referring to Dominion Status especially in view of the fact that Gandhi and Nehru have said that Dominion Status is an intermediary stage. I honestly believe that Dominion Status will last much longer. Mr. Churchill knows this. Do you mean to say that the Conservative party blessed this scheme without knowing that it is going to last longer than what is expressly stated. Now, according to the scheme, it is either two independent countries or two Dominions, viz., Pakistan and Hindustan. I should like to form part of Hindustan. I am willing to work for that Hindustan and fight for that Hindustan. But let us look at the matter a little further. It is alleged that I have a very mean way of dealing with the matter, I am only mercenary, I am only thinking of my own interest disregarding the lofty ideals of those who divided India twice and thrice. My food department will tell you that between the 11th June i. e., to-day and October, 2/3rd of the rice supplies ought to come from Burma or Indonesia and the rest from Punjab or Sind. We get not a grain of rice from Hindustan. Except from one or two places in Central Provinces, we have been getting rice only from Punjab, Burma and Indonesia.

#### PARTITION OF INDIA

I ask you, if human affairs are to be conducted on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan always fighting, why

should we take sides in that fight? Then, there is another question. Can you expect sympathetic treatment from Pakistan? This is a question which must be answered. Mr. Saratchandra Bose, an ex-Member of the Interim Government who is not quite fashionable to-day, has given his views on partition of India like this. This is from a Madras Daily dated June 8th.

"Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose stated in an interview to-day that India could not get peace by accepting H. M. G.'s plan of June 3, and that the Plan sounded the death-knell of freedom.

Criticising the Plan he said split was bound to lead to perpetual conflicts between Hindus and Muslims in the Muslim majority provinces. Mr. Bose added that it was possible even now for Congress and Muslim League leaders to retrace their steps. He asked them to reform the Provinces on linguistic basis, give them full measure of independence and introduce adult franchise and joint electorates in them.

"British Imperialists have won" said Mr. Bose. "Divide and rule has been their policy during the last 158 years and it continues to be their policy, even at the moment when they are supposed to be quitting India. Dominion Status for the two successor authorities is coming, we are told. I have not the slightest doubt that Dominion Status will come to stay".

I don't say this. Mr. Bose, an ex-Member of the Government of India and a prominent Congressman has said this. He continues thus:

"Top-ranking Congress leaders have already begun to talk in the Churchillian strain about "Co-operative Commonwealth". Some of them have envisaged very close relation with Britain. In that background, British imperialist manoeuvring will

go on, but possibly in a more subtle and insidious way. If the two Indias are going to be Republics, they will be Republics only in name. In the days to come, there will be increasing competition between them for securing help and favours from imperialist Britain. We may continue to talk big, and I have no doubt we shall. But the dream of independent India, free from British imperialist control and influences, will more and more become a forgotten dream".

### OUR POSITION

The position is this: In that state of things, what is the terrible mistake that we make in essence? "You had better fight out your own battle. We shall join the battle if there is an ideal behind the battle. Otherwise, we shall look after ourselves." That is exactly what we have said.

With regard to the industrial and other aspects of the matter, I have already made it clear, and Mr. K. V. Thomas in a letter to the Press has made it clear also, that we do not need much help from the rest of India. We can give the rest of India much help. There is no point in talking about economic pressure, because the economic pressure can be exerted by us against those people who exerted economic pressure against us. Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar has asked what international status can a State have. I have before me various historical exploits and I would only invite the attention of this Conference to the Battle of Colachel. *We were the only country in India which defeated a European country in an open and fair fight in the battle of Colachel when the Dutch Navy was defeated by Travancore.*

Mr. D. C. Joseph: Was there any Navy in Travancore at that time?

Dewan: There was. Otherwise, you could not have fought a naval battle. (*Laughter*).

Then there was the treaty of Mavelikara on 18th October, 1748 between the Dutch and Travancore. This was international, but Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar and Pattabhi Sitaramayya say: "How can there be an international vinculum between Travancore and other countries?" *Travancore 150 years ago had however this international status. It was a treaty with Holland by which the Dutch bound themselves to follow a peace policy and never again to resort to force except in self-defence.* Then there was the attack on the Zamorin and upon Cochin by Hyderali and Tippu when all the important Malabar Chiefs came for refuge to Travancore and stayed here for years and when members of the Cochin Royal Family were sent to Travancore for refuge. There was a treaty with Cochin in 1760 when the Zamorin of Calicut conquered a portion of Cochin and Cochin asked for the support of Travancore and Travancore went and fought and gained for Cochin and as a result Cochin granted certain territories to Travancore for the help it rendered to Cochin. Throughout you will find that Travancore has been playing an international part. "In 1761—I am quoting from Atchinson's Treaties Vol. 10, page 209" the Raja of Cochin concluded a treaty with Martanda Varma who undertook to expel the Zamorin. Though the Raja of Travancore did not carry out his obligations entirely, certain portions of territory were transferred from Cochin to Travancore as a reward for the services rendered, since the treaty gave the Raja of Cochin a much-needed respite."

