IMPLEMENTING FEDERALISM: LORD LOTHIAN, THE ROUND TABLE AND THE ENACTMENT OF THE 1935 INDIA ACT

1. Lothian, Nehru, and the enactment of the Act.

Once the parliamentary battle to ratify the 1935 India Act was won, Lothian directed all his efforts at the Indian front, trying to persuade Congress to co-operate. India's real political problem was that the moderates did not have popular following, that Congress—the only really organized and vital Indian political force—consisted of heterogeneous forces held together by nationalistic spirit, and that the loyalty of the younger generation was divided between Congress, local organizations, and various religious faiths. Lothian therefore decided to establish personal contacts with Gandhi and Nehru, representing Congress' spiritual and progressive soul.

On 6 December 1935 Lothian invited Nehru to Bickling Hall, his country house in Norfolk, hoping that Halifax—with whom Nehru had marked differences of opinion while Viceroy in India—could also be present. Nehru was actually in Germany at the time, where his wife was undergoing medical treatment, but he confessed to Agatha Harrison, honorary secretary of the Indian Conciliation Group—who had done all in her power to put Lothian in contact with Nehru—that his heart had hardened a great deal in the last few years:

> The iron has entered our souls. We may not bark as we used to do, as Sir Samuel Hoare ... put it but silent dogs have also their feelings. We expected oppression and cruelty and we got full measure of them, but it is harder to bear them when they are accompanied by ostentatious vulgarity and a sickening hypocrisy. It is this atmosphere that has strangled and suffocated us and made it almost impossible for us to consider anything but the hands at our throats and the foul air we had to breathe.[1]

In his invitation to Nehru, Lothian pointed out that Bickling Hall was "one of the most beautiful houses and gardens in England", where they would be able to get to know each other in their own time, if nothing else because "for good or evil the destinies of India and England are still closely interlocked". They should try to establish "friendly and informal personal contacts", so that even if they did not reach an immediate agreement, it would probably "make possible understanding later on". "A Divine purpose of tremendous significance", Lothian asserted,

> is working through mankind today. The old international order and the old economic system are breaking up. As always in revolutionary epochs, few people see more than a corner of the new world order, or of the right way to reach it, which makes agreement so difficult, and progress so slow and so full of agonizing conflict.[2]

Replying to the invitation on 9 December, Nehru regretted he could not accept it, at least for the time being, adding meaningfully "I like the beautiful houses and countryside of England and your superlative description of Blickling attracts me, but it is really the man I want to see not the house he owns". Although they had very different outlooks, Nehru find Lothian's ideas very stimulating: "It is always a pleasure to meet people who open out new avenues of thought and help one to see a little more than the tiny corner of the world which is the average person's mental beat". Nehru did not think, however, that conflicts could be resolved "merely by friendly contacts between well-intentioned persons", since according to his vision of history, conflicts seemed to stem from irresistible forces at work below the surface, and even the greatest men seemed merely to play "a relatively unimportant role". Finally he confessed to feeling "a certain hesitation" in meeting Halifax, who had been responsible for the cruel

[1] Nehru to Agatha Harrison, 25 September 1935, LP, 312/640-2.

[2] Lothian to Nehru, 6 December 1935, LP, 312/643-5. See also: J. Nehru, *The Unity of India* (London: 1948), 31; D. Norman ed., *Nehru: The First Sixty Years* (London: 1965), Vol. II.

repression of the vital forces of the young India: "It is not so much the repression and suppression of much that was best in India that I refer to, but the manner of it".[3]

Disappointed at not being able to meet Nehru, Lothian suggested Halifax to invite him in London for a conversation. On 31 December Lothian opened to Nehru his heart, revealing to us a lucid insight of the historical process which was then unfolding. According to Lothian they lived "in the midst of one of the most creative epochs in human history". There were two processes taking place simultaneously, one to replace the division of humanity into sovereign states with the reign of law among "equal, self-governing states", and the other to establish through socialism "a system whereby the earth and its fruits will be exploited for the benefit of all members of the community, in proportion to the services they render to it and not according to the accident of property ownership". Neither the League of Nations nor nationalization of production and exchange were however adequate instruments to bring these ends about. Lothian was yet confident that "in the end these ideals will be realized", and both Great Britain and India had an active role to play in this global process.[4]

Great Britain was "shedding the old imperialism", and was trying "to find the way to prevent the anarchy involved in universal national self-determination from ending in fresh wars or in a new deluge of imperialism". India had

> the tremendous task of assuming responsibility for her own government and enacting the social and economic reforms which are urgently necessary without losing her unity and so following Europe into the anarchy of religious and nationalist wars, which has been the principal cause of the deterioration of modern civilization.

The new Constitution provided the Indians with the means to solve their own problems without losing their unity. If religious differences, like those which had caused so much bloodshed in Europe were not overcome by constitutional and peaceful means, they would inevitably bring India to the point of civil war, as religion still exerted a decisive influence on the political behaviour of the Indians.[5]

If India were to follow the European example, it would become divided and weakened and would eventually follow the fate of China, and fall under the control of imperial powers. Lothian observed that Lincoln's greatest concern had been not the abolition of slavery, but the maintenance of political unity among Americans, without which America would have been divided up into national states like Europe, with the same tragic results of "civil wars". If only India could keep her constitutional unity, he urged,

> the very spirit of her institutions will gradually transform the Indian states into constitutional monarchies, will overrule communalism and race and language with an Indian patriotism and public spirit and will gradually enable it to take full control of its own government and make possible the combination of socialism with reasonable individual liberty.

If, on the other hand, India were to lose her constitutional unity, then all would be lost, as she would lose "her identity as a nation and the capacity to control her own destiny. Without government there can be neither self-government nor socialism".[6]

In his reply to Lothian on 17 January 1936, Nehru seemed to share the concept of the dual process, although he remained faithful to the Leninist theory of world revolution: "Real world order and peace will only come when socialism is realized on a world scale". Nehru did not single out capitalism as the cause of international anarchy, although he did consider it directly responsible for the class conflicts which degenerated into civil wars. But it perpetuated, in his opinion, anarchy itself, having produced imperialism "which not only crushes and exploits large parts of the earth's surface and vast numbers of people, but also continues to come into conflict with each other":

> Nothing astonishes me so much as the way the British people manage to combine their material interests with their moral fervour; how they proceed on the irrefutable presumption that they are always doing good to the world and acting from the highest motives, and trouble and conflict and difficulty are caused by the obstinacy and evil-mindedness of others.[7]

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[3] LP, 312/646 7.

