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Thesis:

The Nizam's Last Stand:
Hyderabad's Place in India's Partition

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The Nizam's Last Stand:
Hyderabad's Place in India's Partition

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This work sets out to chronicle the predicament which the state of Hyderabad under Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan found itself as the British prepared to partition the Indian subcontinent in 1947. With the intent to understand fully the place of Hyderabad before the partition, it offers a glimpse into the Nizam's relationship with the British Empire throughout its history, especially focusing on the period of Mir Oman's reign, while also comparing Hyderabad to states, Travancore and Kashmir, which faced similar difficulties after partition. Although the Nizam had legal right to maintain Hyderabad's independence in post-partition India, India never accepted the idea of a sovereign state in its center and with the onset of partition violence and subsequent issues with Pakistan involving Kashmir, increasingly prepared to bring Hyderabad into accession in whatever way needed. By tracing the negotiations which took place between the Nizam and India, as well as the situation on the ground both in and around Hyderabad during the 1946-1948, this work elucidates the issues which ultimately led to the downfall of the Nizam's regime in Hyderabad while offering a view into the further effects which partition had on the princely states in India.

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Hyderabad: The Nizam and His State

When one thinks of Hyderabad today, a technology and economic hub in the heart of India, it is hard to imagine that little more than 60 years ago this was the center of a major political struggle between the largest state in the Subcontinent and the newly formed country of India. Though often lost in the violence and religious turmoil that characterized the partition, Hyderabad refused to join either India or Pakistan, instead opting for its own sovereignty according to Indian Independence Act of 1947. As the premier state in South India and the largest princely state by population¹, Hyderabad presented a unique case for India not only in that it was surrounded on all sides by the Indian Union, but that it was a majority Hindu state governed by a Muslim ruler. The seventh and final Nizam of Hyderabad had continued throughout his reign to promote a claim to independence, which he sought to solidify through supporting British interests in India faithfully, a policy not unlike that of his ancestors. While Hyderabad had been in a period of peace throughout much of its association with the British, the rising tide of communalism seen in the lead-up to partition eventually crept its way into Hyderabad in many different forms, starting from the Khilafat movement until the eventual capitulation of Hyderabad to Indian army forces in the fall of 1948. This paper will attempt to trace the Nizam's continual struggle for sovereignty throughout the period of his reign, paying particular attention to the events and actors, both inside and outside of the state of Hyderabad, pivotal to the years surrounding the partition of the subcontinent by the British. While the Nizam's rule had plenty of weaknesses which were exploited by

¹ Government of India, *White Paper on Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1948, 3.

political and communal forces opposing his position. Hyderabad, in spite of these issues and accusations by India, was able to cope rather adequately even through its negotiations with the Indian Union, upon its official “declaration of independence” in August of 1947. It is the opinion of this paper, however, that India, stung by the creation of Pakistan and the violence of partition, proceeded to strangle Hyderabad into either capitulating or ultimately acceding to the Dominion of India, never recognizing its right of self-determination as spelled out in the Indian Independence Act of 1947. While the Nizam’s choice for independence seemed impractical and romantic at best, this paper intends to show how India’s reasons for eventually invading and dragging Hyderabad into accession were brought on willfully by the government of India itself, not by the Nizam and his state, whose strength was much too inadequate to succeed in breaking away from India itself. The tension, which had begun with democratic movements throughout the subcontinent in opposition to the British colonial rule, found its flowering in the consuming fire of partition, frightening any and all parties involved. The Nizam, who had been steadfast against the movements in support of its ally Britain, had irrevocably linked himself to Britain, and with their exit from the political scene of the subcontinent after partition, were forced to face the newly created power of the Indian Union by itself. Indeed, by the power of the vast resources, both military as well as financial, the government of India, buoyed by the violent reaction to the communalism that had engulfed the subcontinent, beginning in the subcontinent early the Nizam’s reign, would ultimately through means both nefarious and heavy-handed bring to an end the reign of the Nizam in Hyderabad, the oldest monarchy left in the India.

Before beginning to assess the happenings between Hyderabad and India during the years leading up to partition, it is important to understand the history of the state itself. The Mughal Empire had made significant inroads into the south of India during the height of their empire, but the Empire eventually broke apart under successively weak leadership after the death of Aurangzeb. A Mughal nobleman, Asaf Jah established his power in 1713, though he continued to ally himself with Delhi as did his successors. Mir Laik Ali even explains that when Nadir Shah invaded and captured Delhi from the Mughals in 1738, it was Asaf Jah who begged the Shah not to put the inhabitants of the city to the sword, suggesting his continued importance within the Mughal Court despite his more independent outlook.² It is important here to note that despite the continued relation to the Mughal Court in the successive years until the fall of the Empire, it was nothing more than ritual which kept the Nizam and his successors tethered to Mughal rule, as evidenced by the easy victories with which Asaf Jah undertook to form his Hyderabad dominion. The idea of the Mughals as still paramount to the Nizam's state seems particularly ludicrous. Taraknath Das' attempts to assert as much in his article on the Status of Hyderabad,

The very title "Nizam" means the superintendent of a territory under the Mogul Empire, and the succession of the Nizam was invariably sanctioned by the Mogul empire. After the suzerainty of the Mogul Empire had passed into the hands of the East India Company, the succession of the Nizam had to be approved by the

² Austin, Ian. City of Legends: The Story of Hyderabad. New Delhi: Viking, 1992.

East India Company. No independent country has its rulers' succession approved by another power.³

Here Das is only partially correct, as the East India Company indeed had political and military paramountcy over Hyderabad, yet his claim that the Mughal Empire was paramount over the state fails to recognize the extreme weakness of the Mughals to even govern their own territory with any supremacy. If Mir Laik Ali is correct, it took the Nizam Asaf Jah to convince Nadir Shah to end his occupancy of Delhi, making one question what kind of power and influence the Nizam himself had at this time. It would seem prudent to observe that as a former nobleman within a Muslim dynasty in India saw fit to continue association with the Mughals simply to continue association with a once strong, Muslim dynasty. Aram Bakshian explains the relationship in his *History Today* article "Hyderabad: Shadow of Empire:"

Father of both the state and the dynasty, he maintained a punctilious paper loyalty to the Mughal court at Delhi in matters of etiquette, but ran his own show with a free hand in the South...A descendant of one of the noble families that followed the Nizam to Hyderabad, and became part of the Mughal-style ruling class put it rather neatly: 'Communications were bad in those days and rather than go back to Delhi and report to Aurangzeb's successors this gentleman stayed on with his

³Das, Taraknath. "The Status of Hyderabad during and after Partition." *American Journal of International Law* 43.1 (Jan. 1949): 57-72. JSTOR. 2007. JSTOR. 5 May 2007 <<http://www.jstor.org/content.lib.utexas.edu:2048/search>>. 69.

little army, acquired the whole state for himself and failed to send any revenues back to Delhi.⁴

The Mughals inability to reassert their dominion in the Deccan demonstrates what waning power they did actually possess. Das would certainly not claim that during the Medieval Age in Europe kings and emperors were not independent simply because their succession was approved by the Pope, whose power was limited simply to the small territory of the Papal States.

This process of political supplication to the Delhi court continued until the fall of the Mughal Empire in the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion. During this time, however, British influence continued to increase within the court at Hyderabad. As William Dalrymple observes in his *White Mughals*, the British would tend to station the Nizam with a few thousand soldiers to protect and serve him. While calling the relationship an alliance, it built a relationship of trust with the Nizam while making him dependent upon British support to secure his reign. In 1799 the British helped lead an army of Hyderabad into battle against the Sultan of Mysore. This southern ruler had defeated the British in the past and had made inroads into the Nizam's territory in recent years. Sharing a common enemy, the British fought next to Hyderabad, gaining for themselves greater territory and power while ultimately bringing their imperial ambitions within the Subcontinent closer to fruition.⁵ Eventually, with the collapse of the Mughals in 1857, the British became the supreme power over all of India, and affirmed their power in a diplomatic but strong

⁴ Bakshian Jr., Aram, and Geoffrey D. Schad. "Hyderabad: Shadow of Empire." *History Today* 39.1 (Jan. 1989): 19-28. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. 4 May 2007
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/content.lib.utexas.edu:2048/>>. 22.

⁵ Dalrymple, William. *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India*. New York: Penguin, 2002. 150-152.

manner. It is important here to note that while many Indian princes took up arms against the British, the Nizam stood by the British in the Great Mutiny, effectively proving their worth as a reliable and trusted ally. Instances like these later were conjured up by the Nizam in hopes of continuing an alliance with the British crown after partition, or at least to procure a helpful relationship when dealing with the new Indian government.

Her Majesty being desirous that the Governments of the several Princes and Chiefs of India who now govern their territories should be perpetuated, and that the representation should be continued, I hereby in the fulfillment of this desire convey to you the assurance that, on the failure of natural heirs, the adoption, by yourself and the future rulers of your State of a successor according to Hindu or Mohammedan Law and the customs of your race, will be recognized and confirmed. Be sure that nothing shall disturb the engagement just made to you, so long as your house is faithful and loyal to the conditions of the treaties, grants and engagements which record its obligations to the British government.⁶

It became clear that once the British demonstrated their power during the Sepoy Rebellion that no State within India could stand in their way. The British wanted to allow their allies a degree of rule within the each of their States, while recognizing that the British Crown within India was the obvious superior. The British claimed paramountcy over the States, mediating all their affairs between each other while permitting no State to engage in any relations with a foreign power. Yet it is implicit also within this and other declarations by the British of their own dependence upon their overall relationship with the states of India which provided them with money as well as

⁶ Das, 60.

supplies and troops. While aimed specifically at waning French influence within the subcontinent, even a state as large as Hyderabad was for all intents and purposes subsidiary to the British government in India.⁷ Nonetheless, Hyderabad continued to try and maintain closer ties with the British, and attempted to develop the relationship in order to benefit their own territory and power within central and southern India. In an act unprecedented by any prince within the subcontinent, Mehboob Ali Pasha, the sixth Nizam who reigned in Hyderabad from 1869-1911, offered the British £600,000 pounds as well as men toward the defense of the province of the Northwestern Frontier. This coming during a time of peace within the Subcontinent, it demonstrated the Nizam's good faith and appreciation of the British Empire, as the Nizam even made clear that should the moment for battle arise, he would personally join British forces there and lead his army personally. It also demonstrated the Mehboob Ali Pasha's shrewd grasp both of his State's past as well as its future security, a common pattern in Hyderabad's interactions with Britain.

This splendid example (if more generous than the State's finances warranted) was an action unparalleled, as occurring in a time of peace and as an acknowledgement of some responsibility for the expenses of the Central Government...It committed His Highness and his successors to a policy of perpetual fidelity,...but it also showed a quick grasp of political opportunity and gave a decided diplomatic advantage to His Highness, by forestalling the inevitable disarming of his forces on any invasion of the North Western frontier in the absence of such an offer. With still wider consequences, it necessitated the

⁷ Ibid, 61-62.

consideration whether the Native States should enter on a military career trusted rather than supervised, and happily the more generous policy prevailed.⁸

This decision by Mehboob Ali Pasha was an express example of Hyderabad's continued policy to secure the closest and most trusted status in their relationship to the British, in an effort to bring as much freedom and power within her own domain as possible. The money offered could not be accepted, and Hyderabad forces were never called to the Northwest frontier, but, by offering such cooperation, the Nizam, foreshadowing his son's own dealings with the Khilafat movement, cooperated to such a degree as to enable a stronger pursuit of his own aims within the subcontinent.

In spite of their efforts and considerable success, during the early 19th century the Hyderabad State lost many parcels of land to the British in complying with their power, including land containing their only port to the sea, Masulipatnam. As the British continued to shrink the Hyderabad's domain, it was the accession of the lands along the Bay of Bengal to Britain that effectively land-locked Hyderabad within the Subcontinent. This would become one of the main factors in keeping Hyderabad from independence after 1947.

⁸ McAuliffe, R. Paton. *The Nizam: The Origin and Future of the Hyderabad State*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1904. *Google Books*. Web. 13 Feb. 2010. http://books.google.com/books?id=N9xGAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Nizam+THE+Origin+and+Future&source=bl&ots=rrs5PQoRV_&sig=7YnvFHPSPUoRlh0PEcR5UDGxPqo&hl=en&ei=fv_HS7SqH4bK9gTXidSWCw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CAYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false, 57.

The Last Nizam

Mir Osman Ali Khan was born into this political situation in 1886 and became Nizam when his father, Mehboob Ali Khan passed away in 1911. Mehboob Ali had been beloved by many within Hyderabad. His state was well-respected by the British rule on the continent not only for its cooperation, but for its ability to keep the peace among the majority of his citizens, Hindu and Muslim alike.

A dedicated and generous- if not enlightened- ruler, Mahboub Ali Pasha attained legendary status in his own lifetime. He was fluent in English as well as Persian, Urdu and other local dialects. A dandy, a womanizer and heavy drinker with a touchy sense of humor, he was quick to both anger and laughter. He was also devoted to the welfare of his people, and his devotion was returned by Hindu as well as Muslim subjects. His reign witnessed the modernization of the state, massive public works programs, and widespread patronage of arts and crafts.⁹

With his father near sainthood to many in his own lifetime, Mir Osman had much to live up to. During his time of power he often tried to exercise methods of rule similar to that of his father, yet his general demeanor and execution of his rule was completely unlike that of the Nizam that preceded him. V.K. Bawa suggests that Mir Osman's upbringing was austere and void of the attentions due a child of his age. Twice his father had been deathly ill with cholera and preparations were made to ensure a smooth succession that would bring Mir Osman to the throne of Hyderabad. His father continued to insist that his son be brought up like any boy his age, and so did not lavish upon him the riches most

⁹ Bakshian, 22.

princes would have received. Yet Mir Osman was also expected to stay above the fray of the normal Hyderabadi, seemingly leaving Osman with confusion as to his own place as the ruler of Hyderabad. In fact, as he took to the throne, he himself stated it was, ‘a matter of common knowledge amongst all the citizens of Hyderabad that just a few years before my late lamented father’s demise, the relations between him and myself were somewhat estranged.’¹⁰ It is clear then that the relationship between Mir Osman and his father Mehboob was characterized by a difference in approach, one that would be greatly illustrated upon Mir Osman’s ascension to power.