*In the past, we have had an international status. In the past, we have*

*fought on sea and land. In the past, excepting that we voluntarily, and I think foolishly, entered into an agreement or treaty with the British we have never been conquered.* My friend, Sardar Panikkar, a Travancore subject, has been saying and I make bold to say it publicly, that Travancore was never independent. "Travancore has no claim to international status" and I believe he has even made a threat—I think I am right in saying that he is ashamed of Travancore nationality. Is that not so?

Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: He proposes to renounce his nationality.

Dewan: He proposes to do so. That is what he seems to have said about 10 days ago. Well, it may be so. But notwithstanding the great historic background and the equipment of Sardar Panikkar, at present the Prime Minister of Bikaner and one of the highlights of the Constituent Assembly, I may say that Travancore was independent. Travancore had no doubt trouble from the Nawab of Carnatic. It had entered into a foolish treaty with him as it entered into a foolish treaty with the Government of Great Britain. There was absolutely no need for the treaty of 1795 and the subsequent treaty. Though Tippu had been defeated, the Maharaja of Travancore advised by timorous counsellors, asked for the British Army to be put in Travancore for the purpose of avoiding future aggression and promised to pay Rs. 8 lakhs. What was the result? After ten years, they took away the Army and they have been getting Rs. 8 lakhs from us all the time. All that, however, is past history. On the 15th August, the English go and there are two independent countries, Pakistan and Hindustan. Of course, we shall not join Pakistan. Geographically, it

is not possible. Ethnically, it is not possible. Traditionally it is not possible, but if we have to join Hindustan what should be the attitude of Hindustan? Not an attitude of enmity, not an attitude of supererogation, not an attitude of arrogance, not an attitude of denouncing our history, denouncing our tradition and saying that we have no international status, and also not an attitude of crying aloud for one set of doctrines and retracting them the next day. The Congress have undoubtedly yielded to force and threat of force. They are nervous to-day, as the Maharaja of Travancore was nervous in 1805. The question is whether Travancore could join them now. I say no. We are friendly, we wish to be friendly with Hindustan, and also, may be to a less degree, with Pakistan, because both are parts of India. Pakistan to-day possesses the homeland of India, what is called India. India is the Punjab and Sind. The earliest records of Hindu India are in Mohenjodaro and Harappa in Sind and in the Punjab. The Vedas were compiled amongst the five rivers, the five rivers which constitute the great Indus. The present Afganistan was Gandhara that was the heritage of India. We have given up that heritage.

But the point that I am on is this. There are going to be two Indias. If there can be two Indias, which hope to work in friendship and amity and concord with each other, why should there be any difficulty in Travancore, with an independent history and a separate tradition, working in harmony and concord with the rest of India?

#### DIFFICULTIES IN ENTERING THE UNION

I am now coming to what I consider to be the most important part of what I have to say. I have endeavoured to point out that Travancore is

entitled to retain and maintain its independence. - Do the people of Travancore want it or do they not? Here again, I want to make two things clear. When we were at the Round Table Conference, even when asking for a strong Centre, we said that that strong Centre will only outline policy and will not interfere in day-to-day administration. On the contrary the Congress stated to the Cripps Mission that they were not in favour of a strong Centre. They insisted upon a weak Centre, the residual powers being given to the Provinces. The Congress said so to please the Muslims; there was no question of pleasing the States, because they were negligible. So, to please the Muslims the Congress said 'we must have a weak centre. The Muslims will never give the centre residual powers; therefore, let us give them to the provinces.' And the Cripps Mission went away having made the recommendation that there should be a weak Centre with three subjects and that the provinces should be given the residuary powers. But now, three days back, after the partition of India, the Congress have gone back upon their original principle. They are talking of a strong centre. They say "We were always in favour of a strong Centre. We yielded to the Muslims. Now that the Muslims are gone, let us have a strong Centre." This morning the Muslims from the provinces are going into the Constituent Assembly. They are going to raise the question: "Why did you offer a weak Centre with the residual powers to the provinces eight months ago and why are you now going back upon your word?" That means that there will be endless disputations in the Constituent Assembly, leading to no results. But what is going to be the position so far as Travancore is concerned? I have discussed that point before, but it is worth repeating.