[4] Lothian to Halifax, 31 December 1935, LP, 312/663; Lothian to Nehru, LP, 312/665 79.

[5] *Ibidem.*

[6] *Ibidem.*

[7] LP, 312/683-94.

Since Nehru had no faith in the type of democracy proposed by the British for India, nor in their readiness to give up their rule voluntarily, he pronounced himself ready "to accept political democracy only in the hope that this will lead to social democracy", and also to federation—not as provided by the new Constitution however—but only as a means of maintaining political unity in the country. Declaring that unity was "an essential article of our political faith", and believing that "the tendency to unity" was well rooted within Indian people, he recognised that British rule had "inevitably helped in creating political unity in the country" by strengthening Indian nationalism:

> The injuries to the soul more even than to the body, have left a lasting impression on the Indian people. Never have I realised so well how a tyrannical use of power degrades those who use it as well as those who suffer from it ... Many of us cannot tolerate an insult to Gandhi, whether we differ from him or not, for Gandhi represents to us the honour of India.[8]

At last Lothian did play host to Nehru at Blickling at the beginning of February, and was profoundly impressed by the depth of his intelligence:

> I liked him tremendously—Lothian wrote to Edward Thompson—They tell me he used to be a flaming revolutionary. If so, either imprisonment or a better appreciation of the forces which he must overcome before his ideals can be realised, has tamed him. He struck me more as a political philosopher, though an extremely interesting one, than the leader of a great dynamic political party.[9]

Lothian tried to convince Nehru to bring Congress to take on governmental responsibility within the framework of the new Constitution, but while recognising that reform would open the way to limited but real political independence, Nehru seemed more interested in establishing socialism—which under the new Constitution was much more difficult to be achieved—than anything else. Nehru believed that the limits of the new Constitution, especially the financial ones, made it impossible to bring in social reforms "essential to the regeneration of the Indian people". Major changes in rural life would only be possible if the large landowning estates could be abolished or taken over with, by either expropriation or higher rates of taxation on the landlords, measures forbidden by the Constitution. Although there were no immediate concrete results, Lothian did manage to win the confidence and trust of Nehru, who subsequently often went back to Blickling as his guest, and who during the serious political crisis of April 1937 acted in tune with his friend in persuading Congress to abandon passive resistance and assume governmental responsibility.[10]

Lothian also succeeded in persuading the Viceroy Linlithgow, to revoke the ban on Nehru's autobiography, which had had great success in Great Britain, and was "one of the most interesting accounts of recent Indian history and of the personal political pilgrimage of a single individual that I have read". Tolerance and trust had to be shown to the Indians, because the essence of the new Constitution was that the Indians had to learn to exercise real responsibility, and Nehru was one of the leaders of the biggest Indian political organization without which the new Constitution would collapse. The Viceroy yielded to Lothian's pressure but continued to reckon Nehru as a subversive, sympathetic to the Soviet regime and for the abolition of private property and power of the Princes, and who, in spite of encouraging Congress to participate in the forthcoming elections, was opposed to take on governmental responsibilities. Between 1936 and 1939 Linlithgow concentrated his efforts on persuading the Princes—a minority of 90 million people—in accepting the Act, in spite of what Jinnah described as "Hindu arrogance". Linlithgow in fact backed the landowning classes, encouraging them to organize themselves politically as the elections drew nearer.[11]

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[8] *Ibidem.*

[9] Lothian to Birla, 7 February 1936, LP, 306/51); Lothian to Thompson, LP, 316/1075-6.

[10] Lothian to Zetland and to Linlithgow, 13 Febrauary 1936, LP, 312/696-9.

[11] Lothian to Linlithgow, 15 May 1936, LP, 322/526-8; Linlithgow to Lothian, 27 May 1936, LP, 321/425-7; Sapru to Lothian, 4 May 1936, LP, 323/646-51; Lothian to Linlithgow, 19 August 1936, LP, 321/430-1; Lothian to Sapru, 29 June 1936, LP, 323/652-6; Linlithgow to Zetland, 28 March 1939, quoted in William Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: Scramble of Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 397. Jinnah was converted in in 1938 to the 'Two Nation' idea by Sir Muhammad Iqbal—Muslim poet—and pledged the Muslim League to support the 'Pakistan claim' with the Lahore Resolution of March 1940. According to Percival Spears, already in 1939 Pakistan "was in the air", Percival Spears, *India. A Modern History* (Ann Arbor: 1961), 394.

2. Lothian, Gandhi and Anglo-Indian appeasement

Lothian also tried to persuade the Viceroy to meet Gandhi, as it was essential to create a favourable psychological climate for the easing of tension in Anglo-Indian relations. Gandhi was not just "India's Saint", but was also a vital force in persuading Congress to participate in the elections, and accept governmental responsibilities. As he considered Gandhi to be crucial to the political balance of Congress, he noted that "people are often inclined to discount the power of political organizations like Congress", but there was "no case in history when party has been allied with national feeling in which it has not proved its power to capture the electorate as against conservative and vested interests". Since British rule was coming to an end, Lothian tried to prevent an 'institutional' opposition by Congress and a breakdown of Indian political unity, wishing to recover the loyalty of Congress to the British Crown. In this respect he did everything in his power to press the Viceroy and the Secretary of State Zetland to put an immediate end to the "police state", to introduce an amnesty for political prisoners, and lastly to provide a loan to the provincial governments for financing the most urgent social reforms.[12]

The year 1937 was a crucial one in modern Indian history. The elections took place without incidents in February with the extended franchise—as granted by the Lothian Commission—and Congress obtained a majority in six out of eleven provinces. As provincial governors invited the leaders of the various majorities to form a government, Congress announced on 30 March—at Gandhi's initiative—that it was ready to accept responsibility for government on condition that the governors declared officially that they would not resort to the special powers provided for by the Constitution to thwart the constitutional claims of the local governments controlled by Congress. The situation was very difficult because Congress had by then proved itself to be the major political force in British India, and without its collaboration it was not possible to form a legitimate government in any but a few provinces.

Without the Viceroy's authorization the governors could not in fact give up their constitutional prerogatives and recognise Congress's claim—not envisaged in the Constitution—to start a new constitutional process. There was no way out of the situation because Congress could not yield without losing its very reason for existence, and the Viceroy could not concede an unconstitutional right. Lothian then intervened decisively in order to deal with this dramatic trial of strength which lasted until June 1937, and it was due to his action that an agreement at last was reached.