Mir Osman was often characterized as a quiet ruler who did not carry the charisma of his father. Indeed Bakshian relates that he would much rather spend his time studying the Koran than meeting with representatives. Coming on the heels of such a popular and well-liked Nizam, his behavior would have certainly confused and displeased his subjects, who must have expected the son to continue in the romantic tradition of his father. Yet despite his miserly and reclusive habits, Mir Osman did maintain his father’s concern for tolerance within the realm of Hyderabad.

It was his habit to attend midnight mass on Christmas Eve, accompanied by all the ladies of his zanana, at a local Catholic mission where, ‘The Nizam sat in the front pew and when he left, he always gave a big donation to the Sisters ... He also attended Hindu festivals like Holi and Dassera. He would go to the Hindu temple, but would remain outside in his car—and of course he would go to the mosque every Friday’.¹¹

¹⁰ Bawa, V. K. The Last Nizam. New York: Viking, 1992.41-42, 63.

¹¹ Bakshian, 26.

What was most impressive about the Nizam's rule was the continued relative peace throughout his domain despite the radically changing political climate of the 1930s and 1940s. It can be assumed here that despite his strongly-held Muslim beliefs (he was sometimes characterized as a second Aurangzeb) he carried an understanding of his place as leader of all of Hyderabad, and did his best to put forth administration to that effect.

Regardless of the fact that many found him to be impersonal and lacking the charisma needed of the Nizam at that time, Mir Osman was described by his later advisor Mir Laik Ali as becoming increasingly indifferent to public opinion throughout his reign. He was known to most as the richest man in the world, and indeed, it was arguable that during his reign this title was not too liberally applied. When the British Resident at his court tried to convince the Nizam to invest his money more liberally in more international endeavors, he was completely distrustful of the idea, contrary to the actions his father had displayed, exemplifying a mindset that would continue throughout his political career.¹² With the increasingly democratic political climate that surrounded him and began to squeeze, he increasingly asserted his authority in a more direct manner. The Nizam was a man who had a large amount of respect for the history and importance of his position, which had as much to do with his own religious upbringing as it did with the amplification of pressure from both the British officials and political leaders throughout the subcontinent. After the fall of the Mughal Dynasty in 1857 Hyderabad had become the premier center for Muslim intellectual and cultural activity within India. Mir Osman certainly saw his state as the successor to the greatness of the Mughals in India, the premier Muslim state within India. If this was the case, he felt he had to not only set an example for the rest of the Muslims in India at court, but provide them with opportunities

¹² Ali, Mir Laik. Tragedy of Hyderabad. Karachi: Din Muhammadi Press, 1962. 22.

to enrich themselves and their culture through the portal of Hyderabad. Mir Osman invited poets as famous as Iqbal to court, and though he was not always successful in persuading them to stay, gave them large sums of money to continue their work. This has continued a policy of patronage which Hyderabad had been especially active in from 1857 onward, which included both offering great poets and thinkers a place at court, bringing prestige to both parties, as well as donating large amounts of money to projects throughout the Muslim world. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's project, Aligarh University, received significant funding from Hyderabad. Both Mehboob Ali Pasha and many of the nobles in his court had offered great sums of money to help build and support the university in North India and would reap the benefits under the reign on Mir Osman.

One of the first events which helped to both foreshadow and shape Mir Osman's policy toward Hyderabad and his power in determining her destiny took place upon the eve of World War I, which pitted the British and its allies against Germany and its allies, which included the Ottoman Empire. As the paramount Muslim power in the world at that time, the Ottoman Empire's alliance with the Central Powers against Britain was a concern not just militarily, but for the administration of their Empire, which included many Muslims. The British army included many Muslims in its ranks which had been recruited from and had served in India.¹³ Having not forgotten the events of 1857, nor unaware of the large sympathy which many Indian Muslims had for the khalifa in Turkey, the British took steps to address the potential lightning rod of an issue, specifically through their long-time ally in Hyderabad, the Nizam. Imploring him, as the

¹³ Pernau-Reifeld, Margrit. "Reaping the Whirlwind: Nizam and the Khilafat Movement." *Economic and Political Weekly* 18 Sept. 1999: 2745-2751. *JSTOR*. Web. 6 Feb. 2010. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4408427>>.

“spokesman and leader of the Mohamedans in India,” to lend the weight of his opinion to their cause, the Nizam, following in the Hyderabad tradition, offered the British his public support.

I repeat and reiterate that in the crisis before us the Muhammadan inhabitants of India, especially the subjects of this state should, if they care for their own welfare and prosperity, remain firm and wholehearted in their loyalty and obedience, swerve not a hair’s breadth from their devotion, to the British government, whose cause I am convinced is just and right; keep sacred the ties which bind the subject people to their rulers; and lastly, that they should in no case allow themselves to be beguiled by the wiles of anyone into a cause of open or secret sedition against the British government.¹⁴

While the Nizam may have had religious motivation to decline, his concern for both the safety and future strength of Hyderabad caused him to come out unequivocally on the side of the British in World War I, supplying the endeavor in both word and deed. In 1917 and at the war’s conclusion in 1918, gave him the titles of “Faithful Ally of the British Government” and “His Exalted Highness.” These titles were a clear recognition for the Nizam of a special status in his relationship to the British, one certainly higher than the rest of the princes throughout India.¹⁵ Both titles were weighed heavily by the Mir Osman and became foundational in his later dealings with both India and the princely states respectively.

¹⁴ Ibid, 2746.

¹⁵ Ibid, 2747.

At the same time he was achieving new heights in his relationship with the British government, the Nizam was also entertaining support from elsewhere within British domains. In an attempt to serve and protect the Turkish khalifa, leader of the Muslim community, from harsh British punishment in the weeks and months following the end of the war, Muslims from throughout South Asia, many influenced from time at Aligarh University, sought to influence the British government. Recognizing his legitimate position within both India and in relationship to the British Empire, the members of the Khilafat movement, as they became known, called on the Nizam to petition the British for better treatment of the khalifa in Turkey, dubbing the Nizam “King of Hyderabad” and “Reviver of the Community of the Faithful”, while they on their part struggled on the ground level to decrease British power in India by achieving more power for the Indian states, going so far as to demand that the British return the province of Berar to Hyderabad, which had a been one of the sore points in the Nizam’s relationship to the Empire. The Khilafat movement’s support was significant for the Nizam in that it not only legitimized him within the Muslim community of India, but also solidified his status among the nobility of Hyderabad, many of whom had preferred his brother Salabat Jung to him upon his accession. By obtaining the favor of Britain and India’s Muslims, the Nizam seemed to be investing well against his own insecurities at home. Soon after lending his voice to the Khilafat movement, however, the Nizam became aghast at the strength and new intentions of the movement, which had united both Hindus and Muslims in a militant non-cooperation movement aimed at forcing British concessions in Turkey as well as at home. This clearly struck fear into the Nizam, who viewed the intensity of the uprising within the Khilafat movement as both against “the sacred ties

that bound subject peoples to their rulers” as well as dangerous to his relationship with the British. He proceeded, to the delight of Britain, slowly to back away from the movement, advocating for the khalifa but offering no support for the humdrum way in which the Khilafat leaders sought to change the landscape of India. Pernau-Reifeld states that the Nizam’s move to support the Khilafat leaders undermined his own claim for legitimacy by appealing to popular support instead of his position, but this seems to miss the point in my view.¹⁶ This early but important incident in the Nizam’s reign would characterize the struggle between British support, which the Nizam loyally but begrudgingly accepted for the security of his throne, and the support of the Muslim community, which was of such personal importance to the Nizam since he viewed his position as the premier Muslim prince in India with such reverence, even seeming to regard it as something of a divine mandate upon his actions as an example of leadership to the Muslim community as a whole. By the end of the Khilafat movement the idea that the Nizam could accede to the pinnacle of Islamic status, through the end of the khalifa in Turkey, was apparent to him. As evidenced in events here, with these ideas set in motion, the Nizam was deeply concerned about any attempts to limit or extinguish his power, for as he saw it, democracy only meant that his ability to act for the benefit and concern for Muslims was at an end. The Khilafat movement for the Nizam demonstrated all the more clearly the dangers of popular representation to his ability to govern. Ironically, the Khilafat movement was the last time where Indian Hindu and Muslim communities were joined together in their demands for an end to British primacy in the subcontinent and, in the splitting of the movement, the seeds of communal politics so lethal to the future of the Hyderabad state would be sown.

¹⁶ Pernau-Reifeld, 2748.

The Nizam's belief in Hyderabad's divine providence made him increasingly reliant on the Ittehad ul-Mussalmeen during his reign, both for its strength of organization as well its belief in the Nizam's legitimacy. The Ittehad ul-Mussalmeen became the most powerful Muslim political organization in Hyderabad and mirrored in many ways the rise of the Muslim League in Greater India. It had itself been formed in reaction to the rise of Hindu politics within the region of Hyderabad, attempting to safeguard Muslims' position in the state. While the Hindus and Muslims had generally good relations throughout the history of the state, after World War I the international calls for democracy and socialism were invariably heard by those with the least power within their respective societies. The Hindus had formed the Andhra Mahasabha as an assembly to address issues within Hyderabad, mostly related to Hindu concerns. Yet this body began to encroach upon the benefits of a government dominated by Muslim elites that had been in place for two centuries, and this intrusion into Muslim hierarchy was viewed with much fear by those in power, as they made up roughly 15 percent of Hyderabad's population.¹⁷ A study done in a Ph.D thesis by Muneer Ahmed Khan demonstrates the disparity between Muslims and Hindus in the Nizam's government. Muslims occupied 459 high-ranking government army positions and 1635 other positions of high-ranking nature. In contrast, the Hindus only held 39 high positions within the Nizam's army and a much smaller 223 high-ranking jobs in the government.¹⁸ However, to balance this view, the localized administration of the State outside the city of Hyderabad was overwhelmingly in the

¹⁷ Whitford, Angelina Marie, B.A. "The 'Other' India: The Princely States and Independence." MA thesis. U of Texas at Austin, 1996. 83.

¹⁸ Khan, Muneer Ahmed. "Muslim Politics in Hyderabad." Diss. Osmania University, 1980. 40-45.

hands of the Hindu majority.¹⁹ These numbers also do not reflect the almost complete Hindu dominance in the private sector of Hyderabad's commerce. The Hyderabad system ultimately showed that Hindus were dominant in almost all sectors of society, outside of state jobs, where the mostly urban Muslims had a much larger representation.²⁰ While the Nizam did rule a Muslim dynasty, the ratio of Muslims to Hindus within the government administration was certainly disturbing to those who favored popular representation, and was taken up by those who had been energized by the democratic movement in India and now saw the status quo as the disenfranchisement of Hindus in Hyderabad.

The Ittehadul-Mussalmeen had been formed to combat the increasingly aggressive movement by democratic and almost completely Hindu organizations. Many had been excited by events taking place in British India and saw that they could also experience gains in their political standing by changing the political culture of Hyderabad, as well as Muslims' standing within it. The Ittehad made themselves the defenders of the Nizam, in an effort to safeguard their community within the Hyderabad state system, as Bawa cites in M. Narsing Rao's work on the Majlis.

- The Hyderabad government should be a free and independent monarchy and shall always be ruled by a Muslim belonging to the Asaf Jahi dynasty.

- In the Assembly and Local Self-Government institutions, the Muslims should have a statutory majority.

¹⁹ Pernau, Margrit. The Passing of Patrimonialism: Politics and Political Culture in Hyderabad 1911-1948. Delhi. Manohar, 2000. 261.

²⁰ Benichou, Lucien. From Autocracy to Integration: Political Developments in Hyderabad State (1938-1948). Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2000.

- Service or employment is not only a question of prestige historically as well as politically but it is also their economic problem. Therefore, in this respect there should be no question of recruitment being made on the basis of communal ratio. The Muslims shall never agree to lose their jobs.²¹

Many Muslims in Hyderabad were certainly not keen to give up their privileged existence. They too had been influenced by the Muslim League's rise to prominence against what they felt to be untrustworthy Hindu radicals in Congress who would not protect the rights of Muslims within India. Hyderabad offered Indian Muslims a place of refuge in what to some had become an anti-Muslim India. These were among the first major patterns of communalization under the Nizam's rule, something he had approached very seriously. "Relations between the communities in Hyderabad were also kept harmonious ... this, it must be noted, was not the result of a policy of religious laissez-faire but, on the contrary, that of a careful management of communal matters by the Nizam's government."²²

The Nizam was forced to balance his continued concern with all the people of his state with his own need to sustain a dominant Muslim culture and dynasty in Hyderabad. The entrance of Bahadur Yar Jung into leadership of the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen exemplified this difficult balancing act. In a speech in March of 1941, Bahadur Yar Jung made declarations similar to those Muhammad Ali Jinnah, claiming that Muslims and Hindus were part of separate civilizations and could not possibly live together with relative peace. The Nizam was enraged at these statements, which seemed to disregard

²¹ Bawa, 166-167.

²² Benichou, 17.

the previous 200 years of Hyderabad's history and threatened to damage the relationship between the Nizam not only with his own subjects, but India herself.²³ While influenced by his associations with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had come to Hyderabad in 1941 to counsel both the Nizam and the Ittehad, Jung's statements reflected a more concrete picture with which neither Jinnah nor the Nizam were comfortable, the Nizam most especially as he sought to maintain his independence.²⁴ An inability for Hindus and Muslims to live together made the Nizam's claims to paramount status completely illegitimate and implied a hostility which the British would not support in their quest to find a solution for the subcontinent, which would damage the relationship between Hyderabad and, to that point, their strongest ally. Mir Laik Ali asserts in his memoirs that the Bahadur Yar Jung's general notion was to protect the Muslim minority until a time when their rights would be upheld in a pluralistic political society.²⁵ Yet this seems odd in light of the earlier declaration by the Ittehad that they would not support anything less than Muslim majority within the legislative bodies as well as governmental positions, making it difficult to take what Ali says seriously. Could the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen allow someone who varied so far from their self-important view of the Nizam to take power?

It is important here to mention the entrance of Muhammad Ali Jinnah into the act as a counselor and advocate for Hyderabad on the political stage. As the leader of the Muslim League and the most prominent Muslim politician within the subcontinent, he had both willingness and a design upon his interactions with the Nizam in Hyderabad.

²³ Bawa, 173.