Incidentally the *Aikya Kerala* people were so angry with even the Congress for accepting a mere republic that at a meeting at Trichur on the 19th May this resolution was passed with an overwhelming majority:

"The Kerala Socialist Republic should be constituted."

That is a commentary upon the division of India and the Dominion Status. But I leave it at that.

If we enter the Union of India, what will be the position? The Constituent Assembly has accepted the following resolution.

"Duties and customs including export duties, excise, corporation taxes, taxes on income, other agricultural incomes, taxes on the capital values and assets, taxes on companies, duty in respect of succession to property, estate duties, all these should be raised by direct taxation from the Centre."

Therefore, their tax-gatherers will come to us and levy these income taxes, estate duties etc. And then they will return a proportion to us. We will have to be waiting at their doors to find out what proportion they will return.

The latest trend of Mahatma Gandhi's talks is interesting. He has said, 'I am against an army for India. But the people do not agree with me. They want an army. I am for no industries. But they want them.' Four days ago he made a speech, where he stated that he was against all mills and mill-made clothes, but the people are insisting on the industrialisation of India. I do not know whether Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others will accept Gandhiji's views, especially as Baldev Singh is thinking of a very big army. This is what Mahatma Gandhi has stated:

The Associated Press of India, dated the 5th June:

"He had to be patient. There were occasions enough for being impatient. The Congress seemed to stand for projects of industrialism in which he saw no deliverance for the masses from grinding poverty. He did not believe in mill-made civilization as he did not in mill-made cloth."

But the Congress is not only asking for mill-made clothings but they are importing them. There was a time when Congress boycotted all foreign clothes and started huge demonstrations. They are now importing mill-made clothings in order to relieve the cloth scarcity.

"He did not believe in any army for the defence of the country. But he knew of no move from the people for the removal of the menace to the real freedom of the country, says Mahatma Gandhi."

Either Mahatma Gandhi is to be the leader of India or he is not. If he is to be the leader of India, then we must be prepared for the industries and armies being abolished. Otherwise, he will say, 'the people do not follow me, and so I propose to fast.' But that does not take us anywhere.

So far as the above resolution is concerned, we shall have to give up more than 50 per cent. of our revenue, because, of the 9 crores of our revenues, about 5 crores are comprised of those items which come within the terms of the resolution. Our land revenue is about 40 lakhs and if certain proposals of the Government are carried out, it will practically be abolished. Incidentally, I may add that the agricultural income tax which was an object of tremendous criticism, has been adopted practically by every Province in India. If the Congress Government adopts this, it is proclaimed as

a wise and far sighted policy. That is by the way. In return for that what shall we get from the Government of India? 6/400 of the revenue, or about 2 crores. Last year the Central Budget for the year 1946-47 disclosed a revenue of 307 crores and an expenditure of 355 crores, the deficit being 48 crores roughly. The defence expenditure was nearly 243 crores or nearly three fourths of the total revenue. That is a settled fact. In an independent dominion, it will not go down unless Mahatma Gandhi and others devise measures for the abolition of the army. In other words, we shall be entirely at the mercy of the future Government of India for the retention of our revenues, because the method of taxation is decided by them. We shall have to surrender an income to the extent of 4 to 5 crores under various items of our revenue and be satisfied with a refund of about 2 crores.

#### THE PEOPLE SHOULD STAND BY THEIR MAHARAJA

If we realise that there are many difficulties, doubts and handicaps in entering the Union, shall we do well to keep aloof or shall we not? *His Highness the Maharaja has decided to declare independence of Travancore from the 15th August and not to enter the Constituent Assembly and in view to that policy, it will be necessary to see that the people of the State stand by their Maharaja* The question I am putting to this assembly is, is the country prepared to suffer? If so, I say, there is no longer a case for official reticence, sitting in office rooms and writing wholly needless notes on irrelevant and small topics. As the Head of the Administration I appeal to the officers to come out and to use their official knowledge, influence and experience to aid the people of Travancore to preserve the independence, and I expect