Even before Gandhi's 30 March declaration, Lothian was praising Nehru for Congress' electoral triumph, recognizing that it had become "the most active and disciplined national force". The purpose of the new federal Constitution was to retain India's "organic unity":

> When you look at the unspeakable calamities, the endless frustrations, the absolute impotence to deal with its problems, which have befallen Europe through its division into twenty-six sovereignties, one can see the enormous advantage which India starts with in having a structure of government which embraces the whole country.[13]

It seemed much more reasonable to fight for the revision of those aspects of the Constitution which did not fully meet Congress's demands—such as representation of the Princes within the federal Parliament—rather than "to destroy the federal structure itself and so endanger the unity of India itself and view its going the way of Europe". In his reply on 25 March, Nehru seemed to agree with Lothian on the importance of maintaining Indian political unity, but he observed: "The federal part of the new constitution does not help this unity. It sows the very seeds which produce discord and disunity and conflict".[14]

Following Gandhi's 30 March declaration, Lothian pressed Nehru to bring Congress out of the institutional "impasse". The special powers of the governors, introduced temporarily into the Constitution in order to contain the opposition from the reactionary wing of the Conservative Party, were not mandatory but just discretionary, Lothian observed, and with self-government on a representative basis, a

[12] Lothian to Linlithgow, 12 June 1936, LP, 321/428-9; see the report of Lothian's speech at the House of Lords in *Hindustan Times*, 7 August 1936, LP, 317/75.

[13] Lothian to Nehru, 4 March 1937, LP, 341/752-4.

[14] Nehru to Lothian, 25 March 1937, LP, 341/755.

governor would, in fact, have found it "difficult if not impossible to use his special powers". It would produce, in fact, an institutional crisis, which in turn would have called for early elections, and it would have meant "the exercise of power by an alien authority which leads to the defeat of his policy by the electorate". In the interest of Congress, Lothian suggested the adoption of "the traditional course of taking office, passing your legislation and challenging the Governor to interfere". The working of the parliamentary system would make such interference even more difficult and, eventually, impossible. If the Governor were to interfere "you will have a far better wicket to bat upon from your own point of view than you have today". Finally, Lothian rejected Nehru's criticism to the federal system, and maintained that achievement of effective independence required maturity for the self-government, which was also needed for those aspects of the Constitution which might appear undesirable concessions to the reactionary Indian and British forces.[15]

Lothian was asked by the Secretary of State—through Sir Finlander Stewart—to write a letter to *The Times*, in reply to Gandhi's declaration. Zetland believed that if criticism was moved by Lothian, it would have "great effect in India", since his words carried "weight and authority". Lothian accepted, although he refused to accuse Gandhi of dishonesty as Zetland demanded, since he believed that Gandhi was genuinely willing to accept governmental responsibilities, and had been pressed to yield to the radical and well organized minority led by Nehru. He believed that Gandhi had acted in total good faith and believed that "though the old man" was "the most expert, and if you like, crooked dialectician that we have ever had to deal with", he seemed not to have "a clear understanding of the way in which the principle of responsible government works".[16]

In order to find a way out, Lothian pressed the Government to facilitate acceptance by Congress of ministerial duties, once the newly-formed minority governments in Madras, Bombay, Bihar, Orissa, the Central Provinces and the United Provinces had been defeated. In a long letter published in *The Times* on 6 April, he reminded the readers of the constitutional practice which had brought independence to the Dominions, where the Governor's right of veto gradually vanished as the capacity for self-government grew up. The legitimization of governmental responsibility was based on popular suffrage, and the governors could resort to veto only if the provincial governments acted unconstitutionally. Lothian therefore publicly asked Gandhi and Congress to reconsider their position in order to avoid India's first step towards democracy and independence destroying the political unity of the country, and making inevitable the return to the "police state".[17]

Lothian's letter was widely circulated on the Indian press, and gained the full support of Sapru, who openly asked the Viceroy to meet Gandhi. On 8 April Lothian took part in a parliamentary debate on Congress's claims, and on 13 April, he published a second letter in *The Times* in response to Gandhi's arbitration proposal to nominate three judges in order to settle the controversy over the Viceroy's veto powers, considering it illegitimate since "in the system of responsible government the final decision against the abuse of power" was up to the electorate and not the judges. Recourse to the special powers depended exclusively on the unity, determination and authority of the parliamentary assemblies as expressed by the electorate, being the only real legitimate holder of the institute of arbitration.

Lothian's stance provoked a lively debate in *The Times* and in India, where it was interpreted as that provincial ministers could call for early elections if the governors exercised the right to veto, thus utilizing the governor's action as the basis for their electoral campaign. *The Hindustani Times* pointed out, on 14 April, that this interpretation of the controversy would be "welcomed with enthusiasm by the Congress and the country", and in fact it did receive Gandhi's full support on 15 April. According to *The Times*'s correspondent in Delhi, Lothian's second letter had "produced among the Indian public opinion the idea that in London there are friendly forces willing to solve the constitutional controversy", and showed that the strategic goal of Congress was "to suspend the governors' powers". In its leading article on 16 April, *The Hindustani Times* suggested that Lothian should ask the Secretary of State to endorse

[15] Lothian to Nehru, 9 April 1937, LP, 341/756-61.

[16] Sir Finlander Stewart to Lothian, 2 April 1937, LP, 339/518-25; Lothian to Stewart, 4 April 1937, LP, 339/549-1.