²⁴ Copland, Ian. "The Princely States, the Muslim League and the Partition of India in 1947." *The International History Review* 13.1 (1991): 38-69. *JSTOR*. Web. 7 Mar. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40106322>, 52.

²⁵ Ali, 44.

His first intention in coming to Hyderabad was to procure a stronger association between the All-India Muslim League and the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen in Hyderabad, since both associations saw themselves as advocating the general welfare and concern for the Muslim population throughout the subcontinent and, in the case of the Ittehad, Hyderabad particularly. Jinnah seems to have recognized the ascendancy of the Ittehad within the affairs of the Nizam and sought, through influencing the Ittehad to act in accordance with the Muslim League, to simultaneously influence the interactions of the Nizam and Hyderabad, especially as he was actively negotiating with both the British representatives in India, and later the Indian Union under the leadership of the Congress Party of India. Jinnah recognized the paramount importance of Hyderabad to his own argument for the protection of Muslim rights throughout India and believed that his argument for what became Pakistan was strengthened by the association of the largest princely state in India alongside him.

Jinnah himself would have liked to utilize his own relationship to Hyderabad in a more aggressive manner, in order to increase his negotiating position with both the British and the Congress Party, the Muslim League's concern for Kashmir limited the amount of grassroots work they could do in Hyderabad. Until the early 1940s, the Congress Party of India had taken a publicly laissez faire policy with regard to the Princely States, in spite of some the encouraged activity of groups like the Arya Samaj, and it was politically correct for the Muslim League to follow suit, as Francis Wylie, a British departmental envoy in India, recognized. "The Muslim League interfere less than they would like [to] in Kashmir because of possible repercussions in Hyderabad."²⁶ It

²⁶ Copland, Ian. "The Princely States, the Muslim League and the Partition of India in 1947," 45.

was clear that, like the Nizam, Jinnah had to balance his political concerns in order to receive what he hoped would be British support of his ideas for Muslim participation in India, and clearly he was unwilling to give up on the idea of a Muslim state, part of Pakistan or independent, in the middle of the Deccan. The All-India State's Muslim League, created by the Muslim League as a counterweight to the different State's People's Congress parties, and was made up almost completely of Kashmiri and Hyderabad Muslims, an indicator of both the importance of both states to Jinnah as well as the influence of Muslims from both these states in the affairs of British India.²⁷

In some ways, it seemed that by at once working with Bahadur Yar Jung and the Ittehad in Hyderabad, as well as personally counseling the Nizam himself, Jinnah was able to play a sort of good cop/bad cop role in his relations with the state, gaining him the trust of the Nizam, who resisted any attempt, even by the Ittehad, to curtail his hold of power in Hyderabad. Both leaders were under the impression that the British would be reliable in protecting the rights and privileges of the Muslim community throughout India, which made a policy of separation and discussion a strategy appealing to Jinnah as well as the Nizam. It was, in fact, Jinnah, who specifically told the Nizam not to join the federation of Indian princely States before World War II, which asserted the primacy and special consideration which the Nizam believed his state was owed by the British and thus the rest of India. Even though by this time it was clear that Hyderabad was pursuing a policy of independence from either Pakistan or India, Jinnah was acutely aware of the benefit of having a Muslim-ruled state in the center of India, which would inevitably limit both India's power and strengthen the influence of Pakistan and Muslims in general throughout the region. By continually supporting the Nizam's legitimacy, while

²⁷ Ibid, 52.

simultaneously backing the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen through the All-India Muslim League, Jinnah's influence over the Nizam's political policies in negotiating with India would continue to grow, alongside the rise to prominence of the Ittehad.

While the Nizam may have had problems with the way that the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen might portray his country, their loyalty to his crown and commitment to the Nizam's well-being made them indispensable in the eyes of the Nizam, especially since the Andhra Mahasabha became increasingly more radical in their political assertions. Shaped all at once by the victory of democracy in World War I and the continued growth of the Congress Party, the Andhra Mahasabha had wanted to achieve democratic reforms within Hyderabad in order to further the advancement of the Hindus, who were clearly underrepresented in the state. Yet by the early 1940s many within the group had become increasingly disillusioned by the Nizam's immovable nature relating to matters of government and any attempt to limit his power by democratic means. In 1944 the Mahasabha became radicalized under the banner of communism, which had grown in strength in conjunction with Soviet success against the Nazi invasion as well as the continued influx of younger leadership who had been come under the influence of Western political theories.²⁸ The rise of communism within the Mahasabha had been a huge factor in steering the Nizam into the arms of the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen, even though the Nizam often found himself at odds with their leadership. Despite the rise in tension within the state of Hyderabad, the Nizam, through a strategy of association with the British and quick decisive action against those who represented a threat to communal harmony, did an effective job of keeping the peace.

²⁸ Bawa, 212.

From the beginning of his reign, the Mir Osman believed that the most effective policy for the state of Hyderabad was to continue to strengthen his already strong alliance with Britain. The previous Nizams had forged a good relationship with what became the strongest power in the world during the 19th century, and Mir Osman was prepared to continue it. During the First World War, as Britain's fate was in jeopardy, the Nizam relished the opportunity to provide all items which the British required of him and exceedingly more, knowing that a British victory coupled with a strong show of support from Hyderabad would only improve the influence and power of the Nizam in India.

As a reward for the expenditure of nearly sixty million rupees the Nizam's gun salute was raised from fourteen to twenty-one. He was also made an Honorary Lieutenant-General of the British Army and as we have seen, was given the title of 'His Exalted Highness'. In 1912 when he was made a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India (GCSI), Osman Ali Khan had to share his title with the Aga Khan and lesser states. Now, however, the Nizam had clearly emerged as superior in status to all other Indian rulers, none of whom could boast of a twenty-one gun salute or be referred to by the British Government of India as 'Our Faithful Ally'.²⁹

The Nizam believed that the titles bestowed upon him by the British, though only names, reinforced the view that his domain would eventually become independent. To be described as a full-fledged ally by one of the world powers suggested to the Nizam that Hyderabad had risen to the status of full sovereignty, yet the following years would leave

²⁹ Ibid, 74.

much to be desired in terms of British support for the independence of the Central Indian state.

Interestingly, in the period of time leading up to the partition of India, the British tried to placate the Princely states within India, but ended up assuming their strong relationships would ensure easy accession once the date of partition was determined. This proved to be a fatal error on the part of the British.

There was accordingly little ground for wonder that the Princes in the period 1935-9 were to be no more than gently coaxed into playing their supportive, conservative role as an integral part of the envisaged federation of the 1935 Act—which role they coyly declined. There is rather more ground for wonder that in the negotiations of the 1940s the British focused their attention so exclusively on the Congress-League struggle for the succession in British India that they seemed to imply that the problem of the Princes would somehow solve itself. The Cabinet Mission virtually said just that: paramountcy would simply ‘lapse’ because the treaty relations could not be transferred to any successor; the ‘void’, which they admitted would be created, would have to be filled either by a federal relationship or by ‘particular political relationships’ with the successive government or governments.³⁰

Mountbatten himself relates a particularly interesting idea of how he saw the situation with the Princely States. He compared the placation of the Princely states with the

³⁰Morris-Jones, W. H. “Thirty-Six Years Later: The Mixed Legacies of Mountbatten’s Transfer of Power.” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 59.4 (Fall-Winter 1983): 621-628. [JSTOR](http://www.jstor.org/content.lib.utexas.edu:2048/search). 2007. JSTOR. 7 May 2007 <<http://www.jstor.org/content.lib.utexas.edu:2048/search>>. 624.

Confederation of the Rhine, where Napoleon brought many small kingdoms together to mediate a compromise and ended up joining them into a larger union.³¹ Evidently, as is pointed by the reactions of some of the larger Princely States like Hyderabad, there were great disparities between what the British had expected them to do and what the states decided to do. As late as 1948, the Nizam was still convinced that the British and Mountbatten would secure his state independence. “He still believed that he himself and his ancestors had been too good a friend of the British and that under no circumstances would the British let him down and risk their fair name.”³² The British Secretary of State for India made a statement showing the total discrepancy between what was expected of Hyderabad and the British by their respective governments.

With the ending of the treaties and agreements, the states regain their independence. But they are part of a geographical India, and their rulers and peoples are imbued with a patriotism no less great than that of their fellow Indians in British India. It would, I think, be unfortunate if, owing to the formal severance of their paramountcy relations with the Crown, they were to be islands cut off from the rest of India.³³

What is apparent is that the Nizam had never believed himself to be any less than independent and had played his role in forming a strong alliance with the British. For their part, the British offered a shallow concession of independence to Hyderabad and

³¹ Collins, Larry, and Dominique Lapierre. Mountbatten and Independent India. New Delhi: Viking, 1984. 9.

³² Ali, 66.

³³ Eagleton, Clyde. “The Case of Hyderabad before the Security Council.” *American Journal of International Law* 44.2 (1950): 277-302. Web. 6 May 2007. <http://www.jstor.org/content.lib.utexas.edu:2048/search>, 283.

other Princely states, but never expected that their offer of independence for their greatest friends would be acted upon.

The Uniqueness of Hyderabad as Compared to Other Princely States

It is important not to look at Hyderabad within a vacuum but to see it alongside the other Princely States within the Indian subcontinent during the lead up to partition. Comparing Hyderabad with the Princely States of Kashmir and Travancore enables a balanced viewing of the conditions facing the Nizam during his last years as ruler, elucidating the uniqueness of its relationship to the rest of India. Each of these States, according to their similar political associations with the British in India, was given the choice to either accede to India, Pakistan or to become an independent state free from association.

What must be taken into account from the beginning is the geographical location of Hyderabad, Kashmir and Travancore, and what this meant for their respective states with regard to accession to India. While Hyderabad was surrounded on all sides by what became the Indian Union, both Kashmir and Travancore were not surrounded by India on all sides, making their claim to independence far more likely than Hyderabad's candidacy. Kashmir, which shared borders with India and Pakistan as well as Afghanistan and China, had been and is today a crossroads of trade. It represented the northernmost point for either India or Pakistan and its location in the foothills of the Himalayas made it a place of integral strategic importance for both of the new countries. Travancore, on the other hand, is located in what is now southern Kerala, near the

southernmost point of today's India, and was a center of trade in the Arabian Sea, and was the most literate state in India at the time, with 47.1 per cent to the all-India rate of 15.1 per cent.³⁴

Travancore was a diverse state of around 5 million at the time of the British census in 1931. Hindus of all castes made up approximately 61.6 per cent of the population, while Christians of a variety of sects made up 31.5 per cent. Muslims, for their part, amounted to little more than 6.9 per cent. Within the Hindu community there were two notable castes, Nayars (17 per cent) and Ezhavas (22 per cent), who played a larger role in political affairs of the state.³⁵ Unlike Hyderabad or Kashmir, where Hindu and Muslim interests created much of the conflict in the State, Travancore was one of the few places in subcontinent where Christians made up a large minority. Travancore was ruled under a system with a Hindu Maharaja, yet during the time up to partition it was the mother of the Maharaja who controlled the government through the Dewan, Sir C.P. Ramaswamy. A notably pro-Hindu statesman who became progressively more devoted to the idea of Hindu Raj as time went on, Ramaswamy went so far as to allot funds to the Kerala Hindu Mission, whose sole purpose was to reconvert Christians back to their native religion, much like the Arya Samaj.³⁶

Dick Kooiman, who has done comparative work on Travancore and Hyderabad, cites a lack of excitement within the Princely States early on in Congress Party movements like the Civil Disobedience movement that was due to the "loyalty to the

³⁴ Ramusack, Barbara N. "The Indian Princes and Their States." The New Cambridge History of India. Vol. 6. 3. Cambridge: Cambridge, 2004, 211-212.

³⁵ Kooiman, Dick. Communalism and Indian Princely States: Travancore, Baroda and Hyderabad in the 1930s. New Delhi: Manohar, 2002, 40-43.

³⁶ Kooiman, 150.

rulers that was said to be still very strong in the states.”³⁷ Yet in Travancore communalism had been a continuous problem for decades, unlike in Hyderabad which had presided over relative peace between Hindus and Muslims until the late 1930s. As reforms were brought forth by the Dewan in the early 1930s, communal groups outside of the Nayers, the caste of Hindus in power, found the reforms lacking in bringing popular representation. These groups formed the Joint Political Congress in 1933, in an effort to realize their political aspirations through strength in numbers. The Dewan was able to break up this group by making policy for Hindus while leaving out the Christians and Muslims, making the organization obsolete. Again in 1938, in accordance with the Indian National Congress’ declaration of civil disobedience, the Travancore State Congress was formed by the disenfranchised Hindus, Christians and Muslims against the Dewan, demanding responsible government. This action coincided with the 9-month Satyagraha begun in Hyderabad by Congress-backers there. The government of Travancore cracked down against this campaign, and reeling from defeats in other Princely States, Gandhi dissolved the civil disobedience campaigns, effectively ending the Travancore State Congress’ movement.

One of the major differences between Travancore and Hyderabad was in contrast to the way in which communists were able to infiltrate and build support in both places. Unlike in Hyderabad, where communists depended upon poor rural farmers in Telengana to rise against the landed jagirs and village chiefs, in Travancore the communist movement was led by urban intelligentsia of many communities, mainly Christian and Hindu, who had immediate access to workers across the more densely populated state.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid 176.

³⁸ Ramusack, 232-234.

Communists in Travancore were more successful than the Telengana movement for a variety of reasons that demonstrate the differences between the states. In Hyderabad, the language differences between communities of Hindus kept them isolated from each other politically until late in the 1930s. Travancore on the other hand, had a common language, Malayalam, which united the populace. They also had a history of working between communal organizations with both the Joint Political Congress and the Travancore State Congress, which gave them experience in combining the various community movements. Finally, enough attention cannot be paid to the people of Travancore. During World War II, as Soviet Russia aligned itself with the British, communist ideas were disseminated in the educated circles of India, and with Travancore located not only at an important point of trade and commerce, but filled with a large educated population, they were quick to subscribe to communist practices in order to fulfill their goals. Further, the results of government action against the communists in Hyderabad and Travancore had substantially different consequences. The isolated nature of the incident in relation to the rest of Hyderabad only emboldened those loyal to the Nizam to continue their fight against those whom they saw to be agitators from outside Hyderabad. However, in Travancore the decision to attack the communists led to the loss of credibility of the Dewan and ended the idea of independence for Travancore from the rest of India.