them to do so. If any officer of mine fails in that, his duty is obvious. Let him join the non-officials who are against the policy of Government. I do not expect that this policy will be accepted by everybody in the State. There may be people who think that my arguments are wrong, foolish or fantastic and that I am entertaining inordinate ambitions. We have nothing to do with them. We must agree to differ. But if under the guise of a Constituent Assembly Day there is an attempt to make things difficult, this Government, with the utmost reluctance, will have to take such steps as are necessary to protect the policy which they have announced and hereby make known publicly. There can be no compromise on this matter. Travancore has decided to remain independent. Who has done that? Has Mr. Pattom Thanu Pillai done it? Has Mr. T. M. Varghese done it? Has my good friend Mr. Mannathu Padmanabha Pillai of Nair Service Society fame done it? Of course not. The Maharaja has done so. I am not speaking of C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar because he is just a nominee of His Highness. *I do not say it as a mere gesture that when the new constitution comes, the Dewan will not deal with a single file. Every file will be dealt with by the Committees constituted under the Act. The Dewan's only function will be that of private adviser of His Highness the Maharaja to suspend or to veto such things for grave reasons. The normal administration from the time the Constitution comes into force will be conducted by the people of the State and this is no hypocrisy.* I am told that some of my good friends of the State Congress say that the Dewan will still continue and that he will still continue to exercise the power vested under the constitution. No doubt certain powers are vested in him statutorily. But I have

said very often and I repeat it openly and publicly that those powers will be exercised only on extraordinary occasions. If the Congress High Command suddenly has to send Kripalani to upset Prakasam's policy, that is democracy. If thousands of spindles are given up by Prakasam, if they become the object of a kind of inquest or post-mortem in Delhi, that is democracy. That is all by the High Command. But the very fact that the Congress High Command has had to intervene on these occasions shows the necessity for a veto. Madras is supposed to be an enlightened Province, an educated Province. The Madrasis think that they lead the rest of India and Prakasam is a man who made many sacrifices and came to the top under a democratic constitution. He and his ministers wanted to pursue a policy not to have a certain number of spindles though certain commercial interests had arranged for them. The Government of India at that time was naturally very solicitous about the business possibilities of India. Their help is necessary. Therefore the Congress High Command came to the aid of the mill owners. The interests of the mill owners and the contractors of the spindles had to be protected against poor Prakasam who wanted to go on with spinning. The spinning by charka is not going to solve India's industrial problem. Poor Prakasam was told by Gandhi to support charka. Poor Prakasam was saying on every occasion that it was Gandhi who wanted to develop charka. But that happened during a prayer meeting. The question turned round and the interests of mill owners became supreme. If the Congress High Command can intervene like minor Providence over spindles, why should there be all this furore about the Dewan being given the veto powers? The

fact is that the Congress High Command know very well that the Legislature sometimes, on account of exuberance of emotion, on account of excitement at the moment, may make mistakes. But those mistakes will, however, be prevented, suspended or obliterated. That is all that this veto power is intended for. *I want to assure you and through you the public of Travancore that the intention of His Highness the Maharaja is to transfer power to his people in matters of administration. That transfer of power is sought to be achieved through a system which it is believed will remove some of the drawbacks of a removable executive.*

We know what is happening in Bengal, Sind, Beluchistan, the Frontier Province and other places. Suhrawardy thinks that if Nazimuddin goes out, then Bengal would be an earthly paradise. So he tries to get rid of Nazimuddin and he wants to come in. Suhrawardy to day goes to Gandhiji and to-morrow to Jinnah Sahib. He is a very ardent adherer of Gandhiji's principles. He says that the only solution for the problem of Bengal is to get rid of Nazimuddin. We know what happened when there was trouble between Dr. Khare and the Congress High Command. The Congress High Command forced Khare out of the Congress. He was forced to resign. He later on joined the Government of India. We are well acquainted with these phenomena. I have been in public life for the last 40 years. A removable executive leads to internal riots and the net result is that nobody has time to look into any papers. It is no exaggeration when I say that after the Interim Government came into power no big policy has been undertaken. Of course, a number of big speeches have been made, but nothing substantial has been done. I

do not blame them. It is because there has been trouble all over the country and they had to keep peace and order. When the British power was in force, inefficiency in administration was talked of and they said that they had to keep law and order. The Congress is saying the same thing.