[17] Lothian to Dawson, 4 April 1937, LP, 339/552-3.

publicly this interpretation, and remarked that if Congress did not accept Lothian's version as an honorable solution, it would be committing "a grave error of judgement".[18]

Lothian feared that any form of definite agreement might lead to reciprocal accusations of dishonesty in the future, but he considered a statement by the Secretary of State to be essential in order to put Congress in such a position that it would have to accept governmental duties unconditionally. To this end, he worked on the Secretary of State with the assistance of Halifax, since a first approach at the end of April had come to no results, being Zetland persuaded that Gandhi was not willing to collaborate and was playing the same game as Nehru. Lothian wrote to Halifax on 3 May, shortly before going to Germany to meet Hitler for a second time, begging him to persuade Zetland to release a press statement on the Government's interpretation of the new Constitution in the friendliest possible way, since "as you know better than anybody else gestures often count for more than reality in India".[19]

The text of the statement suggested by Lothian restated his own position, emphasizing that the governors could intervene in provincial affairs only in an emergency, and only as a guarantee to the Constitution. Zetland issued Lothian's desired statement on 6 May, and Gandhi invited Lothian to India to see at first hand the difficulties which the new Constitution was confronting, and to strengthen the ties between the new India and British progressive forces. Both Sapru and Halifax were also in favour of this unofficial mission, and Lothian decided to leave in December, trying in the meantime to strengthen relations with Gandhi. Lothian asked Zetland to authorize the Viceroy to accept Gandhi's proposed solution, namely that in case of an open conflict between a governor and a minister, the governor would have to call for the minister's resignation. "In view of the tremendous possibilities for evil which may follow from a final decision by Congress not to take office but to adopt the Sinn Fein method as in Ireland", Lothian pressed Halifax not to risk "a breach over a point of no real substance". Such intransigence would force the majority of Congress, who were willing to take on responsibilities, to follow the policy of active resistance advocated by the minority, led by Nehru. Even on this occasion, Halifax's assistance proved decisive in convincing Zetland to meet in his statement on 23 June Gandhi's request, thus smoothing the way for Congress to accept ministerial duties.[20]

In a very long letter to Gandhi of 10 June, Lothian acknowledged that civil disobedience had the merit of having forced the British Government to look at the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms again, and concede a new Constitution, but he emphasised the fact that if opposition and resistance to collaboration were too prolonged, they could become counter-productive and damaging, both for the individuals and the parties. "The ultimate purpose of a political party is to take over responsibility for government. And nothing but experience teaches then the art of government". For the temporary phase of 'apprenticeship', a government elected by the people, in accordance with the new Constitution, was to be supported by an efficient bureaucratic apparatus, the British civil service. The merit of the representative system was that it apportioned governmental responsibility monitoring the process of formation of public policies.[21]

The Constitution was, moreover, founded on a dualism that could not last for-ever:

> At one end is the British electorate. At the other end the now large Indian electorate. What is to happen if and when they fundamentally disagree and compromise has failed? All Dominion experience has shown that once the principle of responsible government is in force and the initiative and responsibility has passed to the elected majorities the issue has gone in favour of the local and not the British electorate. ... That is why responsible government is *the only method of non-violent transfer* which has ever worked successfully in practice. It does not matter, in the long run, what reserved powers the Governor or Viceroy are endowed with, because the real question is always whether, in face of a competent, determined popular ministry backed by legislature, press and electorate, he can afford to use them, without doing far more harm than good. If the Ministry is foolish or unjust or loses the support of public opinion the Governor can act and ought to act. But

[18] See *The Times* of 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 April 1937; Lothian to Sapru, 19 April 1937, LP, 342/864-7); Sapru to Lothian, 19 April 1937, LP, 342/868-71.

[19] Zetland to Lothian, 27 April and 10 May 1937, LP, 343/1018, 1020; Lothian to Halifax, 3 May 1937, LP, 338/439-42; Lothian to Birla, 11 May 1937, LP, 334/78-9; Lothian to Halifax, 20 May 1937, LP, 338/444; Lothian to Linlithgow, 8 June 1937, LP, 347/378-80.

[20] Lothian to Zetland, 18 June 1937, LP, 343/1021-2; Lothian to Halifax, 17 June 1937, LP, 338/447-9.

[21] LP, 338/403-14.

> if the legislatures are reasonably just and practical, as experience and responsibility increase, the power passes inexorably from one electorate to the other *without violence*.[22]

If Congress did not accept ministerial duties, then the political struggle in India would become radicalized with violent confrontation between the progressive forces led by Congress and the reactionary forces led by the Princes and landowners: "the diehards here will welcome it, because it will play into their hands, for the British Raj will then be the only basis left for Indian unity and order". The only way to social justice securing lasting results without unleashing civil war was the "democratic road".[23]

On 24 June, Gandhi replied that he entirely agreed "with much of what you say", and admitted that the Viceroy's statement of 23 June, "the last word about the Government's attitude", was a step forward compared with Zetland's stand of 6th June. Gandhi did not however accept the comparison of India with the other Dominions, because Indian culture was, by its very nature, profoundly non-violent, while in general Dominions were the products of Western culture. Non-violence was new to history and had shown that it could achieve more lasting results than violence. Finally Gandhi encouraged Lothian to visit India, no matter what Congress decided.[24]

It was with great satisfaction that Lothian learned of the decision made by Congress at the end of June to accept governmental duties, and his visit to India was therefore entirely dedicated to the enforcement of the second part of the new Constitution, namely that part relating to the introduction of the federal system. Lothian hoped that Congress would gain a majority of seats in the federal Parliament since, in his judgement, it represented the central force for upholding federation in the short term, although Gandhi and Congress had to be convinced of the need to support it. Lothian was a guest of Gandhi for three days, and wrote to his sister Minna about that experience:

> It was exactly like staying in an early Benedictine monastery before the days of great buildings. Everybody celibate, prayers in the open at 7 p. m. and 4 a.m., the simplest food, everybody hard at work in village uplift and other moral and spiritual duties. And at the centre a vital old man, with few clothes on, who knew all about international as well as Indian affairs. I lived in a mud and wattle hut, scrupulously clean, was fed on vegetarian food of excellent and ample quality, had an hour's talk a day looking at the activities of the movement or writing, and slept out under the stars every night. The best holiday one can imagine.[25]

Lothian's attraction to Gandhi was increased by their mutual aversion to modern medicine and Gandhi's preference for prevention and natural treatments rather than cure. Moreover, Lothian was undoubtedly fascinated by Gandhi's prophetic charisma, while Gandhi was attracted by Lothian's genuine spirit of public service.[26]

The trip to India convinced however Lothian that federation was strongly opposed both by the Muslims, who were afraid of a predominantly Hindu federal Parliament, as well as by Congress itself, highly critical of British 'safeguards', and the prominent parliamentary representation accorded to the Princes, which would slow down and possibly block the process of social reforms. The Princes, for their part, did not seem too eager to enter into the federation, fearing the loss of most of the privileges enjoyed in their own states, and being eventually forced into secession in the last resort, in order to defend them. The conversations with Lothian convinced Gandhi that federation should however be supported, and in a document of the 25 January, "reserved to Lord Lothian and responsible statesmen", he put forward a solution. He asked the British Government for an official recognition of Congress—through talks between the Viceroy and the President of Congress Subhas Bose—as the "only party which can successfully resist the government and bring benefits". It was "the only party which from the beginning has represented all the minorities".[27]

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[22] *Ibidem.*

[23] *Ibidem.*

[24] LP, 346/298-300.