Kashmir's situation was a role-reversal from Hyderabad as the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh presided over an overwhelming majority of Muslims in his provinces. In Jammu and Kashmir 79 per cent of the population were Muslims, with 20 per cent Hindus and a small group of Sikhs and Buddhists making up the final per cent.³⁹

³⁹ Bose, Sumantra. Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace. Cambridge: Harvard, 2003, 31.

However, the pivotal province of Kashmir was overwhelmingly Muslim, where 93 per cent of the population adhered to some form of Islam.⁴⁰ But whereas multiple sources attest in Hyderabad to a general peace and concern for the welfare of subjects regardless of creed, in Kashmir, the dominance by Hindus over Muslims was reflected in all possible localities.

In J&K, however, the distance between the privileged Hindu elite centered on the ruling family and their large majority of Muslim subjects was particularly vast. In 1941 Prem Nath Bazaz, a prominent Kashmiri Pandit journalist and political activist, reported: 'The poverty of the Muslim masses is appalling. Dressed in rags and barefoot, a Muslim peasant presents the appearance of a starving beggar ... Most are landless laborers, working as serfs for absentee [Hindu] landlords ... Almost the whole brunt of official corruption is borne by the Muslim masses ... Rural indebtedness [to Hindu landlords and moneylenders] is staggering.'⁴¹

Syed Ahmed El Edroos relates a similar description of the status of Kashmir in comparison with Hyderabad.

The economic and social conditions of the Kashmir Muslims were far from satisfactory in relation to the Hindus of Hyderabad. The Kashmiri Muslim is proverbially poor and except for artisans, petty-shopkeepers and small traders, the

⁴⁰ Ramusack, 238.

⁴¹ Bose, 16.

Kashmiri Muslims were nowhere in the field of trade and industry in comparison to the Hindus.⁴²

Whereas in Hyderabad there were areas where each community had a niche, in Kashmir the Muslim community was dominant within every facet of society simply by virtue of their numerical superiority, which not only created the possibility of communal uprising, but did not allow for the kind of integration between religious communities within the State that came from the satisfaction of each community. This integration was resisted as much by the Dogra Hindu rulers in their exclusionary policies toward Muslims within the Jammu and Kashmir region as it had been by any within the Muslim fold. The geography of Kashmir made it difficult for the kind of collusion and idea-sharing that grew political movements in other states, particularly Travancore. In some ways, Kashmir's terrain functioned like Hyderabad's language barrier, keeping larger political momentum from being able to gain a significant hold on the population, though in both places these obstacles began to erode in the 1930s with the coming of the "Lion of Kashmir."⁴³

Unlike Hyderabad, which outside of the Nizam had no major political player, in Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah became the premier force behind the politicization of Muslims as well as other disenfranchised Kashmiri residents. Bose cites the July 13, 1931 riot in Srinagar, where 21 people were killed by state police, as the beginning of the politicization of the Muslim community in Kashmir, as well as the beginning of Sheikh

⁴² El Edroos, Syed Ahmed. Hyderabad of "The Seven Loaves". Hyderabad: M/s. Laser Prints Ltd., 1994, 165.

⁴³ Ramusack, 239.

Abdullah's move from obscure activist to leader of a mass movement.⁴⁴ The creation of the All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was created around the same time as other pro-democracy parties were founded in Hyderabad and Travancore. Abdullah headed the Conference which, after being granted small concessions by the Maharaja, opened the party to all communities regardless of religion, changing its name to the "National Conference" more appropriate for its inclusiveness. Abdullah himself began to come under criticism from those within the party who felt he was starting to emulate the All-India Congress party, which Bose cites as a reason for the eventual breakup of the party into two factions, one supporting the All-India Muslim League and the other, under Abdullah cultivating closer ties with the Congress Party. Abdullah himself forged a relationship with Jawaharlal Nehru, a Kashmiri himself, who visited Kashmir in 1940 and in 1946 in support of the National Conference, even being thrown in jail for his alignment with the National Conference on his second trip.⁴⁵

Like Hyderabad, Kashmir's position as the second largest Princely State made it an important place of interest for both the Congress and the League, but the parties strived for their own goals for Kashmir independent of the rest of the Indian States, which was unlike the parties opposed to the Nizam in Hyderabad, whose opponents were often aligned with larger movements throughout India. Even as he built a political relationship with Nehru, Sheikh Abdullah built his party under the banner of patriotism of a regional nature that focused on building a state that was strictly Kashmiri, though on a friendly basis with India. Ironically, while Sheikh Abdullah pressed for secular democratic reforms within Kashmir, he built much of his popularity on his ability to recite

⁴⁴ Bose, 19.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 22-23.

beautifully from the Koran, and deeply valued Kashmir's Islamic heritage, much in the same way that the Nizam saw Hyderabad as a beacon of rightly-guided Islamic rule in India. While each of these figures was committed to a government that opened opportunities for all within their respective states, the Nizam and Sheikh Abdullah were sincerely devoted to Islam.

While each party within Kashmir seemed to slightly associate itself with either party in the greater subcontinent, by the time of partition, the Maharaja Hari Singh was in close talks with newly created Pakistan about accession.

On 15 August 1947, meanwhile, the maharaja's regime had concluded a so-called standstill agreement—normally the precursor to accession—with the government of Pakistan ... This strange entente between a ruler and a regime with manifestly anti-Muslim policies and the new Muslim state in the subcontinent was the result of compulsions and calculations on both sides ... the maharaja's overriding priority was maintaining his throne and privileges, and he and his advisers thought it was worth negotiating with the Muslim League's Pakistan on this, given Congress's well-known aversion to the feudal, autocratic nature of princely rule and the Congress connections of J&K's largest organized political movement, the NC.⁴⁶

This flirtation with Pakistan came at the same time Hyderabad was negotiating its own Standstill agreement with India. According to El Edroos, the maharaja had favored acceding to Pakistan, but was soon deterred by his Rajput wife, as well as Congress

⁴⁶ Ibid, 33.

pressure, manifested in Sardar Patel.⁴⁷ The situation in Jammu and Kashmir had also turned from bad to worse in the form of a rebellion in the Poonch district of Jammu, which had only since World War II been a part of the maharaja's dominion. Unlike the Telengana revolt, which the Nizam and those supporting him were able to effectively control, the uprising in Poonch soon took on a thoroughly communal character, bolstered by the events of partition in August. The maharaja chose to accede to India instead of Pakistan, in the fall of 1947, at the express request of Indian officials, most specifically Sardar Patel. The Muslim League government chose to send Pathan troops into Kashmir, but while the troops faced little opposition, they were also poorly-trained and more inclined to plunder than hold onto conquered territory.⁴⁸ Congress responded by sending the Indian army into Kashmir which quickly began to throw the Pathans out of Kashmir, which then forced Pakistan to bring a number of their brigades into the region as well. Knowing that a ceasefire would soon be brokered, Pakistan defensively tried to hold the territory which it had gained under the Pathans. Although the Indian army was continuing to push the Pakistani troops out of Kashmir, neither nation had an army capable of reinforcing itself without help, which was not offered by any of the abiding powers. Thus, a cold peace was brokered, leaving India in control of almost all of Jammu and the majority of Kashmir, and Pakistan with much of the northwest of Kashmir, which became known as "Azad Kashmir."⁴⁹ In spite of the violence going on throughout Kashmir, Nehru had promised there would be a plebiscite for the people of Kashmir to decide their future.

⁴⁷ El Edroos, 167.

⁴⁸ Bose, 35.

⁴⁹ El Edroos, 169-170.

But India under Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, advised by Lord Mountbatten, then the Governor General of India, while accepting the petition of accession, made it clear that after Kashmir was freed from invaders, its people should decide their future by recognized, democratic means, such as a plebiscite. Thus, the proposal for a plebiscite in Kashmir was unilateral act of the government of India.

Actually, from the legal viewpoint, Kashmir became a part of the dominion of India the moment its petition for accession was accepted.⁵⁰

The proposal for a plebiscite in Kashmir was jointly accepted by the government of Pakistan as well, however, with the issue of deciding who had come in and who had left Kashmir since the violence had begun, its ability to be realized became ever more doubtful. By the summer of 1948, the United Nations Commission on Kashmir wished to expand their investigation into India's acquisition of Junagadh, a state which, like Hyderabad, had been landlocked within what became the state of India after partition, but had remained independent at the request of its ruler.⁵¹ After a measure of time, Junagadh had requested to accede to Pakistan, but had been invaded and pulled into accession by the Indian army in much the same way as Hyderabad would be. India was completely unwilling to comply with the implications of this resolution by the Security Council, while continuing to persist in the notion that what happened in India was an Indian affair, which applied to the newly acceded Kashmir as well. The Nizam was himself, careful to avoid giving the kind of paramount status to India which the maharaja of Kashmir conceded, which, given the happenings in Kashmir, was a smart decision. The plebiscite

⁵⁰ Das, Taraknath. "The Kashmir Issue and the United Nations." *Political Science Quarterly* 65.2 (1950): 264-282. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 Apr. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2145524>, 268.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 272.

promised in Kashmir was never held, in spite of the end of the violence there, demonstrating the extent to which India was willing to go in acquisition of what they considered to be vital territory.

Partition, Negotiation, and Invasion

As partition drew closer in 1947, the Congress Party began to exert considerable force upon those not in-step with their vision of India, by virtue of the British desire to slowly decrease its own role in the politics of the subcontinent as they prepared to transfer power to their former subjects. While the Princely States had never played much of a role in the discussion about a post-independence India, the fall of the Conservative government after the war eliminated what had been their voice and staunchest defender within the negotiations. The new Labour government was in all ways different from the previous Conservative administration, which was reluctant to give away any part of Britain's imperial domains. One of Labour's foremost foreign policy concerns was for Britain to part with its colonies in an honorable manner, which made the Labour government much less worried about the fate of their relationships with even their staunchest allies among the princely states, like Hyderabad, so long as they did not disable the process of disengagement.

As late as October 1945, when it was evident by the change of government in London that Indian independence was a matter of a very few years at the most ... despite their willingness to await events, the British nevertheless had to prevent the actual outbreak of popular unrest which might result in the Nizam requesting the Paramount Power for military intervention, an unenviable situation which would leave them with the alternative of either acceding the request—thereby provoking an outcry of the national movement and possibly risking the constitutional development and the orderly transfer of power in British India—or

to deny this support, with all the impact such a breach of treaty would have on the princely states and the position of the government in London.⁵²

The British had been forced to develop a broader perspective for the subcontinent, in part because of the pan-Indian movement by Congress that had taken India from a fragmented group of states and territories ruled fully or in conjunction with British hegemony to a national consciousness. While this idea of unity among the people of India for a common national cause was extremely problematic considering the rise of communalism as well as the hundreds of princely states with different degrees of sovereignty, the impact of Congress participants in a variety of places in the subcontinent had convinced the British that their time as paramount power of the subcontinent was becoming increasingly untenable. The British no longer felt they could deal with each state or territory in an individual manner because of the far-reaching effects of the Congress and thereby were increasingly not willing to fulfill their obligations to Hyderabad or most any other princely state, for that matter.

With the close of World War II, the British seemed to feel even more justice in stepping aside from their guarantees of absolute rule for the princely states, as they had just concluded a war against a much more dangerous and aggressive power in Nazi Germany which dominated completely those whom it had ruled and conquered. This gave them more confidence internationally to step back from their promised obligations, even as they, ironically, through the advice of the British advisor to the Nizam, Lord Monckton, had been counseling Hyderabad to stay out of any constitutional reforms

⁵² Pernau, 298.

which India sought to propose.⁵³ In early 1947 with the debt of the war still heavy, the British could not reasonably continue to pay for the troop levels which had been kept in the subcontinent to continue their dominion over the provinces of British India, and it was certain for the Labour government that the Britain itself certainly did not have the political will to engage in any sort of conflict within the Indian subcontinent, much less one for the protection of princes whose territorial control was no longer valuable to British interests. Since Congress had positioned itself to govern once the British had left, it was in the interests of the Labour party as well as Britain as a whole to maintain a strong relationship with India in hopes of keeping India within Dominion status of the British. While Britain had been forthright in their support for the Nizam throughout the 1940s, it was clear that the British government was moving in the direction of Congress. Conversations between with the U.S. ambassador at this time showed demonstrated Britain's new position, "neither Hyderabad nor any other Indian state should be allowed to establish [after independence a] relationship to the ... Crown."⁵⁴ While it is certainly significant that Hyderabad is here mentioned specifically, revealing that Britain recognized its relationship to Hyderabad as having a special nature apart from the other princely states, it had nonetheless, internally, become British policy to keep the princely states out of direct communication with Britain, forcing them to negotiate wholly with Congress. If there was to be a balkanization of the subcontinent, as Nehru had feared, it would happen as a result of negotiations with the between Indian and the princely states

⁵³ Kaul, Santosh. *Indian Freedom Movement and States*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1998. *Google Books*. Web. 7 Apr. 2010. http://books.google.com/books?id=RseNGbur3BEC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Santosh+Kaul+Indian+Freedom+Movement+and+States&source=bl&ots=wf_jZgL1kV&sig=vcr28p2fc9spaleHGCir5kiW-jw&hl=en&ei=SjDIS52RC4GK8ATzn3sCg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CAYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false, 148.

⁵⁴ Copland, Ian. "The Princely States, the Muslim League and the Partition of India in 1947," 57.

of the subcontinent, not because of British meddling. Britain, for all its promises and treaties, would remain on the sidelines. However, they did not make this policy absolutely clear to the states or the Congress; for fear that the states might take matters into their own hands if they felt that they had lost all other options. Mountbatten's own response to the question of British policy towards the states at a press conference just two months later put on display the disparity between internal and public policy regarding the princely states. "Are you suggesting that we, in our last act, we should tear up those treaties and say that we are going to compel them [the princely states] to join this or that ... Constituent Assembly?... I cannot go back on a pledge based on treaties entered into many years ago."⁵⁵ For Hyderabad this phantom policy could not have come at a more inopportune time, as the Nizam had trusted fully in and depended upon his alliance with the British for protection from the Congress movement that threatened to swallow the state and the Nizam's hold of power into greater India. His decisions politically continued to be influenced, first and foremost, on this relationship. While the Nizam continued to petition the British in hope that they would remember their alliance to Hyderabad and the obligations that it entailed, he was forced to instead look inward for protection from the continued pressures of the Indian National Congress.