### NONE TO EQUAL OUR MAHARAJA

*In Travancore the entire power is transferred to certain committees. I want to repeat that those committees will be the Government of the future, and on every point the advice of those committees will prevail.* The fact that there is a veto power is a very insignificant thing and that veto power will not be exercised frequently. I am not saying these things for the purpose of canvassing opinion one way or the other. There is no doubt about the fact that there is a great deal of misgiving in the minds of the people in that a man, who is now 67, has been continuing as Dewan from 1936 onwards and there is no sign of the early termination of his Dewanship. Once he put in his resignation and he was asked to cancel that and still he is there. There is no chance of getting rid of him either by force or by argument and therefore naturally there is a great deal of frustrated ambition in the country. All that I can say is that the advice I have given, and I have now said, is not framed on the basis of my perpetual continuance. In the nature of things, under the new constitution, a man like me has no place. Apart from other things, for the last 25 years, I have been accustomed to deal in a particular manner both when I was a Member of the Madras Government and a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. When I was adviser to various rulers and when I came as the Dewan of Travancore I pursued the same policy.

I want to assure everybody that those who think that the Dewan of the State under the present administration under the aegis of the Maharaja, is the real factor, and that the Maharaja does not know what is going on, or that he does not exert an influence on the day-to-day administration, are doing a great disservice to His Highness the Maharaja the like of whom Travancore has not seen. Perhaps even Marthanda Varma comes only next to Sri Chitra Thirunal. I know every ruler in India. I have advised and have intimate knowledge of every ruler in India. The Maharajas of Gwalior, Kashmir, Mysore and the Nizam of Hyderabad are known to me personally. His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad has been advised by me for the last 25 years. In some of the most important matters connected with Hyderabad, he has consulted me. I had occasion to know him on many an occasion. There is hardly anybody to beat the present Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad in matters of administration. *But for dedication to public cause, for sacrificing all his privileges for the good of the State and for his ever present daily knowledge of the administration, there is no one to equal Sri Chitra Thirunal.* Those who talk of the autocracy of the Dewan do not know this. This has been a fashion in the Indian States. If there is trouble between the Dewan and the Maharaja, somebody is benefited. There is a Dewan's party and a Maharaja's party and they fight each other. It went on like that in olden days. I do not want to go into further details. Very few people like complete agreement between the Dewan and the Maharaja. It does not suit them. Hence the trouble in the States. Some people feel that the free comradeship and fellow-feeling between the Maharaja and the Dewan cannot be shaken. Even some officials feel like that. I

can even name them, Non-officials feel like that. People who talk of auto-cracy forget that they have in their present Maharaja one of the greatest Maharajas that Travancore has ever seen. I want the people to realise that it is not on the phenomenon of C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar they can judge the reforms. Think that that man is dead today. Proceed on that basis. That might happen at any moment. I am now 67. It does not matter how long I live. But it does matter to me that a great monarch should be regarded in the proper perspective. Argument is put forward that I am a foreigner. *I claim that I have been keeping the interests of Travancore to its best advantage and I claim to be a Travancorean.* Whether I am right or wrong in all the advice that I have given is a different matter. All of us are likely to commit mistakes. I think the people are all in favour of a united India and I find that that is not what is going to happen. If great sages and *Avatars* can make mistakes, ordinary individuals can also be allowed to make mistakes.

### THE PATH OF INDEPENDENCE

I have honestly come to the conclusion that, at this juncture, the path of prudence, the path of safety, the path of glory, the path of achievement, the path of realisation is the path of independence. Is there not a thrill of satisfaction over that for Travancore? Do not people feel patriotic enough to rouse such an influence? If that little Ireland could fight with England for 200 years for independence why should not we fight for that independence? I am unfortunately not a Travancorean. I wish I were. With all your history, with all your resources, with all your education and with your people with a lively, alert intelligence, fight for independence. And should you detract

from His Highness' ideal in that respect, or should you stand by that? I call upon you and emphasise that the future is in your hands. I say this with a sense of full responsibility. I have been told of jathas coming into the State from the north and from the south, I expect Mr. Sivathanu Pillai to guard the south. I expect my friends in the north to guard against any attacks from there. If it comes to a fight let us be safe on all sides. Rather than being a subordinate agency of a dominion, a colony or a dependency of a dominion, I would rather say that the State should justify its existence. We are not aggressors but we should defend ourselves. We will keep what we have. We do not want any other's property. Mahatma Gandhi is in the habit of quoting from Easovasa-Upanishath "do not desire another's property". We shall follow him. If I find that there is anybody who does not cooperate it will be my duty to fight that man, whether he is big or small, whether he is an official or non-official, whether he is within the State or without the State, whatever the risk, I am determined to fight that man. It will be my duty to fight the battle and I shall advise His Highness to fight. Independence will be ours. I know that the people of Travancore will stand by His Highness.