[25] Sapru to Lothian, 30 December 1937, LP, 357/576-83; Lothian to Gandhi, 14 September 1937, LP, 347/303; Lothian to his sister Minna, 21 January 1938, quoted in Butler, *Lord Lothian*, 186.

[26] Gandhi to Ruby Hill, 3 February 1938, LP, 354/249.

[27] Gandhi to Lothian, 25 January 1938, LP, 355/386; Lothian's Memorandum on 24 January 1938, quoted in Butler, *Lord Lothian*, 187-8.

Gandhi was thus ready to press Congress to accept federation if the British Government would postpone its introduction until the Princes allowed democratic election in their own states of representatives to the federal Parliament. If the British Government were to impose federation upon them "a major crisis" would inevitably erupt, Gandhi predicted, and Congress would therefore be forced to summon a constituent assembly and to draft an alternative Constitution. Lothian agreed with Gandhi's proposed solution, as shown by the memorandum he sent to the Viceroy and the Government on 24 January—the day before Gandhi's statement—acknowledging Congress as a democratic body and inviting the British Government not to try to impose federation but, instead, to ask the Princes to accept the representative system as basis for the federal election, and a process of constitutional revision once the federal system was in operation. Two Lothian's articles in *The Times* opened up however new controversy, and were followed by his usual tactics—which became later well-known as 'Lothian method'—of quickly putting the decision-making process into action taking advantage of the strength of public opinion.[28]

The Gandhi-Lothian solution was approved in principle both by Congress, during its February sitting in Haripura, and informally by the Government, who being still involved in negotiations with the Princes had to adopt a cautious attitude towards Congress's claims. The Gandhi-Lothian line had the support of the moderate Indians, and Brila noted on 20 March that "never in the history of British rule in India was the opportunity for mutual understanding so bright as it is today and it will be the greatest pity if the occasion is not fully utilized". Even the Princes had begun to take the Gandhi-Lothian line seriously, and set up an 'ad hoc' Commission to consider the introduction of the federation.[29]

The delay in the introduction of the federation depended on the Princes' resistance to introducing representative democracy in their own states, and Lothian thought that it would be in their own interest to concede a democratic constitution spontaneously, thus preventing external pressures leading to internal disorders. The British Government could force them to concede much more than they were prepared to yield spontaneously, but being strongly opposed to the introduction of federalism within just British India—since it would either lead "to the permanent division of India or to a tearing, ranting campaign fostered from British India in the States to force them in by promoting revolution"—Lothian opted for the postponement of the federation, pressing the Princes to introduce internal democracy.[30]

As soon as it became clear that it was unrealistic to meet the deadline of Autumn 1940 for the inauguration of the federation, the British Government proposed to the Princes a compromise, by which the Upper House of the federation would be made up of their representatives, and the Lower House by democratically elected representatives. Lothian continued to appeal to public opinion through *The Times* and *The Observer*, whose editors Dawson and Garvin played a decisive role in creating a favourable psychological climate for the recognition of Congress as the central political force in India, and for direct negotiations with the British Government.

In India, the progressive forces now considered Lothian to be a point of reference they could count on. In May 1938, Birla wrote to him as follows:

> India cannot adequately thank you for your efforts to explain her correctly to your people from time to time. We had two crises in the provinces during the last three months and both of them have been settled satisfactorily. I have no doubt that your contribution to the solution of these two crisis must have been great. Apart from the part that you have played behind the scene, your articles and speeches, no doubt made very valuable contribution towards better understanding between the two countries.[31]

And again, in April 1939, following Lothian's appointment as Ambassador to Washington:

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[28] Lothian to Gandhi, 27 February 1938, LP, 354/252-3; Lothian to Garvin, 9 February 1938, LP, 354/259.

[29] Gandhi to Lothian, 3 March 1938, LP, 354/256; Lothian to Gandhi, 10 March 1938, 354/257; Hoare to Lothian, 9 February 1938, 355/301-2; Lothian to Sapru, 10 March 1938, LP, 357/588-9; Lothian to G. Andrews, 30 March 1938, LP, 352/34-5; Birla to Lothian, 20 March 1938, LP, 352/61-2.

[30] K.M. Panikkar to Lothian, 2 April 1938, LP, 365/603-4; Lothian to Panikkar, 14 April 1938, LP, 365/607-8; Lothian to Mirza Ismail, 13 June 1938, LP, 363/444-7; Lothian to Sir Akbar Hydari, 12 May 1938, LP, 363/417-21.

[31] Rama Rao to Lothian, 8 May 1938, LP, 365/659-61; Birla to Lothian, 13 May 1938, LP, 359/39-41.

I did not feel quite happy on regarding this news because what may be a gain to America and England will be a loss to us. You know how in time of emergency we always rely on you to help us and I am wondering whether still you would be able to do anything in case of need.[32]

Rama Rao attributed Gandhi's change of attitude and that of Congress towards federation to Lothian:

You will no doubt realize that since March of this year ... there has been a certain softening in the Congress criticism of the Federal Plan; and Gandhi and others of the right-wing have become more friendly to the Federal scheme than they were, say, in 1937. This softening in the attitude of Gandhi and the right-wing leaders, in my humble judgement, which is widely shared in India, is entirely due to your visit to India in December-February. Believe me, Sir, that if it had not been for Your Lordship's visit, Lord Linlithgow could not have witnessed the present softening of the Congress criticism against the Federation in the constitution Act.[33]

Jayakkar, too, was of the same opinion as Rao:

From all talks I heard around me in New Delhi and in Bombay, I gather that the Mahatma is now more reconciled to Federation and this is perhaps chiefly due to your kind offices and also the efforts of the Viceroy. It is said that Gandhi believes in the sincerity of you both as he did at one time in that of Lord Irwin. If so, Gandhi has in his power to soften or rationalize the opposition to Federation".[34]

Writing to Gandhi on 16 December 1938, just when Great Britain was preparing to mobilize all available energy to face the challenge of Nazi Germany, in a desperate attempt to save the federation and the unity of the country, Lothian asked the Indians to take on the responsibility for their own political future. In this impassioned call for unity, Lothian was also handing on to Gandhi a kind of spiritual heritage. Referring to one of Gandhi's statements that non-violent non-co-operation was the Indian answer to the violence that was threatening the whole world, Lothian remarked that the non-violent spirit of unselfish love for one's own friends and enemies could only be translated in political terms through a democratic and constitutional government:

International peace cannot exist without law and government. International peace cannot exist unless the nations accept a system of constitutional government which will give them unity and law and end anarchy among them. No doubt some day the law of God will be so 'written on the hearts and minds' of men that they become individually the expression of it, and will need no human law or government. But that is the end. The beginning of progress towards the heavenly goal must take the form at first of a willingness among races, religions and nations to unite under a single constitution, through which their unity and membership one of another is established...As between sovereign nations the operation of a constructive non-violence spirit must lead to some form of federation. It cannot succeed until it has done so. The proof that it exists effectively will be the appearance of a federal system. Thus the only real solution for the European problem is the federation of its 25 peoples and nations under a single democratic constitution, which will create a government which can look at and legislate for the problems of Europe, not as a set of rival and conflicting nations but as a single whole with autonomous parts. In the same way the only solution of the Indian problem is the substitution of a democratic constitution for the control of Great Britain. And what is true for Europe and India is true, in the long run, for the whole world and is the only final method of ending war…The Government of India Act is clearly a very imperfect application of the principle of democratic federation and must necessarily evolve rapidly if it is to work. The main argument I have always urged for it is that in present conditions it represents the only constitutional compromise uniting provinces, states, Moslems and Hindus which can be made to work and that it has far more seeds of evolution within it than is generally recognized.[35]

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[32] Birla to Lothian, 26 April 1939, LP, 388/41.

[33] Rama Rao to Lothian, 11 November 1938, LP, 376/725-9. On this stage in the relationship between Congress and the British, see B. R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942: The Penultimate Phase* (London: 1976).

[34] M. R. Jayakar to Lothian, 20 May 1938, LP, 363/465-9.

[35] Lothian to Gandhi, 29 August 1938, LP, 372/310-2. Writing to Gandhi on 29 August 1938 Lothian expounded the view according which "all the nations of the British Commonwealth have, as the final stage of their evolution towards self-government, drawn up their own constitution, which has then been formally confirmed by parliament. I should expect that India will eventually follow the same course — though, as you said to me when I was in Segaon, the Constituent Assembly will have to represent all the main sections of India and not Congress alone. The difficulty is to provide for the transitional period, because I am convinced that an Indian Constituent Convention will not frame a

3. Epilogue: Amery, Hodson, Coupland and the partition of India.

The appointment of Leo Amery in May 1940 as Secretary of State for India, reinforced Round Table's hopes for a final settlement of the Indian question. Both Amery and the Viceroy Linlithgow were aware that India was vital to the British war effort, supplying resources and troops—for what became the largest volunteer army in history—for the Middle East fighting front. Once Japan entered the war in December 1941, and invaded Burma, India strategic role grew immensely, but Gandhi's and Congress' resolute opposition to contribute to the war effort brought to the collapse of the Cripps Mission and, as a consequence, to Gandhi's resort to the disastrous 'Quit India' campaign.[36]

Amery's initial plan was to invite Indian leaders "*during the war*" to accept a compromise on the constitutional issue, to be implemented "*after the war*". Churchill's 'August Offer' of 1940 was in fact based on Amery's original idea, even if "the general impression", H. V. Hodson—member of the Empire Division of the Ministry of Information and leading exponent of the Round Table—later observed, " was one of taking as much with one hand as was given with the other". It completely lacked "of boldness or imagination or generosity". Aware that "nothing can be done at the moment", Hodson thought that in order "to end the deadlock" it was "vital…that somebody should start the work of serious study so that when the atmosphere is better a real project can be produced which might form the basis of an agreement". Appointed in March 1941 by Amery as Reforms Commissioner in India, Hodson produced a memorandum on the steps needed to lead India to Dominion Status—which Amery welcomed as "evidently entirely fulfilling the objects with which I sent him out"—but having failed "to consolidate his position with Linlithgow", Hodson had to return to England at the end of 1942.[37]

With the endorsement of Curtis, Amery then offered Reginald Coupland—Editor of *The Round Table* and Beit Chairholder at Oxford—to tour India and draft a report on the constitutional issue, under the auspices of Nuffield College. "Coupland", Amery wrote to Linlithgow in January 1942, "to my mind, is much more likely to plan something constructive and I am not unhopeful that he may in the end produce something which will at any rate set India thinking". Coupland had already addressed his attention to the Empire and its divided societies in Palestine—being the key author of the 1937 Report of the Peel Royal Commission—and accepted Amery's invitation, travelling around India during the winter of 1941-42, at the time of the Cripps Mission, and taking a part, even if marginal in it. His two volumes *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India—The Indian Problem, 1833-1935* (1942), and *Indian Politics, 1936-42* (1943)—investigated the Indian institutional conflict in the perspective of full Dominion status, which

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wise and useful Act from the standpoint of India itself unless it contains among its members a number of people who have actually carried responsibility for All India affairs. That is why I feel that the first step is to bring the present Federal Act into operation, on the understanding that afterwards a constitutional conference will be called to advise as to the future", LP, 372/309.

[36] In September 1939, provincial governments controlled by Congress resigned in protest at Linlithgow's declaration of war on Germany. On Amery's colonial policy, see: John Barnes and David Nicolson eds., *The Leo Amery Diaries, 1896-1929* (London: Hutchinson, 1980); Stephen Constantine, *The Making of British Colonial Development Policy* (London: Routledge, 1984); William Rubinstein, "The secret of Leopold Amery," *Historical Research*, 53, 181, (June 2000): 175–196; Deborah Lavin, "Amery, Leopold Charles Maurice Stennett (1873-1955)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); David Faber, *Speaking for England: Leo, Julian and John Amery: The Tragedy of a Political Family* (London: Free Press, 2005).