The Congress, for its part, had gained much of its power by fostering democratic movements throughout the subcontinent. While they often kept their name from being completely associated with movements they deemed as dangerous or subverting their influence with the British, historians have found their support of anti-monarchical movements was not at all uncommon, seen as far back in Hyderabad as the communal riots and subsequent Satyagraha of 1937-39. When the Arya Samaj and Hindu

⁵⁵ Ibid, 57.

Mahasabha, combined with the Hyderabad State Congress, had begun their Congress-sponsored movement against the Nizam, they brought in many “children under 15 and old men over 60, in addition to sick, blind and maimed persons”⁵⁶ from India in order to bring accusations of maltreatment against the government of Hyderabad. This was soon found out by the British, and Congress was forced to dissociate itself from the Satyagraha and it soon fizzled, demonstrating their own importance in prolonging the Satyagraha struggle while conceding the disorganization of the groups with which it had been associated. It was out of this defeat of the reformist and Hindu-oriented communal groups that a few younger leaders of the Mahasabha became disillusioned with the progress of their goals as well as the Andhra Mahasabha itself, and when jailed during the Satyagraha, came into contact with communist leaders from other Indian states which had come to Hyderabad for the Satyagraha. This younger generation, led by Ravi Narayan Reddy, would come to play a strong role in the future of the Mahasabha, which they helped convert into a communist organization, as well as the Hyderabad state in the run up to, and during the period of negotiation between Hyderabad and India. While Congress would continue to try and subtly influence the people of Hyderabad for India by supporting these local organizations, both monetarily and popularly, any movements against the political and social current in Hyderabad were viewed by the Nizam with much suspicion, especially with the history of outside influence from India. This distrust played a devastating role in the relationship between the Congress and Hyderabad, as well as the local relationship between reformists within different classes of Hyderabad and the Nizam’s government.

⁵⁶ Kooiman, 199.

It was not until 1946, when the transfer of power became imminent, that the Hyderabad State Congress was allowed to form again, having been outlawed by the Nizam for its known connections with the Indian National Congress for attempting to introduce “responsible government” in Hyderabad. Although it claimed democracy as its main goal, the actions taken during previous campaigns against the Nizam’s rule had lent doubt to the group’s credibility, as had their association with the Indian National Congress. Nonetheless, the group was reformed after British pressure on July 3, 1946.⁵⁷ The British saw this formation as a step to both appease the Indian National Congress, whose calls for democracy certainly had an effect in Britain after the War, but also seemed mild enough to allow the Nizam room enough to continue his dominion. Swami Ramananda Tirtha, elected president of the newly legalized State Congress, presided over a group which was split over the growth and success of the new communist movement in Telengana, and while Tirtha sought to include the Communists based on their success in organizing the rural population against outdated laws which were crippling to the already impoverished peasants of Telengana, the State Congress was split on whether to support or condemn the Communists, who had been growing in strength in the Telengana region.

During this same time, the Communists in Telengana began their first phase of protest against the landlords and subsequently the Hyderabad police force in the rural areas. The Communists strength had come primarily out of their superior organization in comparison with the other reformist groups which had either entered or started out of Hyderabad. Their leadership, under Ravi Narayan Reddy, was shrewd and pragmatic in their goals, helping to draw masses of people into the communist party without alienating

⁵⁷ Roosa, John. “Passive Revolution Meets Peasant Revolution: Indian Nationalism and the Telengana Revolt.” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 28.4 (2001): 57-94. *Informaworld*. Web. 7 Feb. 2010. <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713673200>, 66.

those who could do him the most damage. By the beginning of 1947, their 4-class alliance system, which opened the party to all but the most wealthy landowners in the Telengana region, had succeeded in connecting and mobilizing much of the peasantry with the party leadership, giving the Communists confidence to begin advancing their Agrarian Political Program in a more substantive and aggressive manner.⁵⁸ The genius of their 4-class alliance was both the growth and strengthening of the Communists in Telengana as well as the credibility their suggested reforms were given, since they were, in the middle of 1946, much more concerned about achieving practical improvements for the peasant and lower-landowning classes and less concerned with overthrowing the government. By including many small and medium-sized landlords, the Communists were also able to support themselves financially in a way few more revolutionary movements are able to do.

The Communists massive mobilization had taken place partly through the change in trade at the end of World War II, which turned India and especially British-allied Hyderabad farmlands, from cash-rich operations during the war, to profitless endeavors afterwards. This happened as a result of the international lowering of agricultural product pricing due to the close of the war and the reopening of markets which had been closed previously because of the fighting taking place. This situation had a tremendous effect on the peasants of Telengana and forced the Communists to press ahead with a more ambitious policy of protest. However, the timing of the Communists protests in Telengana also coincided with the increasingly tense negotiations between the Nizam's government and both Britain and their eventual successors represented in the Indian

⁵⁸ Elliott, Carolyn M. "Decline of Patrimonial Regime." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 34.1 (1974): 27-47. JSTOR. Web. 4 Mar. 2010 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2052408>, 44.

National Congress. The Nizam had outlawed almost every protest-movement which threatened his legitimacy within the State, and, in spite of what seemed to be legitimate concerns, sent Hyderabad's State Police in to thwart the efforts of the Communists. To the Nizam, stationed in the city of Hyderabad, these protests only too easily resembled the Satyagraha campaigns earlier in the decade which had been organized and heavily funded from outside of Hyderabad, mostly by Nationalists who sought to either force democracy on Hyderabad via protest, end the Nizam's government, or both. As the transfer of power became even more a present reality, the Nizam could not afford to seem weak or lacking control in any portion of his State, and so the peasant concerns fell on deaf ears. If anything, the Nizam saw the Communists as just another extension of forces from outside Hyderabad trying to cause enough instability to bring down his government and force accession to India.

The situation in Telengana had however, reached the State Congress and Tirtha, as previously mentioned, and was especially keen on combining the State Congress with the strength present in the Communist organization in Telengana. However, because of the wide split between leftists and more conservative members, the Congress did not swing its support behind or join the Communists in Telengana. In fact, conservative members of the Hyderabad State Congress went and reported on the actions of the Communists in Telengana, attempting to damage their credibility among the Congress and sympathizers throughout Hyderabad as well. They pointed to the violence of their protests against the Hyderabad State Police, which was surely reciprocated, as well as their coercive methods in gaining new members into the party, which John Roosa points out, were true in as much as they're recruitment often focused on gaining members from

certain sectors of village society, who would inevitably stop the flow of their labor or goods until others were forced to join as well.⁵⁹ Tirtha and the leftists became increasingly jaded by the hesitancy of the State Congress to act, and by the end of spring in 1947, they had decided to join in civil disobedience against the Nizam's attempts to remain independent from the Indian Union, whose democratic ideals and largely Hindu communal background would benefit the majority of people living in Hyderabad, and would seem to be especially beneficial to those who coordinated with the National Congress to work against the Nizam's administration.

At this same time the Communists themselves began to declare their movement as a Communist struggle for the joining of Hyderabad with the Indian Union. The activities against the landlords and subsequently the Hyderabad State Police had increasingly become violent over the months of organized Communist protests, and now they had chosen to support the State Congress move against the Nizam. While the Communists worked largely within the State, their adamancy in supporting accession to India was such that the Nizam could not help but think that they were being led by external Indian leadership much like earlier movements within Hyderabad. As one party member explained, “...in the initial stages of the struggle, we hoisted more Congress flags than Congressmen themselves and in many places the National Flag was seen flying with the Red Flag! We extolled Nehru and Gandhi more vociferously than the Congressmen themselves!”⁶⁰ With these mixed signals being sent to the Nizam, the forceful response by the Hyderabad State police is easier to understand, especially considering the extent of communal violence which had taken place in Bengal only months earlier in response to

⁵⁹ Roosa, 71.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 74.

Jinnah's call for Direct Action. However, even with the protests generally curtailed at this time, the overall strength and of the combined State Congress and Communist movements against the State, along with the considerable political pressure from Britain and the Indian Union, made the Nizam consider a significant compromise which had the potential to change the direction of dialogue between the Nizam and the Indian Union.

The Nizam, in an effort to both appeal to the democratic sympathies of the British, whom he continued to hold out hope would turn and offer him political backing, as well as to help pacify the State Congress and Communist organizations which had been causing unrest within the State, communicated to Swami Ramananda Tirtha that he would like the State Congress to join his government, making the way for responsible and democratic government. The Nizam's conditions were that Hyderabad would remain independent and for its people, and that there would be equality between Hindu and Muslim representation within the legislation of the new constitution, which in his mind would provide stability against the violence of communalism, which was intensifying with the likely partition of India looming and now was threatening the stability of the Hyderabad State.⁶¹ This reflected both the influence of Jinnah's advice as well as an awareness of the politics which had created Pakistan. It was a well-calculated political move by the Nizam. If the State Congress accepted his call for responsible government, he would have put to bed the major critique of the Indian Union leaders as well and likely increase the chances of British mediation for Hyderabad independence. However, even if the State Congress refused his offer, which was likely, he could claim that he was not an opponent of responsible democratic government while continuing to hold a strong

⁶¹ Vaikuntham, Y., ed. *People's Movements in the Princely States*. Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2004. Print, 47.

position of power. In fact, with the meddling of the Indian National Congress and other nationalist political groups well-known in British and many Indian political circles, the refusal of the State Congress could then be said to be influenced by the external groups of the Indian Union. The reality was a bit more complicated. Since the Nizam still held sway over a substantial portion of the administration, and could appoint 1/3 of the legislative representatives, as well as keeping from providing proportional communal representation, there were plenty of places within the Nizam's reforms which Tirtha could criticize.⁶² However, Tirtha had just allied in all deeds but words with the Communists with the singular point of bringing Hyderabad into the Indian Union, and his answer was predictably in the negative, continuing the violence in the Telengana region of Hyderabad state, which, although lasting through the end of the Nizam's reign, would never become statewide uprising which its leaders had hoped, due to the work of the Nizam's government and supporters within the state.

With the partition of the subcontinent into Hindu-majority and Muslim-majority states, Congress and the Muslim League had also begun to race for the commitments of princely states that had not yet acceded to either India or Pakistan. By virtue of the Indian Independence Act of 1947, the princely states were given the right to choose whether to become part of India, Pakistan or to assert their independence from either of the states.⁶³ This dictum, however, did not stop Congress from pressuring those states to accede to India, and they were willing to use whatever means necessary to acquire territory which they deemed to be naturally part of their own state, in spite of the agreement.

⁶² Ibid, 47.

⁶³ Austin, 179.

To this were added the difficulties with Pakistan, which found their expression not least in the conflicts over the other two princely states, which had left open their decision to join one or the other country after 15 August. One was the small state of Junagadh, which like Hyderabad had a Muslim ruler and a Hindu majority population, but which had a direct access to the sea and geographically was situated much closer to Pakistan ...Wavering whether the appeal to the sovereign people's right to decide the question or the recognition of the existing distribution of internal competencies in the state would bring in greater profits in terms of moral capital and real power, the Indian government reacted to the accession to Pakistan by the ruler of Junagadh by sending the army. The ruler fled and the state became a part of the Union.⁶⁴

Hyderabad clearly presented a different situation for the Indian Union, not only because it was a much larger state, but because of its historical relationship with the British. Nonetheless India had set a precedent, making clear that they were willing not only to negotiate the accession of states into the Union, but that they were willing to use military force to keep whatever they thought fell within their grasp.

In spite of the British *laissez-faire* policy in regard to the princely states, one of the Nizam's advisors, Sir Walter Monckton, was admittedly hesitant about Hyderabad's accession to the Indian Union. Echoing the thoughts of many British officers after the instability caused by the horrors of partition, he advised the Nizam to take a wait-and-see approach to negotiation, stressing that Hyderabad need not associate itself with a fledgling nation likely on the brink of utter collapse and failure. At most he believed a

⁶⁴ Pernau, 328-329.

treaty between Hyderabad and India was the most Hyderabad should offer.⁶⁵ This was contrary to everything that India under Congress leadership was willing to accept. Sardar Patel, arguably the most aggressive and important figure in the politics between the princely states and the Indian union, was adamant that Hyderabad accede to India, and that nothing less than this could begin negotiations. While India began negotiations with Hyderabad on the subject of accession, events in other states, particularly Junagadh and Kashmir, limited the strength of India's bargaining position from its side. The Nizam, aware of the events that occupied India to the north and west was unwavering in his insistence on an agreement which would allow for his authority to be kept intact. This roadblock created the opening that the Nizam needed to press his case to the Indian Union. The influence of the Ittehadul-Mussalmeen at court with the Nizam had steadily grown as a reaction to the growth of the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha during the period of unrest beginning in 1937 and lasting into 1938. At this point in negotiations, its hold over much of the Hyderabad administration was stronger than it had ever been. The organization had no doubt a polarizing position in the politics of Hyderabad, but with the communalization of politics in India leading up to the events occurring as a result of partition, they were found to have the support of an increasing number of Muslims who feared for their welfare and position in what seemed to be a predominantly "Hindu" India. This growing power of the Ittehad was clearly demonstrated on October 27, 1947. After drafts from India and Hyderabad had been delivered back and forth between New Delhi and Hyderabad, V.P. Menon, the chief political advisor to the Governor-General, Lord Mountbatten, had rewritten the agreement to include many of the Nizam's

⁶⁵ Ibid, 328.

conditions, while making clear the eventual accession of Hyderabad to India.⁶⁶ The Nizam had at first seemed willing to sign the documents, but the Ittehad saw the concession of Hyderabad's paramount status as unacceptable. As Sir Walter Monckton and two of the principal negotiators were preparing to leave for Delhi, with at least an agreement in principal from the Nizam, they were blockaded by 25,000 to 30,000 people under the direction of the Ittehad. Remarkably, the protest was completely non-violent, but it did not allow the delegates to leave for Delhi until the leader of the Ittehad, Qasim Razvi, was able to persuade the Nizam to redraft the Agreement once again, reiterating India's commitments in the north of India, and assuring the Nizam of his ability to keep his sovereignty.