MR JOSEPH: After hearing your elucidative and informative speech I want to ask one question. After knowing Mr. Pattom Thanu Pillai's views which he expressed yesterday, does the Government think that there is a class of people who are united in Travancore? He says that with regard to the Reforms Act, the Act itself must come from the people and not from the Dewan. So I want to know whether the Government realise that the people of Travancore are united.

**DEWAN:** Well; the position is this. The Maharaja of Travancore was regarded as the source of power and influence in the State. I would still believe that it is so. Therefore, I cannot admit that in a monarchical system the power is from the people and I have always contested that claim. The power in the people is represented by the Maharaja. Our old Scriptures, both the Bible and the Hindu Scriptures, make it clear that the monarchs represent the people and if the monarch does not adequately and faithfully represent the people he should be removed by the people. If there is tyranny there is a right to remove him. But so long as the monarch represents the views of the people the power remains with him. He is perpetually the president of the people. Any other question?

**Mr. Josesh:** I noticed in one of the local papers yesterday that the Dewan is persecuting the Christians.

**Dewan:** You are a Christian.

**Mr. Joseph:** Yes; that is why I ask.

**Dewan:** There are quite a number of delegates in Delhi and most of the special correspondents come to Delhi, and I take it that what they say about our country is quite good. For instance, there was a good lady called Mrs. Nicholls who came with the Mission. She lost her portmanteau and some jewels. She said that the administrator of Travancore is very efficient and hoped that I would help her to get them back. It was then found that it was lost in Ernakulam and not in Travancore. She said that ours is the ideal State. I am glad that you have raised the question. What are the points that you have arrived at as regards religion, education etc.?

I want to make the point clearer, so that my Christian friends may not

have any doubt. I am not opposed to the construction of temples and churches. But there are already too many of them in Travancore. There are about two thousand and odd churches and temples in the State. If you take the number in the whole of Madras Presidency, you will not find even 200 temples and churches. I do not want to put them down. I have told the Catholics, the Syrians, the Jacobites and everybody else to give me a list of churches which they want to build in the next two years. His Highness is not unsympathetic in the matter of constructing temples and churches. But I have not got an answer from anybody.

**Mr. Joseph:** Evidently the Dewan is not against. Even if one section of the Christians object, when another wants to put up a church, the Dewan is not to be blamed at all. Communal jealousies and quarrels come and it becomes difficult.

**Dewan:** The real point, Mr. Joseph, is this, Now, all the propaganda has been only on the one side and the appeal that I have made this morning is that every officer and non-official should be a propagandist in order to enable people to learn the actual facts, and steps will be taken for that purpose. I will make it perfectly clear. Steps will be taken to start a propaganda organisation within the State in order to remove the misconceptions that have already arisen. Mr. Mannath Padmanabha Pillai said to me very recently that he is dedicated to "Swami", that is myself.

**Mr. Sivathanu Pillai:** Would you allow others also to call you "Swami"?

**Dewan:** That depends, on Mr. Sivathanu Pillai. Mahatma Gandhi does not like to be addressed as Mahatma, but if people do so he cannot permit



it. I think he is a foolish man who addresses me like that.

Mr. Sivathanu Pillai: One more question. I want to be very serious in this matter. I would like to know definitely whether under the present reforms there will not be any sort of interference in the day to day administration?

Dewan: No; the reason is this,

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai: May I know, Sir, whether under the present reforms there will not be any sort of interference by officers in day-to-day administration?

Dewan: No. The reason is this. An officer is appointed by the Public Service Commission under certain rules. It has been laid down in the Reforms Act that an officer who does not bear the confidence of the Committee can be removed from that office on a resolution passed by the Committee.

Mr. D. C. Joseph: May I know whether Government feel that the local official and non-official members of the Textile Committees are doing their work properly?

Dewan: I will ask Mr. Joseph to remember that every new officer is very warmly welcomed for the first two months. At the end of it little interests spring up. But even in British India we know, especially in provinces administered by Congress Governments, there are slight murmurs heard regarding their textile policy.