[37] J. Barnes and D. Nicholson eds., *The Empire at Bay: The Leo Amery Diaries, 1929-45* (London: 1988), 669, entry of 15 Dec. 1940; Leo Amery, "New Proposals for Indian Settlement", *The Round Table*, 31, 121, (Dec 1940): 101-15. Amery to Linlithgow, 13 Jan. 1942, quoted in Nicholas Mansergh ed., *The Transfer of Power* (London: 1970), Vol. 1, No. 11. Linlithgow seemed not very satisfied with Amery's decision, and in replied: "Coupland had got his 'solution' in his mind, his ticket for home in his pocket, and his subjects, I suspect, neatly arranged in his twelve chapters, and that he was not disposed to welcome criticism which was in any degree destructive of these plans!", Linlithgow to Amery, 23-27 Jan. 1942, *ibidem*, No. 30. On Churchill's Indian policy at Downing Street, see R. J. Moore, *Churchill, Cripps, and India, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979).

was the common goal of the three actors at play, Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government.[38]

Comparing the Hindu-Moslem conflict in India to the Catholic-Protestant struggle in Ireland, Coupland underlined the deep divide among "two sharply contrasted religions and…the social systems, the ways of life and thought, they have inspired". If Hinduism had "its primeval roots in a land of rivers and forests", Islam's roots were "in the desert", Coupland observed.[39]

Coupland attacked Congress' claim "to be the sole authentic representative of the revolt against British rule…its sole inheritor", and the "totalitarian" attitude of Congress provincial governments once they came into power, which "intensified the anxiety and antagonism of the minorities, especially the Moslems". Congress' "aggressive" attitude towards the League was largely responsible for the League's reaction, which went "as far as it could go": "Partition pure and simple". "Unitarianism" and intolerance by the Congress had thus "been met by separatism". India was a divided society, in which "the minority is so different from the majority that", Coupland concluded, "a parliamentary system based on simple majority rule cannot work".[40]

Having in mind that the case for Pakistan was grounded upon the provinces of Punjab and Bengal—having a modest majority of Muslim population—Coupland thought however that a partition line somewhere between Lahore and Amritsar "would be wholly artificial, geographically, ethnographically and economically". A predominantly Muslim Bengal state, would have included Calcutta and the prevalently Hindu populated west of the province. As a solution to the Indian religious and ethnic division, Coupland suggested then its division into seven regions, coming to form "more than a Confederacy, but less than a normal Federation". This solution—based on suggestion made by Maurice Yeatts, *Round Table* contributor between 1934 and 1937 and at the time Census Commissioner for India—Coupland argued, would have met "half the Muslim claim".[41]

While firmly rejected by Congress, the Muslims regarded Coupland's compromise "as a sign of grace", as the new Viceroy Lord Wavell—former British Commander in chief in India—wrote to Amery in November 1943. Considering Coupland's scheme "half meet and half dodge the issue of Pakistan", Amery used it as a basis for three memoranda which in February 1945 he presented to the India Committee of the War Cabinet. Considered by William Roger Louis as the "real father" of Pakistan for his pro-Muslims attitude, Amery thought that Indian independence would lead "to more than one member of the Commonwealth". The result of the forthcoming General Election would have however passed the final decision on the fate of India to a Labour Government.[42]

Criticising on *The Round Table* the Labour Government's Indian policy in February 1947, Hodson observed regretfully that "if British will and British resources were still matched to the task, another decade of British rule" would "leave a more united, peaceable and prosperous India than is likely to emerge after ten years of independence." Since neither the will nor the resources were then matched Great Britain had to retreat, however leaving behind remarkable achievements.[43]

The special relationship which Lothian established with Gandhi and Nehru—who found Lothian's ideas very stimulating, opening out "new avenues of thought"—won the two major Indian leaders to the case of federation though a gradual process of transfer of power. Lothian was aware to live in a revolutionary epoch—"in the midst of one of the most creative epochs in human history"—as "the old international order and the old economic system" were breaking up, and only "few people" saw "more than a corner of the new world order, or of the right way to reach it", making "agreement so difficult, and

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[38] Barnes and Nicholson, *The Empire at Bay*, 661, 667-75; Reginald Coupland, *The Cripps Mission* (London: 1942).

[39] Reginald Coupland, *The Indian Problem, 1933-1935* (Oxford: 1942), 31.

[40] Reginald Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936-1942* (Oxford: 1943), 106, 154, 207. Reginald Coupland, *The Future of India* (Oxford: 1947), 15.

[41] Coupland, *Indian Politics*, 86, 89, 40, 90, 130.

[42] Wavell to Amery, 8 Nov. 1943, quoted in Nicholas Mansergh ed., *The Transfer of Power*, (London: 1973), Vol. 4, No. 213; Amery to Wavell, 24 March 1944, *ibidem*, No. 439; War Cabinet, India Committee, Paper I (45) 26, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, 17 Feb., in Nicholas Mansergh ed., *The Transfer of Power*, (London: 1974), Vol. 5, No. 271. Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism*, 387.

[43] [Hodson,] "Valediction to India", *The Round Table*, 37, 148 (Sept. 1947): 330-38.

progress so slow and so full of agonizing conflict". The two historical processes which were taking place simultaneously had, according to Lothian a special meaning for India. If on one side there was the replacement of the division of humanity into sovereign states with the reign of law among "equal, self-governing states", on the other there was the establishment, through socialism, of "a system whereby the earth and its fruits will be exploited for the benefit of all members of the community, in proportion to the services they render to it and not according to the accident of property ownership". Both Great Britain and India had an active role to play in this dual process, and Lothian was confident that "in the end these ideals will be realized".[44]

In order to persuade Nehru and Gandhi to accept the federal scheme at least for British India, Lothian referred to the European situation, emphasizing how "the only real solution for the European problem is the federation of its 25 peoples and nations under a single democratic constitution, which will create a government which can look at and legislate for the problems of Europe, not as a set of rival and conflicting nations but as a single whole with autonomous parts". In the same way, the only solution of the Indian problem was, according to Lothian "the substitution of a democratic constitution for the control of Great Britain". International peace could not in fact exist, according to Lothian, "without law and government", unless the nations of the world accepted "a system of constitutional government which will give them unity and law and end anarchy among them". The beginning of progress towards that goal had to take the form "at first of a willingness among races, religions and nations to unite under a single constitution, through which their unity and membership one of another is established". What was true for Europe and India, was also true, in the long run, "for the whole world", and it was "the only final method of ending war".[45]

Nehru, more than Gandhi, was particularly struck by Lothian's lucid insight into the global historical process and firm leadership in handling Indian matters, but was also astonished for the way the British people managed "to combine their material interests with their moral fervor". Their ability to present themselves as acting in the general interest of mankind, having to deal with "trouble and conflict and difficulty…caused by the obstinacy and evil-mindedness of others", appeared to Nehru just a coverage for their bad consciousness. Nevertheless Nehru and Gandhi accepted to implement the federal scheme even when it was apparent that the princely states would not follow them. Nehru recognised however that British rule had "helped in creating political unity in the country" by strengthening Indian nationalism. The Indian people had been injured "to the soul more even than to the body", but the "tyrannical use of power" degraded more "those who use it" than "those who suffer from it".[46]