From Hyderabad the relationship between North and South India was being strained, in fact, the disconnection had occurred already. Under the view of their dispersed resources, the Indian Union did not compel Hyderabad from a position of strength. Therefore Sardar Patel, Nawab Chattari, Sir Sultan and Mountbatten, by means of their friend [Lord] Monckton had laboured to catch the Nizam in a noose. The Nizam had been made to fear and been threatened falsely in order to force him to accede. To this point, through Monckton's [advice], he had agreed to depart to New Delhi with Sir Sultan and Chattari for the signing of the Standstill Agreement. This whole action was kept in the most secretive manner because Chattari knew that the Deccan Muslims' agreement was in reality to turn into an instrument of accession. No one [Muslim] could be convinced [by the proceedings]. Before the dawn of morning, with all arrangements secretly

⁶⁶ Benichou, 186-187.

completed, the airplane, filled with gas, was about to depart for Delhi. The [secret] information spread like wildfire through the city at 2 am. A huge number of Muslims departed in the direction of the airport. The delegation was stopped [by the Muslims]. The determination of the Muslims having collided with the wrong-headed intentions of the plane's flight, sank the plane into the ocean of a crowd. Chattari second attack was felled by the divine purpose of the Deccani freedom movement.⁶⁷

This action not only demonstrated the strength of the organization of the Ittehad, but indeed seemingly represented their newfound power in conducting affairs of the Hyderabad state reaching a level equal to that of the Nizam; there were no members of the Hyderabad police at the protest of the delegates, and immediately after this each of the delegates respectfully resigned their positions, Monckton as well as the Nizam's prime minister, the Nawab of Chattari.⁶⁸ As can be clearly inferred in reading the Ittehad's characterization of the actions taken against the delegation, the Nawab of Chattari was not a favorite choice of the Ittehad, and they were especially skeptical of Chattari's relationship with the British government, believing that his suspect loyalties drove his desire to move negotiations with the Indian Union ahead. In the process, the Nawab of Chattari, who carried with him the admiration of the British government, as well as perhaps Hyderabad's most ardent British defender in Lord Monckton, resigned their positions in representing Hyderabad's interests to the Indian Union. Razvi and more pro-Ittehad members of the Nizam's inner circle would travel to Delhi instead. It is certain that the Nizam's authority had not just been put to question in his own state, but

⁶⁷ Rizvi, Wajid. *Mujahid-e Azam*. Karachi: Kaleem Press, 1952. Print, 133.

⁶⁸ Bawa, 251-253.

those within the Indian Union government were also to lose faith in any idea of an independent Hyderabad as well because of the Razakar action, even as Razvi and the delegates pressed for a new understanding with the Indian Union.

Qasim Razvi's strategy seemed to be proving effective for his ability to further influence the policy of the Hyderabad government, evidenced by the break up of many of the Nizam's most trusted advisors, but it seems he himself might have been aware of the importance of his own display of power on the morning of October 27. By exhibiting his control over such a large mass of people in the peaceful but effective protest, Razvi signaled to India that Hyderabad was becoming more aggressive in the negotiations. India was of course engaged with Pakistan in Kashmir and was increasing pressure upon Junagadh, but they could not risk a communal uprising in the center of the newly-created state, as it could potentially destabilize much of central India, not even considering the potential for new Hindu-Muslim violence that could unfold there. In this series of events, Hyderabad had demonstrated how pivotal her geography was to the continuance of Indian nation as a whole and most importantly to the negotiations with the state of Hyderabad, but they also seemed to make India that much more determined to control and ultimately bring the Nizam's dominion into step with the rest of the Union, at any and all costs.

Instead of this delegation there was another which included Moin Nawaz Jung, Abdul Rahman and Nipgel Wenket Ramareddy that departed for Delhi. Sir Sultan [still] created potential difficulties in the way of the delegation. In Delhi, the educational qualifications of the members of the delegation were openly inquired about and the delegation, being ridiculed, could not move the discussion

for compromise forward. And when the conditions for delay came into being during the time when Muslim blood had covered Delhi, Sardar Patel invited in Qasim Razvi, who accepted his invitation. Patel was relying on his own capabilities, his confidence in terrifying a stranger and his grasp [of the political situation]. He understood that, to the one who was skinny and of low-standing, the grandeur and pomp of the magnificent government of the Indian Union would terrify [Qasim Razvi] and force him to sign the death warrant of Deccani freedom. But he did not know that the man of low-standing had no small courage and that within his skinny chest was an iron heart.

The series of discussions continued. Patel's every strategy was defeated, every opportunity was missed...Having become irritable, Patel eventually said, 'So then Mr. Razvi, in southern India there will be a terrifying war.'

'And you will find me at the war front, Mr. Patel!' replied Qasim Razvi.

After this Qasim Razvi met with Mr. Gandhi. Gandhi, in his distinguished style, said, 'Sayyed Sahib, save humanity!' You are the person in power in the Deccan, and I hope that there, you will not let the incidents of Northern India happen again.'

Qasim Razvi informed Gandhi of the details [in Hyderabad] and explained, 'Mr. Gandhi, you yourself should witness our condition. If you could not come Miss Amrit Kumar is present here. Her eyes will be able to see the condition of the Hindus and once the research is complete you will have recognized that which was only a frightful appearance.'

The Indian Union Cabinet meeting was held but no solution was found. The following day, November 29, 1947, the agreement of the continued arrangement was signed. The politics of the truthful Muslim overcame the Brahmin parties.⁶⁹

This account of the negotiations between the Hyderabad delegation and the Indian Union in Delhi, while written with the intent of praising the work of Qasim Razvi, offers a fascinating glimpse into the interactions between Razvi and the highest political figures in the Indian Union, as well as the way this event was thought of by those within the Ittehad party itself. The delegation from Hyderabad is said to have been rudely treated, unable to accomplish the task given them by the Nizam and through the desires of Qasim Razvi, who is called to Delhi to himself meet with the Union leaders in hopes of brokering a deal, reinforcing India's knowledge of Razvi as the new political force in the politics of Hyderabad.. Having been described as obstinate and stubborn by many members of the Indian Union,⁷⁰ it is clear here that Razvi was unwillingly to give ground to an equally ferocious adversary in Sardar Patel, whose own stubbornness and wily character were later to be revealed alarmingly to Hyderabad. Gandhi's conversation with Razvi is more revealing, as Gandhi's reference to Razvi as the most influential person within Deccani politics seems less a form of flattery and more the reality confronting the Indian Union, and one with which they were uncomfortable, if only because they were no longer dealing with familiar faces associated with the British Empire in India. Razvi's leadership of the Razakars, as well as his declaration of readiness for war if needed leads into Gandhi's petition against the violence of partition happening again in Hyderabad, which is met with a similarly meek response by Razvi, who is presented as adept to the

⁶⁹ Rizvi, 135.

⁷⁰ Copland, 52.

good cop/bad cop routine which is explicated from the author Rizvi. Razvi's invitation for Gandhi to Hyderabad and see the condition of Hyderabad for himself is particularly interesting, especially considering the exceedingly respectful way in which Gandhi is characterized here. The mention of the good condition of the Hindus in Hyderabad seems to indicate that, at least within the top levels of the Ittehad; the fight was with pro-Indian Hindus, many of whom were a part of the Communist uprising in Telengana and had come from outside the state of Hyderabad, rather than the Hindus of the state itself. Interestingly, the fact that there were no major visitations by any of the major figures within the Indian Union until after Hyderabad's capitulation is perhaps one of the most peculiar parts of this period, and likely one of the most telling, for as India dealt with other places within the subcontinent up to the invasion of Hyderabad, they're policy of negotiations on the points of the Nizam's government seemed to be more about toeing a line politically than it was about any sort of compromise. One is left to wonder here whether the economic blockade of Hyderabad by India was known by Gandhi at this time, for it certainly must have been a factor in keeping Union leaders from crossing into the state.

On the surface, India and Hyderabad's signing of the Standstill Agreement on November 29, 1947, left the Nizam's paramount power intact and mainly related to the easing of political tension between the parties for one year through agreements on defense, communication and foreign affairs.⁷¹ The Standstill Agreement would become the forum where the grievances that perpetuated the relationship between India and Hyderabad would be aired. It was originally understood by the Nizam and the Razakars

⁷¹ Government of Hyderabad, *Hyderabad's Relations with the Dominion of India: Vol II*. Hyderabad: Government Press, 1948, 27.

as a victory achieved by standing up to the leaders of the Indian Union. “Qasim Razvi returned to Hyderabad—victorious! From his victory the adorers of freedom encouraged and the perception of Deccani freedom had physically gone before the entire world.”⁷² The reality was, however, more complex, and perhaps even favored India in that it both bought them time while they dealt with pressing matters in Kashmir and organized themselves more fully and also through the Agreement itself, which kept the issue of accession as one between India and Hyderabad.⁷³ Had no agreement been signed, Hyderabad would have for all intents and purposes been acting alone and thus independent, giving it an even stronger claim to freedom from India than it had from the dissipation of the British Empire in India. There is some disagreement on whether the agreement itself was actually the same one which would have been signed by the first delegation before they were stopped, which would seem to damage the place of Razvi in defending Hyderabad’s legitimacy as Cantwell Smith asserts.⁷⁴ But the Standstill Agreement allowed negotiations to be prolonged, and thus, hope for independence to continue within the state of Hyderabad and gave momentum to the Nizam and those around him in the weeks following the Agreement. While this seemed a victory for the Nizam, in fact it demonstrated the precarious position from which he was forced to act. The communal harmony that had characterized Hyderabad and the Nizam’s rule was under pressure. Too weak militarily to truly threaten the Indian Union, too strong for India to ignore, he had to walk a fine line between both communities in his own state, especially after the bloodbath of partition. His decision to continue to define Hyderabad

⁷² Rizvi, 136.

⁷³ Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. “Hyderabad: Muslim Tragedy.” *The Middle East Journal* 4.1 (1950): 27-51. *JSTOR*. Web. 6 Apr. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4322137>, 37.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 38.

as separate from India and from Pakistan revealed a deeper concern for the peace and well-being of those within his domain.

He seems to have realized at an early stage what dangers the concept of partition held for Hyderabad. An accession to the Indian Union, which surrounded the state from all sides, would probably have been followed by a *coup d'état* by the Ittehad and a blood bath among the religious communities. An accession to the distant Pakistan, however, would have caused a revolt by the Hindus and thus ended in a blood bath as well.⁷⁵

By keeping Hyderabad separate from the rest of India, the Nizam felt he was acting in the best interests of his state, for a variety of reasons. Clearly he was concerned about the potential for uprising by either community as a reaction against joining what were seen as “Hindu” and “Muslim” states, but he recognized that Hyderabad’s position was equally precarious for both India and Pakistan, who could not afford to be involved militarily in the central part of India as well as the north, which would threaten to dismantle completely what all parties had worked to build. With these circumstances brought to light, the Nizam’s actions appear much more precarious, and not without a touch of concern for the future of not just his state, but the subcontinent as a whole. It kept the conflict between India and Pakistan regionalized while buying more time for negotiation and compromise between Hyderabad and the Indian Union. Unfortunately, his position as head of the of the largest princely state, and one that geographically separated north from south India, made him too dangerous in the minds of the Indian leaders to trust, as events would come to show.

⁷⁵ Pernau, 307.

Upon the signing of the Standstill Agreement, India had agreed to re-supply the Nizam's police and agreed upon military forces, which needed ammunition and equipment that the British had helped to provide in the past, and India had been obliged to continue for one year according to the Agreement.⁷⁶ However, it soon became clear that India, despite agreeing to the Standstill Agreement in principal, was concerned only with buying time for its forces to end the conflict in Kashmir, and relocate themselves to Hyderabad. For its part Hyderabad had been struggling to put down the Communist rebellion in its eastern districts, most of which is located in today's Andhra Pradesh, and was also facing stiff resistance from invaders who continued to cross in and out of its borders which were supposed to be protected by the Government of India. While the Nizam continued to plead with India to provide the ammunition and military equipment that it had been promised, India in turn criticized the Nizam and his government for exceeding the limits of his armed forces, and no help was provided.⁷⁷

The Nizam's response was exasperatedly clear.

Four further months have now elapsed and not a rifle or a round of ammunition has been supplied to Hyderabad ...If the State Forces and Police are adequately armed and equipped to enable them to cope with the raiders, and the Provincial Governments co-operate with Hyderabad, the whole *raison d'être* of the Razakars will disappear.⁷⁸

The Government of India was much more intentional in its support of the Communist uprising in Telengana than it let on. India knew that with its troops still located in

⁷⁶ Government of Hyderabad, 29.

⁷⁷ Benichou, 204.

⁷⁸ Government of Hyderabad, 37, 41.

Kashmir dealing with the Pakistani marauders there, they could not afford to split their forces and give support to the ill-equipped forces of Hyderabad. Their response to the increasing level of troops in the Nizam's army as well as the growth of the Razakars was a direct response to the uprising, but India's reaction only demonstrates their ultimate desire of the capitulation to Indian sovereignty in one way or the other. Indeed, if India's army was occupied at the present moment, why not allow others to weaken the resolve and manpower of Nizam's forces. Even Gandhi, at this time, when approached by members of the Hyderabad State Congress about the possibility of a more aggressive campaign against the Nizam in Hyderabad, told the State Congress to "practice non-violence as best you can,"⁷⁹ which seemed to reflect, in the case of Hyderabad, a less patient and compassionate approach by the Indian leader known for these very same qualities.

The Indian socialists were also at this time actively engaged in rioting on the borders of the state of Hyderabad, and under Tirtha's leadership the remnant of the State Congress had been joined with the Communists to fight against the Nizam's troops in the east with the goal of forcing accession to India. From their respective positions along the border between Hyderabad and India, the Communists were encouraging the villages to resist the Nizam and accede to India. Almost every one of these villages were overwhelmingly Hindu, and many were smuggled arms from different parts of India to fight against the hierarchical society imposed on the lower classes by the government of Hyderabad. The camps from where many of the attacks were coming as well as the ammunition for the uprising in Telengana were under the authority of Sardar Patel.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Roosa, 75.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 75.

Apparently, there were arms coming from India to Hyderabad after all. Patel intended to make use of the camps to support the attempts to weaken the Nizam's grip on the state of Hyderabad, but he kept a close eye on the camps for a few other pertinent reasons as well.

