

ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE, HEAD OF THE
PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF AZAD HIND

November 6, 1943

Your Excellency, Your Excellencies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, allow me to express my warmest thanks for the honour and the favour shown to me and to my colleagues in allowing us to attend this historic Assembly as observers. I am particularly grateful to Your Excellencies for the sympathy that you have expressed so generously in your speeches and also for the assurance of co-operation and support that you have given us for the future. I want further to express my profound thanks for the resolution moved by His Excellency the Representative for Burma which has been heartily and unanimously adopted by the House. This resolution, I assure you, Your Excellency, will travel far beyond the walls of this stately mansion and will bring hope, encouragement and inspiration to millions and millions of my countrymen groaning under the heel of British oppression, while it will also strike terror in the hearts of all those who have a guilty conscience.

I am sure that we of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and all those who under the leadership of our Government will launch the last struggle against Anglo-American imperialism, will now go to war against sworn enemy with the consciousness that behind us stands

not only the invincible might of Nippon, but also the united will and grim determination of the emancipated nations of East Asia.

Your Excellency, as I was sitting, listening to the proceedings of this august Assembly yesterday and to-day, the panorama of the world's history passed before my mind's eye. My thoughts went back to the many international congresses and conferences held during the last 100 years and more. My thoughts went back to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 after the downfall of the Napoleonic Empire, to the Congress of Paris in 1856 after the Crimean War, to the Congress of Berlin in 1878 after the Russo-Turkish War in the Balkans, to the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 at the end of the last War, to the Washington Conference held in 1921 for ensuring the Anglo-American domination of the Pacific and Far East, and to the Locarno Conference in 1925 for ingeniously binding the hands of the German people, once and for all. My thoughts also went back to the Assembly of the League of Nations, that League of Nations along whose corridors and lobbies I spent many a day, knocking at one door after another, in the vain attempt to obtain a hearing for the cause of Indian freedom.

And as I sat listening to the proceedings of this historic Assembly, I began to wonder what the difference was between this Assembly and similar assemblies that the world's history has witnessed in bygone days.

Your Excellency, this is not a conference for dividing the spoils among the conquerors. This is not a conference for hatching a conspiracy to victimize a weak power, nor is it a conference for trying to defraud a weak neighbour.

This is an Assembly of liberated nations, an Assembly that is out to create a new order in this part of the world, on the basis of the sacred principles of justice, national sovereignty, reciprocity in international relations and mutual aid and assistance. I do not think that it is an accident that this Assembly has been convened in the land of the Rising Sun. This is not the first time that the world has turned to the East for light and guidance. Attempts to create a new order in the world have been made before and have been made elsewhere, but they have failed. They have failed because of the selfishness, avarice, and suspicion in those who had to play a leading role in the creation of a new order. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things and in conformity with historic precedent that the world should once again turn to the East for light.

Your Excellency, I believe that history has ordained that in the creation of a new, free and prosperous East, the Government and people of Nippon should play a leading role. This role for the Government and people of Nippon was carved out by history as early as 1905 when, for the first time, an Asiatic nation stood up to resist Western aggression.

As I have often said, I still remember how, as a child, I and millions of my countrymen and millions of Indian children were then thrilled with joy and enthusiasm over events happening so far away from home and I am sure that that was the experience not only of the Indian people, not only of Indian children, but of Asiatic peoples have been dreaming of a united Asia and a free Asia. And we in India since 1905 have also been dreaming of a free and united Asia. Since then, and particularly since the last

World War that dream, that thought, has taken concrete shape in the form of Pan-Asiatic federation.

It should be no surprise to anyone that the Indian people from then onwards for two decades have been thinking and dreaming of a Pan-Asiatic federation. This thought is in full conformity without past tradition and culture.

As Your Excellencies are well aware, from the earliest times, universalism has been a marked feature of Indian thought and culture. In the earliest days, through Buddhism and all the culture centred around Buddhism, India stretched out her hands to the whole of Asia. Later on, with Islamic influence permeating India, that tendency towards universalism also continued, and through Islam, India forged new links with Western Asia.

I must confess, however, to my great sorrow, in this connection, that during the Middle Ages, India developed a false type of universalism and, it is because of this false universalism, that it was so easy for European Powers to settle in, and ultimately to conquer India. But we have learned through sorrow, suffering, and humiliation to distinguish now between the false internationalism and the true. We know now that that internationalism is true, which does not ignore nationalism, but is rooted in it.

We have also studied with great interest the attempts made in Europe and elsewhere to set up a new international order. We have learned from these experiments and from the failure which ultimately crowned these experiments. We are the wiser for this experience, and today, we are convinced that the establishment or the creation of an international society of

nations can be possible only if we begin by setting up what I may call regional federations, like the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Your Excellency, may I humbly point out that the establishment of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere is of interest, of vital interest, not only to the people of East Asia but, if I may say so, to the people of the whole of Asia and to mankind in general.