Lothian persuaded Gandhi and Nehru that only with constitutional unity the Indian states would gradually be transformed "into constitutional monarchies", and that "an Indian patriotism and public spirit" would gradually enable Indians "to take full control of its own government". If India lost her constitutional unity, then "all would be lost", as she would lose "her identity as a nation and the capacity to control her own destiny." Lothian facilitated the understanding by Gandhi and Nehru on the functioning of the principle of responsible government, and persuaded them that if resistance to collaboration was too prolonged, it could become counter-productive and damaging both for the individuals and Congress, since "the ultimate purpose of a political party is to take over responsibility for government". Only experience could teach "the art of government", and the British—the efficient bureaucratic apparatus of the British civil service—were there to offer the Indians a temporary phase of 'apprenticeship'. The Government of India Act represented, in those historical conditions, "the only constitutional compromise uniting provinces, states, Moslems and Hindus which can be made to work and that it has far more seeds of evolution within it than is generally recognized".[47]

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[44] LP, 312/646-7. Lothian to Nehru, 6 December 1935, LP, 312/643-5. See also: Nehru, *The Unity of*, 31; Lothian to Halifax, 31 December 1935, LP, 312/663; Lothian to Nehru, LP, 312/665-79.

[45] Lothian to Gandhi, 29 August 1938, LP, 372/310-2.

[46] LP, 312/683-94. On the failure of an all-India federation, see: C. Bridge, "Old Men Forget: Some Objections to the Templewood-Halifax Explanation of the Failure of All-India Federation 1930-9", *Flinders Journal of History and Politics*, 6 (1980): 32-39; S. R. Ashton, "Federal Negotiations with the Indian Princes, 1935-1939", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 9, 2 (1981): 169-192.

[47] LP, 312/683-94; 338/403-14. Lothian to Gandhi, 29 August 1938, LP, 372/310-2.

The final refusal by the Princes to join federation crippled the federal scheme, undermined the political unity of the country and delayed elections at the provincial level to 1937. With the partition, the tragedy which the Round Table earnestly tried to prevent, became reality. The final adoption by British India, once fully independent, of a federal Constitution represents, however, a remarkable legacy by the Round Tablers. If one accepts Elazar's view that the essence of federalism is not to be found "in a particular set of institutions but in the institutionalization of particular relationships among the participants in political life", it is possible to identify in the implementation of Round Table's policy—from dyarchy to the drafting of the 1935 Constitution—the training of the Indians by that British, in the practice of self-rule and shared-rule.[48]

In Elazar's version, federalism is a 'flexible' instrument that provides several possibilities for the organization of political authority and power. Federalism is therefore "as much a matter of process as of structure", and it includes "a sense of partnership among the parties to the federal compact, manifested through negotiated cooperation on issues and programs and based on a commitment to open bargaining between all parties to an issue in such a way as to strive for consensus or, failing that, an accommodation that protects the fundamental integrity of all the partners". The Indian constitutional process was carried out by three main actors—Congress, the League, and the British Government—through a period of half a century, during which they learned the art of bargaining having in mind the same final goal, which for the Indians was the achievement of independence, and Dominion status for the British. Since the British held power, they placed independence within the context of political unity of all-India. Federalism was the only instrument to achieve both.[49]

A federal union, according to Elazar, must combine, in fact, "both structure *and* process". The structure of federalism—the federal Government—is "meaningful" only in polities "whose processes of government reflect federal principles". The existence of a 'federalist spirit' or attitude of mind—a specific culture and behaviour—is therefore a prerequisite for the establishment of a federal polity. A federal spirit can also exist without a federal structure, but in order to put in motion a federal process "it must ultimately acquire some structural recognition". In 1916 India was a reality of divided societies—by language, religion, class, education, census, and ethnic belongings—held together by the British Raj. Half a century of constitutional process led by the British—and among them by the Round Tablers—developed the growth of that 'federalist spirit' among the various and frequently conflicting elements of Indian society which alone could create and enliven the federal structure. The outbreak of World War II removed Lothian from the Indian context, and prevented the British—as Hodson bitterly acknowledged—to shepherd the Princes into the federation. The British succeed, to a degree, to regulate ethnic conflicts during the constitutional process within British India, but failed to bridge ethnic divisions which run along the lines of conflicting sovereignties and loyalties.[50]

Alongside with a constitutional and structural aspect, Elazar also identifies a cultural basis for federalism, which implies "a posture and an attitude towards social as well political relationship, which leads to human interactions that emphasize coordinative rather than superior-subordinate relationships, negotiated cooperation, and sharing among parties". Genuine federal systems can be recognized therefore by "the degree to which federalism has been internalized culturally within a particular civil society". There is no evidence that in 1916 a cultural basis for federalism existed at all in India. Lothian persuaded Gandhi to adopt the federal scheme using Europe as an example for the manifestation of the demonic consequences of national sovereignty. Both Lothian and Gandhi were yet aware that the fundamental cultural difference between India and Europe was that Indian culture was, by its very nature, profoundly non-violent. This was the very basis which allowed the Round Table to lay down a process which in the

[48] Elazar, *Exploring*, 12.

[49] *Ibidem.*

[50] Elazar, *Exploring*, 67. For a discussion of the character of Indian ethnic divisions, see: Katharine Adeney, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict Regulation in India and Pakistan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Jan Erk and Lawrence M. Anderson eds., *The Paradox of Federalism: Does Self-Rule Accommodate or Exacerbate Ethnic Divisions?* (London: Routledge, 2010).

space of half a century developed "coordinative rather than superior-subordinate relationships, negotiated cooperation, and sharing among parties".[51]

The Round Table played—indirectly—a crucial role also for the process of European integration, but only through American leadership Europe was able to overcome the culture of violence which characterized the relations among its sovereignties since the seventeenth century. The fact that the European constitutional process—started in 1951 with the creation of the first Community—did not yet enter into its final phase, shows how difficult is to apply a federal scheme within a political culture fundamentally alien to federalist values. The Indian experiment highlights though the universalistic character of federalism, and its success in bridging the gap among divided societies.[52]

[51] Elazar, *Exploring*, 78.

[52] For a discussion of the Round Table's legacy on the process of European unification, see Andrea Bosco, *June 1940. Great Britain and the First Attempt to Build a European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016).