The Socialists had joined forces with the Communists in Telengana to continue guerilla fighting against the Hyderabad military and police forces, trumpeted by the robbing of a bank in Umri on January 30, 1948, by Congress forces, who in the process killed 3 policeman, 2 bank employees, and made off with 200,000 rupees, shocking much of Hyderabad and particularly the less revolutionary members of the Hyderabad State Congress, many of whom were landowners and continued to resent the lack of respect for property by the radical revolutionaries in Telengana. They were certainly even more perturbed by the migration of almost all of the landowning class left in Telengana and its surrounding regions into the capital city for fear of the violence now an essential part of life in the northeastern part of the Hyderabad State.⁸¹ Patel was overseeing the supply of both the native Hyderabad fighters as well as the more radical Indian forces who had come to help the State Congressman in their fight for accession alongside the Communists, but Patel was especially concerned to know the results of the violence after the Communist Party of India, of which the Hyderabad Communists were a part, had publicly turned away from supporting Nehru and were advocating resistance against the government of India itself. While this did not change the alliance between the State Congress and Communists within Hyderabad, it made the attempts to support the revolt much more worrisome for India, as they were unsure whether they might have been supplying its own enemies. Nehru and Patel were becoming increasingly concerned

⁸¹ Ibid, 77.

about this possibility throughout 1948, especially as it was the Communists, who had stayed out of the cross-border camps themselves, who had asserted themselves most in Telengana and was receiving adulation for their place of leadership in the Telengana uprising, even as their alliance within the region was coming apart, splitting the Communists there into 3 less effective segments.⁸² This split was certainly of great help for the Nizam's forces, and no doubt helped the military contend with the Communists in the east and limit its effectiveness in moving outside into other parts of the Hyderabad state.

Because of India's organization around Hyderabad, due both to the economic blockade as well as the cross-border camps, Patel, with the Communists turn against India, thought that the invasion of Hyderabad should be begin while the fighting was still taking place in Telengana.⁸³ Patel reasoned that a concerted attack could flatten the Nizam's stretched forces, while then enabling a quick success against the weakened Communist organization in Telengana, effectively ending both threats. However, both Nehru and Mountbatten were absolutely against his line of thinking, Mountbatten in particular, since the potential for a communal response much like partition seemed a real possibility, especially with the situation in Kashmir growing progressively more intense and Jinnah's continued support of the Nizam's regime.

It is only too ironic that during this time that the Nizam and his new prime minister, Mir Laik Ali, an industrialist associated financially with the Ittehadul Mussalmeen, were openly encouraging reconciliation between the more hostile Hindu groups that had been part of much of the earlier communal disturbances in Hyderabad,

⁸² Thirumali, I. "The Political Pragmatism of the Communists in Telengana: 1938-1948." *Social Scientist* 24.4 (1996): 164-183. *JSTOR*. Web. 7 Mar. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3517795>, 17.

⁸³ Roosa, 79.

going so far as to pardon most everyone who had been barred because of previous actions, in an effort to begin reforms of his government.⁸⁴ The border wars that were overwhelmingly communal in nature made these efforts almost completely insignificant, continuing to rip apart the religious communities of Hyderabad, much to the dismay of Mir Laik Ali.

The border raids of which the Muslim residents and their property was the principal target and internal disturbances engineered and conducted with similar objects only helped to arouse the Muslims and resulted in the overnight growth of the much publicized Razakar movement. The events, however, considerably embittered the communal feelings in the State and upset the communal harmony to a degree that had never been experienced before.⁸⁵

It is not surprising then that the ranks of the Razakars grew large during this time of instability, but it is impressive that the Nizam's police and armed forces combined with regiments of Razakar and other Hyderabadī volunteers were able to keep the state from flooding into complete chaos during this time. The Razakars themselves cited the border raids as one of main reasons for the formation and momentum of their movement.

And then on chief boundary of the Hyderabadī Sultanate a crowd and Sevek Sangh and army personnel established raiding camps, from where our country's poorest villages and unarmed Muslims were attacked one after another. They [Sevek Sangh and army personnel] began killing them and burning their houses.

Their women were raped and their children made slaves. These events made firm

⁸⁴ Benichou, 198-202.

⁸⁵ Ali, 129.

our freedom-passion and every single Deccan Muslim, for the security of his ancestral honor, became a Razakar.⁸⁶

It is interesting here to note than in the case of the Ittehad ul-Mussalmeen, just like the Razakars, growth of the organization took place in reaction to disturbances and attacks which had come from outside of Hyderabad, indicating the violent changes which communal and national politics brought to the state. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, in his work *Hyderabad: Muslim Tragedy* captures the effect of the partition upon the psyche of the Muslims of Hyderabad, helping to explain the massive mobilization of the Razakar movement for the defense of Hyderabad in the face of the insurmountable opposition of India.

The Muslims reposed, too, a remarkably blind faith in the legal validity of their position, and it will be generally conceded that in the dispute with India, Hyderabad's case was on the whole considerably stronger in law. Along with their false sense in traditional and legal security went perhaps the opposite—a subconscious fear. They were frightened by what, in the explosive weeks following partition, had happened to millions of their coreligionists in northern India; frightened perhaps by the awareness of what would happen to them, once they lost their supremacy at home. Such a dread, growing more intense and irrational, may have inhibited them from facing facts, as well as driven them to aggression. Or, more rationally, there were those that felt that any concession to

⁸⁶ Rizvi, 132.

Hindu India would in any case eventuate in their doom; and that therefore resistance, at any cost, could not be wrong.⁸⁷

The changes wrought by partition certainly helped to convince many of the Muslims of Hyderabad that giving into any Indian demands could bring them the same fate as many in the Punjab and Bengal, and these fears were made all the more real by the border raids into Hyderabad by those supported by India, evidence of the spirit with which India would treat the Muslims of Hyderabad once they had acceded to India. While Cantwell Smith describes many of these fears as irrational, events which happened later in Hyderabad tended to justify the ardor with which many Muslims worked to defend Hyderabad from capitulation.

Nonetheless, Hyderabad continued to be on its heels in reacting to the larger strategies of those within the Indian Union, due as much to the still faint hope for British intervention as to the dealing with the internal problems brought by the Communist movement in Telengana, as well as its own geographic limitations. In the case of the border raids, with no help from India in fighting the radical elements along the borders with Hyderabad, and no ammunition and key equipment coming into Hyderabad, how were they able to keep the state workable during this tumultuous stage? A likely answer can be found at the earlier period of mobilization only 10 years earlier, when the “Congress-backed Hindu agitation against the Nizam’s regime”⁸⁸ was cited by Dick Kooiman as unsuccessful because of the continuing loyalty among most people in the state to the Nizam.⁸⁹ There is no doubt that many people from Hyderabad were full

⁸⁷ Cantwell Smith, 51-52.

⁸⁸ Benichou, 91.

⁸⁹ Kooiman, 176.

participants in the border raids as well as the Telengana Communist movement. Yet it seems likely that most remained unconvinced of their need to rise against the Nizam. He had been known as a ruler with an ear to the problems of the people in his state, regardless of faith, and most of Hyderabad was unwilling to fight on the side of outsiders bent on creating instability. Indeed, without the Indian army to help guard the borders, many more people from the Indian Union were able to come in and out of the state, and their continued presence, while a detriment to Hyderabad, did not lead to the full-fledged uprising that these groups had expected.

As Hyderabad's forces continued to expand to fight the increasing pressure along its borders, the rhetoric out of India continued to become stronger. Starting in January 1948, when the former Arya Samaj leader and K.M. Munshi had been sent, most likely under the insistence of Sardar Patel,⁹⁰ on a "diplomatic" mission to Hyderabad bragging about the quick takeover of Junagadh by the Indian armed forces, for obvious reasons, the nature of the Standstill Agreement had become clear. What had happened at Junagadh would happen in Hyderabad if a political solution was not found, and quickly.

After India demanded the complete dismantling of the entire Razakar organization, they had begun a total economic blockade of the state, although this was something that neither Mountbatten nor Nehru were willing to admit publicly.⁹¹ If Hyderabad had any doubt about the meaning of the border raids, the inability of Hyderabad to sell its goods to Indian markets confirmed the true intention of the Indian government, which was put forth in a direct manner by Nehru on April 25, at the All-India Congress meeting in Bombay.

⁹⁰ Bawa, 271.

⁹¹ Pernau, 332.

‘There are two courses now open to Hyderabad—war or accession,’ Pandit Nehru said. ‘War is a prolonged affair, and if we resort to it, many new problems will arise. We have therefore been trying to solve this problem by negotiations, but that does not mean that we are afraid of following the path to war.’⁹²

Hyderabad was forced to examine what kind of preparations it needed to take for the coming invasion. It was clear that with the present state of affairs there was no hope of holding off the Indian army if they were ordered to attack. India and Pakistan had been forced to halt their aggression in Kashmir partly because of international pressure to end the conflict, which was heeded by Mountbatten and the Indian leaders. It had continued to be Mountbatten’s wish to settle the issue with Hyderabad by peaceful means as opposed to creating another quagmire in the middle of India, just after Kashmiri conflict, and he reiterated his hope for a resolution without bloodshed to the Nizam as his time as Governor-General was coming to an end.

As you know, I am leaving India in 6 ½ weeks’ time. The main object which I hope to achieve before my departure is to retain peace and tranquility in South India and to do all in my power to re-establish good relations between Hyderabad and India without which these conditions cannot be maintained. I believe that Your Exalted Highness must have similar objects at heart.⁹³

It is reiterated through a variety of sources that Mountbatten was clearly pursuing a peaceful end to the tensions between Indian and Hyderabad, but it is also clear that his

⁹² Hyderabad’s Relations with the Dominion of India. Vol. II. Hyderabad: Government Press, 1948, 10.

⁹³ Government of Hyderabad Vol. II, 17.

own legacy as well as that of his country, Britain, had a strong interest in clearing up the matter in the most expedient way. Having seen the carnage of partition and soon after the war between India and Pakistan over the area of Kashmir that was resolved through international pressure, another major political crisis in the subcontinent would leave Britain with virtually no credibility in their attempt to leave India in a position of sustainability as a nation.

The Nizam, understanding that his window of time for a peaceful settlement was running out, now made a move that surprised even the Indian government. The government of India had made it clear to the Nizam during the early negotiations that led to the Standstill Agreement that they would abide by the will of a plebiscite within his dominion.

If, however, the Nizam's Government are still unable to decide their course in the only right direction in which it lies, His Exalted Highness must agree to submit the issue to the judgment of his people and abide by their decision. *We on our side will be content to accept whatever might be the result of such a referendum.*⁹⁴

Indeed, the government continued to stress that this offer for a plebiscite was true and on the table for the Nizam to accept. Yet here he was, in the summer of 1948, offering India the very consolation that they had reiterated to him in the month of April 1948. What are particularly interesting in this offer are the implications associated with the acceptance of a plebiscite. If this action was taken up, the Nizam's authority would be undone from the beginning, because he was no longer recognizing the authority given him by the Indian Independence Act to choose for his own state what to become. With this in mind, it

⁹⁴ Government of India, 34. (emphasis added)

becomes difficult to believe India's characterization of the Nizam as one whom "for all his life thwarted the legitimate aspirations of his people."⁹⁵ In fact his actions seem to point to the conclusion that the Nizam might have been most concerned with preserving the independence of his state, and ending the communal rioting that was plaguing his state all along the borders with India.

India's response to this final move by the Nizam made clear their intentions from the start of negotiations. In Kashmir, they had recognized the right of a princely state to accede according to the will of the ruler, because the Maharaja had decided at the last moment for India. Here the Nizam was offering to give up his earlier claim of independence in order that his people were given the option to choose to remain independent or join the Indian Union, just the request that India had made of the Nizam only a few months before. But India now saw no need of a plebiscite, now that the situation in Kashmir was temporarily resolved and they would be able to press the issue with Hyderabad with the full military option available. India realized that if they went ahead with such a vote, there would have to be a third-party to arbitrate and make certain that the election was legitimate, a move that by the standards of international law implied equality between the two nations, something India would certainly not accept. At the same time if India was unable to prove that Hyderabad was a dependent state within India, so bringing up this point would lead to an inevitably difficult situation for India. According to Benichou, the Heads of Agreement clause in the Standstill Agreement was kept specifically to give India a semblance of paramountcy over Hyderabad, something vague enough that gave them flexibility in their negotiations with the Nizam. Submitting to a plebiscite would thus end this hazy paramountcy and would draw international

⁹⁵ Ibid, 35.

attention toward what India believed to be a domestic affair.⁹⁶ If the international community were to get involved, India would no longer have free rein to decide Hyderabad's fate and this would be unacceptable. Nonetheless, it is worth to note that India had been preparing itself with the notion that Hyderabad would attempt to take their case to the international court, evidenced by Nehru's correspondence with Vallabhai Patel from July 23, 1948.

You are aware of the fact that there is every chance of Hyderabad State Government referring their dispute with us to the United Nations. We should not wait for this reference and then think about it. We should therefore take immediate steps to prepare our answer and to clear up our own minds as to the attitude we should take. I hope therefore that the State Ministry is thinking about this and preparing for it.⁹⁷

In spite of its preparedness, and because of the implications involved in the dialogue on a plebiscite, which India had itself started and continued into 1948, India chose not to negotiate with the Nizam under the conditions he espoused.

After Mountbatten had left for England, Sardar Patel was quick to let Hyderabad know that the rules of the game had changed considerably.

It appears, however, that on the very day of his [Mountbatten's] departure, Patel wrote (to N.V. Gadgil, a minister in the Nehru Cabinet) that the time had come ' to take firm and definite action ...to go ahead with determination and vigour in applying the economic sanctions as well as dealing effectively with border and

⁹⁶ Benichou, 221.