(One of the representatives of the Press present wanted to know whether any referendum will be taken in the State regarding the question of the State's joining the Pakistan or the Hindustan.)

In answer the Dewan stated as follows:—

Dewan: In any case we are not going to have a plebiscite on this

question. I have already told the Viceroy that from the 3rd June I shall feel myself independent. Notwithstanding Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar things will go on as it ought to.

Mr. Thaikad Subramonia Aiyar: May I ask whether the economic facts which an independent Travancore will have to face and the advantages or disadvantages of joining either Pakistan or Hindustan will be brought home boldly to the people at large?

Dewan: There is no doubt that there is great need for pamphlets published on the subject and speeches made to the public. I am expecting that officers will do this.

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai: I would like to know whether the present talk will be printed for the benefit of the members of the Press?

Dewan: I propose to get this printed. But my friends will excuse me if I add some figures relevant to the topics dealt with.

There is one more matter at which I think the people might be wondering. Why is it that my good friend Mr. Mannathu Padmanabha Pillai is now on the war path? Not many months ago Mr. Mannathu Padmanabha Pillai definitely assured me that having regard to the line I have taken as to the consolidation of Hindu interests he was entirely on my side and considered that my policy was right. Later on the question of the Nair Service Society and their college came up. At the same time applications were received for starting Colleges at Alleppey and Quilon by the Sanathana Dharma Vidya Sala and by the S. N. D. P. Yogam. Certain Missionary agencies from Kottayam also made similar applications. I took up the same line with regard to all those institutions. I said that under modern conditions

about 18 lakhs of rupees was required to start and function a good college. I said that any community or group of persons might collect 5 lakhs and Government will contribute 5 lakhs and with that they could start a college. It is on that basis that certain acquisition proceedings were started in Changanacherry and the members present here know that Government were subjected to great criticisms by certain Christian interests that it was a pro-Hindu and anti-Christian move and that properties of Mr. Mannathu Padmanabha Pillai and his relations were kept out of the acquisition and the properties of the Christians were sought to be acquired. We went into the matter and arranged an adjustment. Mr. Mannathu Padmanabha Pillai did very well in that matter. He actually included some of his relations' properties in the acquisitions and I was extremely pleased with him. In the meantime the idea of a pre-University School and a college arose and there was a chance of a college being started in Trivandrum. An alternative was put and accepted and the question of fund arose. One of the members present here is aware of the negotiations. I have stated more than once and still state that the Nair community will be treated as well or as ill as any other community. The S. N. D. P. Yogam collected 3 lakhs for their college and they were given the land required for the college. They have not yet been given any money by Government. But the moment they come to me they will be given as much as they have collected.

Dr. Mar Ivanios came to me and said he wanted to start a commercial college. I said it was a very useful and necessary thing and that if he had collected a decent sum, the same amount will be forthcoming from Government. He was rather anxious that the Nair Service Society should not start a college in close proximity to

his own college. That contention was overruled. But I told Dr. Mar Ivanios that if he went to America and collected money, I should give him an equal amount. He has gone to America, and I am sure he will collect the money and that the college will start soon. I asked Mannath Padmanabha Pillai to collect money. He said he had promises for 2 or 3 lakhs, but I learn that only one and a quarter lakhs has been collected so far. If they want one and a quarter lakhs more, I will give it. Five lakhs was what they wanted. What they have collected is however only one and a quarter lakhs, and I am quite prepared to give them another one and a quarter lakhs but nothing can be done with  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakh plus  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakh. It is like Alagappa Chettiar's donation. (*Laughter*). He promised five lakhs and gave donation of one lakh for starting a Tamil Chair. More amount was not forthcoming. The result was that the Government had to spend 1 1/2 lakhs in order to start the Chair and that was a drawback. But I am told that Mannath Padmanabha Pillai never told the people that I will be paying an amount equal to his collection. I have even told him that if the prominent members of the Nair Service Society will give a personal undertaking for the 5 lakhs, an equal amount would be paid to-morrow morning by the Government. I made that offer one and a half years ago, one year ago, six months ago, and I am repeating it this morning. So far as I know, the main grouse of Padmanabha Pillai is that there is some kind of sharp practice or some dishonesty of Government with regard to this college. I have recounted the 'dishonesty' of which this Government have been guilty.

I have done.

*Mr. D. C. Joseph thanked the Dewan, on behalf of the Press, for his speech.*

*The Conference ended at 12-40 p. m.*