I claim to have some personal contact with that part of the world stretching from Afghanistan to Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco. I claim specially to have personal contact with the suppressed nations living in that part of the world. Over and above this, India has for a long time been a bridge between East Asia and the West. I can, therefore, say with authority that the people of West Asia, the people in that part of the world stretching from Afghanistan to Algeria and Morocco, are following with the deepest interest the happenings in East Asia. I am speaking particularly of these people in West Asia and Africa who have been for some time dominated and oppressed and tyrannized by British imperialism. I can say at home of those people that their liberation in the future depends to a very large extent on the success and the victory of Nippon and her allies in this war. Unless Anglo-American imperialism is wiped out of India, it will be difficult, perhaps impossible, for the suppressed Islamic nations to overthrow the British yoke and recover their lost liberty. The establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere will pave the way towards a Pan-Asiatic Federation. And I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that the establishment of an Asia for Asians, or an All-Asia

Co-Prosperity Sphere, if you will, will ultimately pave the way towards a world federation, a real society of nations, and not the League of robbers that we saw at Geneva.

But, your Excellency, I must not forget that all these dreams of a new world, of a new Asia, of a new, free and prosperous Greater East Asia depend entirely on our ability to achieve victory in this war. So far as India is concerned our fate is indissolubly linked up with the fate of Nippon and her allies in this war. If our Allies were to go down, there will be no hope for India to be free for at least 100 years. But we know that this time providence, fate, and luck are on our side, and I want to assure Your Excellency and Excellencies that we, the Indian people, having waited all our life for an international crisis of this sort, are determined to make the fullest use of his opportunity for achieving the final emancipation of our country. For India, there is no other path, but the path of uncompromising struggle against British imperialism. Even if it were possible for other nations to think of compromising with England, for the Indian people, at least, it is out of the question. Compromising with Britain means to compromise with slavery and we are determined not to compromise with slavery any more.

I, therefore, want to assure Your Excellencies, that come what may, no matter how long and hard the struggle may be, no matter what the suffering and the sacrifice involved may prove to be, we are determined to fight to the bitter end, being fully confident of our final victory. But I have no illusions about the magnitude of the task that awaits us. I do not minimize the strength of the enemy. I claim to know the British people intimately and at first

hand. I have known them since I was a child of five and, knowing them so intimately, knowing the strength and the weakness of the enemy in India, and knowing also our own strength and weakness, I feel fully confident of our ultimate victory.

But we have to pay the price of our liberty. For Your Excellencies the problem is quite different from what it is for India. You have only to repel any offensive launched by the enemy in the future. You have only to retain what you have got now; you have only to preserve your own freedom. But the Indian people have yet to fight and win their freedom. Therefore, I repeat: we have no illusions about the magnitude of the task that awaits us. In fact, I may say that all the time sitting here in my chair, as I was dreaming of a new East Asia, a new Asia and a new world, before my mind's eye there floated the scenes of the battle that we will have to fight on the frontier and on the plains of India.

I do not know how many of those who will go to war against our powerful and unscrupulous enemy, I do not know how many of the members of our National Army, will survive the coming war, but that is of no consequence to us. Whether we individually live or die, whether we survive the war and live to see India shall be free, that Anglo-American imperialism shall be wiped out of India, and the menace that now hangs over the whole of East Asia will be removed, once and for all.

Your Excellency, I am aware that there are many people in this world who have an exaggerated notion of the strength of Britain and of her allies. I have just said that we know the British people at first hand. We know

their strength and their weakness and we are therefore looking forward with the fullest optimism to the hard and bitter struggle that is ahead of us. Assured of such an invincible ally as Nippon, assured of the support which Your Excellencies have so generously given us, and assured us for the future, we shall go to battle fully confident that the day of our salvation is at hand.

Your Excellencies, in setting out to create a new order based on the sublime principles of justice, national sovereignty, reciprocity, and mutual aid and assistance, you are undertaking a task which is the noblest that the human mind can conceive. I pray to God that your noble efforts may be crowned with success. I pray to God that the dreams of Okakura Kakuzo and Sun Yat-sen may be translated into reality. And I pray to God that this Joint Declaration which this historic Assembly has unanimously adopted this afternoon may prove to be a charter for the nations of East Asia and, what is more, a charter for the suppressed nations of the whole world. May this Joint Declaration prove to be in the world's history, the charter, the new charter of liberty for the year 1943 and after.

Your Excellency, may I offer my respectful congratulations to yourself and to your Government for the noble manner in which you have given us the most eloquent proof of your bona fides and sincerity. You have granted independence to Burma and the Philippines. You have recognized the Provisional Government of Azad Hind which represents a population numbering about one-fifth of the human race. You have just entered into a most honourable treaty with China. And what is perhaps the most important, you have proceeded steadily and

bravely with the task of reconstruction, while engaged in a life and death struggle with powerful and unscrupulous enemies. I pray that Nippon a role in the creation of a new and free Asia may be fully and finally consummated. In conclusion, I may assure Your Excellency, that if you and your distinguished colleagues succeed in this mission, as I hope, I trust, and I believe, you will – your names will go down in history not merely as the makers of a new Nippon, not merely as the makers of a new East Asia, not only as the makers of a new Asia, but as the makers and architects of a new world.