⁹⁷ Khalidi, Omar, ed. *Hyderabad: After the Fall*. Wichita: n.p., 1988. Print, 212.

other incidents and to put the military in a state of preparedness for all eventualities' ... thus, no settlement, tightened economic blockade and stepped-up military preparations were now India's strategies.⁹⁸

Patel had been adamant about concluding the situation with Hyderabad ever since the Standstill agreement had been signed, but because of Mountbatten and, to a lesser extent, Nehru's insistence upon a peaceful accession, he had been forced to toe the party line on negotiations. Patel had called Hyderabad "a cancer in the belly of India"⁹⁹ and his aggressiveness could not have come at a more opportune time for India. The economic blockade had stopped, among other things, chlorine from entering Hyderabad, and a cholera epidemic had begun to spread in many areas of the state because of the lack of clean water.¹⁰⁰ In light of this inhumane situation, Hyderabad's plight was beginning to gather international attention through a variety of outlets, not the least of which was the UPI bureau set up by Hyderabad, much to the chagrin of the India Union.¹⁰¹ In an interesting twist of fate, an Australian pilot named Sidney Cotton was visiting Hyderabad, and having sympathy for the deteriorating situation there, offered his services. As a former reconnaissance pilot for the Royal Air Force, he flew supplies, mainly medical supplies, into Hyderabad from Pakistan past the Indian blockade garnering international sympathy for Hyderabad.¹⁰² In this way Pakistan was also able to participate in supporting the Nizam against India's attempts to suffocate Hyderabad into capitulation.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 225.

⁹⁹ Austin, 182.

¹⁰⁰ Benichou, 226.

¹⁰¹ Government of Hyderabad, 33.

¹⁰² Austin, 183.

With the spotlight on the situation becoming brighter, India readied its army for an assault upon Hyderabad. The Nizam, knowing now that an invasion was imminent, had decided to take his case to the international community in order to prevent the capitulation of his state to the Indian army, under Patel's command. When the Nizam sent word to New Delhi that he intended to send a delegation to the United Nations to plead Hyderabad's case, and as such would need passports for his contingent, he was met with a stiff and final retort.

The Government of India regard the difference between them and Hyderabad as a purely domestic issue and cannot admit that Hyderabad considering its historic as well as its present position in relation to India, has any right to international law to seek the intervention of that or any other outside body for a settlement of the issue.¹⁰³

The Nizam, in a state of desperation, was undeterred by India's response. On August 21, 1948, representatives of Hyderabad, flown through the blockade by Cotton, submitted their plea to the United Nations Security Council for arbitration, stressing the pressing nature of their position.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, Prime Minister Laik Ali was sent to Pakistan to enlist the help of Jinnah, hoping that Pakistani show of support would hold back India's invasion for the time needed for the Security Council proceedings. The presence of Laik Ali in Pakistan illustrated the significance of the moment, for India was sure to learn of the visit, and might attack even sooner. Nonetheless, with circumstances as they were, Hyderabad was grasping for any possible help, as they had no hope or

¹⁰³ Vaikuntham, 62.

¹⁰⁴ Eagleton, 277.

genuine desire to resist the invasion, as later events demonstrated. Unfortunately for Hyderabad and Laik Ali, he was unable to garner Jinnah's favor, most likely in part due to his bed-ridden condition, to which he would soon succumb. Nehru, learning of Laik Ali's mission, as well as the increasing support that Hyderabad was earning among the international community, declared India's intention to occupy Secunderabad on September 10. Not knowing for sure whether Laik Ali had succeeded in his mission, India intended to send in a full military invasion that would quickly oblige Hyderabad to submit to Indian rule.¹⁰⁵

With India's official declaration of war, the Nizam reiterated Hyderabad's impending capitulation in a telegram sent to the Security Council on September 12, asking for the matter to be considered as soon as possible in light of the "officially proclaimed intention of India as announced by its Prime Minister to invade Hyderabad."¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately for the Nizam, and despite criticism from many nations regarding the Indian invasion, the United Nations postponed the matter until later, effectively ending any hope of the international community coming to the aid of the Nizam.¹⁰⁷ In light of timing of the United Nations postponement, it seems likely that not only Indian interests, but British weight helped to defer the matter until after the invasion had succeeded. Hyderabad, having been abandoned once again by the British, was left to wait for the impending attack. India began its invasion the next day, expecting to encounter large resistance, but according to Pernau, it was not just the desperate situation facing the Hyderabad army, but probably the insistence of the Nizam and others within

¹⁰⁵ Austin, 188.

¹⁰⁶ Eagleton (needs to be cited), 278.

¹⁰⁷ Talbot, Phillips. "Kashmir and Hyderabad." *World Politics* 1.3 (1949): 321-332. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 Apr. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2009033>, 327.

the ranks of command, who told the forces to offer little resistance, in the light of the futility of the fight.¹⁰⁸

While its army was on its way to Hyderabad, the Indian government was fighting a public relations battle with the international community. While the invasion was popular amongst the people of India, the violence relating to partition and subsequently in Kashmir had alerted the international community to the problems within the subcontinent, and another military episode had the potential to destabilize the region in the minds of many observers; indeed, as was mentioned earlier, it was Nehru's fear of such a reaction by Pakistan to an invasion of Hyderabad which had kept him at the negotiating table.

V.P. Menon, while briefing the American embassy just after the military invasion began on September 13, stated that 'one of the reasons why it was necessary for the Indian Government to march into Hyderabad was to put down the Communists, who were completely out of control in certain areas of the state. Menon promised that one of the first steps the Indian army would take after occupying the capital city was to 'clean out' the Communists and eradicate 'Communism from the Communists' strongholds.'¹⁰⁹

It is certainly clear that while India felt that the invasion was the correct play, their arguments for the invasion of Hyderabad did not rest on a legal right to the accession of the state, instead focusing on broader and more accepted issues of communism and democracy.

¹⁰⁸ Pernau, 336.

¹⁰⁹ Roosa, 80.

As the Indian army lumbered towards Hyderabad on Friday, September 16, the Security Council heard the case as presented by ministers of both Hyderabad and India, but despite the critical nature of the situation, the Council chose to postpone any kind of decision on the matter until the following Monday.¹¹⁰ When the Nizam learned of the postponement of the matter, the Indian army was only miles away from Hyderabad, and he thus announced the capitulation of his government on September 17, 1948.

In the aftermath of the invasion, the army, under the command of Joyanto Nath Chaudari took up the administration of the state of Hyderabad, as the Nizam rescinded his petition to the United Nations according Hyderabad international mediation with India. While the 100 hours or so of minor conflict had seen little casualties amongst those in either the Indian or Hyderabad forces, some of the Nizam's strongest expressed fears about accession to India came true. Once the administrative capacity of the government had been reduced to the Indian army, Muslims, whether the large landowning jagirdars or poorer city dwellers, were cut down in a fashion that made previous state incidents throughout the Nizam's reign, including Razakar brutality, seem paltry in comparison.

Off the battlefield, however, the Muslim community fell before a massive and brutal blow, the devastation of which left those who did survive in bewildered fear. Thousands upon thousands were slaughtered; many hundreds of thousands uprooted. The instrument of their disaster, was, of course, vengeance.

Particularly in the Maratwara section of the state, and to a less but terrible extent in most other areas, the story of the days after 'police action' is grim.

¹¹⁰ Eagleton, 280.

The only careful report on what happened in this period was made a few months later by investigators—including a Congress Muslim and a sympathetic but admired Hindu—commissioned by the Indian government to study the situation. The report was submitted but has not been published; presumably it makes an unpleasant reading. It is widely held that the figure mentioned therein for the number of Muslims massacred is 50,000. Other estimates by responsible observers run as high as 200,000, and by some of the Muslims themselves still higher. The lowest estimates, even those offered privately by apologists of the military government, come to at least 10 times the number of murders with which previously the Razakars were officially accused.¹¹¹

It seems here that while the Nizam had concerned himself especially with eliminating the possibility of the atrocities of partition happening within Hyderabad, upon his removal, these events transpired anyway, on a scale which seems unbelievable with the presence of a large armed force, but on further view seem to reflect the resentment of communal forces not just within Hyderabad, but perhaps throughout India as a whole. Cantwell Smith reports that somewhere between 10-20% of the Muslim men in state of Hyderabad state were killed in the violence, which seemed to have occurred mostly during the period between the invasion and the setting up of martial law by Chaudari, who himself was considered a strict and well-respected commander.¹¹² Unfortunately, as it seems with many army occupations, the capacity for troop violence in Hyderabad was no different. Combined with the breakdown of the administrative system and police force run almost entirely by Muslims, the atrocities committed on Muslims and much of their property

¹¹¹ Cantwell Smith, 46.

¹¹² Ibid, 47.

seemed inevitable, especially keeping in mind the intensity of the previous few years in Hyderabad and India as a whole. While many of the remaining Muslims fled Hyderabad for Pakistan and other locations, a large contingent of Muslims remained in Hyderabad and had to endure the see-sawing effect of their privileged position, whereby many Hindus took over the positions which during the Nizam's rule had been almost strictly Muslim, leaving the majority of remaining Muslims in positions of poverty in a state, in their view, gone topsy-turvy.

Conclusions

Throughout most of its long history, the state of Hyderabad had received legitimacy, in part, through its association with more powerful kingdoms, from the Mughal Empire through its alliance with the British Empire through both the 19th and 20th centuries. In both of these cases, shrewd political dealings by each of the Nizams as well as members of his court had enabled the state to grow and prosper into the largest and richest of the princely state of India. Mir Osman Ali Khan, as the last Nizam, saw Hyderabad reach perhaps the pinnacle of its glory at the close of World War I by being esteemed among Great Britain's highest allies and even considered by Muslims throughout the subcontinent as the highest arbiter of Islam in India and potential successor to the Caliphate in Turkey after the fall of the Ottomans. Yet only 30 years later he could only watch despondently as his state was invaded and overrun by the army of the newly formed Indian Union, ending the over 200 years of rule by the Asaf Jahi dynasty in Hyderabad.

The Nizam, while less charismatic than his father, had stayed true to the same principles with which previous rulers of Hyderabad had governed successfully. In the case of his relationship to the British, he had been implored during the first and second World Wars to act according to the supremacy which his position offered him, so as to ensure that His Majesty's interests were secured within India. In resisting the wave of democracy which had come to subcontinent and, even to Hyderabad, during the latter stages of his reign, Mir Osman was complying with the power whose authority would ascertain his state's legitimacy once they had subsisted as the paramount power in the

subcontinent. Ultimately, however, the British were no longer able to fulfill their obligations in their relationship to the Nizam, whose government, although having long been a faithful British ally, could no longer serve the interest of the Commonwealth for the creation of a stable India.

An India deprived of the States would have lost all coherence...If no more than the Central Indian States and Hyderabad and Mysore were excluded from the Union, the United Provinces would be almost completely would be almost completely out from Bombay, and Bombay completely from Sindh. The strategic and economic implications are obvious enough. The practicability of Pakistan must be admitted...India could live if its Moslem limbs in the North and North-East were amputated but could it live without its heart?¹¹³

It was nonetheless a complete shock for the Nizam to find that the British, whom he had trusted and appealed to most according to their promises and actions, would refuse to hold up their end of the alliance upon which the Nizam had based his own governing policy.

In a twist of irony, The Nizam's dealings with the Indian Union had resembled much of the approach which Muhammad Ali Jinnah had employed in the run up to partition, and even after within Kashmir, with similar results. Jinnah had counseled the Nizam since the beginning of World War II, and, had been unwavering in his insistence that the Nizam resist any sort of accession to India, to which the Nizam eagerly obliged. As his political fortunes rapidly deteriorated around him, it was eerily symbolic for the Nizam, in his last ditch effort to garner Pakistan's support before the invasion of

¹¹³ Vaikuntham, 60.

Hyderabad by the Indian army, to find Jinnah on his deathbed, in much the same condition as the state of Hyderabad.

The strategy throughout for the Nizam in his dealings with the Indian Union had been to hold to the guarantees of sovereignty made to Hyderabad by Britain, with the assumption that these agreements would be held valid by the Indian Union.

Unfortunately in the case of the Nizam, as this paper has repeatedly shown, there was never any acceptance by India of Hyderabad's decision to opt for sovereignty under the Indian Independence Act of 1947.

But war is inevitable, if the Indian Union has not the heart to declare war, Razvi will, not today perhaps, but tomorrow or the day after. He may want a few weeks' time until he is more definitely assured of Pakistan help or foreign support. The Nizam has powerful allies in Pakistan and in London. Razvi has a cause and the Nizam has claims—stupid, frivolous and dishonest thought they may be. But have not stupid, frivolous and dishonest claims been the foundations for war before.¹¹⁴

The religious character of partition had certainly placed doubt in the minds of even the most tolerant on the side of both India and Pakistan, and while Hyderabad had worked for so long because of the general communal harmony, the changes wrought by the independence movement and subsequent communal divisions between Hindus and Muslims weakened Hyderabad while creating the events which would lead its downfall.

The rise of the Communist movement in Telengana had appeared due in large part to the inability of the Nizam to distinguish between genuine attempts at reform by those

¹¹⁴ Gauba, K. L. Hyderabad or India. Delhi: Raj Kamal Publications Limited, 1948.

within Hyderabad and the continued political pressure which India had been exerting on Hyderabad, seen most especially in the Satyagraha preceding World War II as well as the later border incursions which grew more intense in the days after the partition. Even those Hyderabadis who attempted reform within their state were connected with larger all-India parties supported by the Congress, making the ability to discern their real intentions that much more difficult as the tensions between religious communities in the subcontinent grew stronger.

The very nature of the Hyderabad's government was especially disturbing to most within the Indian Union, as a government composed of Muslims made them a possible threat to the stability of the newly-formed state, as well as to India's relationship with Pakistan. The experience of these events then, as well as the violence in other states like Kashmir, had greatly hardened the resolve of those within the Indian government to ensure that nothing of a similar nature would happen again in Hyderabad, and they were willing to do all within their power to ensure an outcome in India's favor. Particularly, the appeal of the United Nations to investigate Indian dealings with other princely states, like Junagadh, demonstrated to the Congress leaders that they would have to act themselves in order to solve the puzzle which Hyderabad had provided, or else risk an unfavorable arbitration in the international community. The Nizam, consistently under pressure from those within his government, the Razakars, and state of affairs outside the state, had continued to work for what he felt were the best interests of his state and those under its banner, but without the support promised to him, could not stand up to against the strength of the Indian Union. It took all the efforts of the Nizam's government along with those who supported him to resist the internal struggles brought about by the rise of

a communist consciousness among those who led the uprising in Telengana, as well the raids into Hyderabad coordinated by India and those proxy organizations loyal to it. India, like a great python, slowly wrapped its coils around Hyderabad, and while the Nizam exhausted every effort to prolong the life of his state, he was ultimately strangled into submission.

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Vita

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