



HISTORICAL SECURITY COUNCIL: Topic 1

THE ISSUE OF INDEPENDENCE FOR BRITISH INDIA, 1947

Background:

March 22, 1600 – East India company in India

Robert Clive, an administrator of the East India Company based out of England, helped the British defeat the French and won control of Bengal. He then appointed local rulers in various places including Bengal who supported the East Indian Company. Indian rulers were forced by the Company to sign treaties granting it more power. They gained lots of wealth and took over more land. Setting up a court system and law code that helped protect the Company's interests. From this point onwards, they ruled India with immense power.

May 10, 1857 - The Sepoy Rebellion

The British introduced the Enfield rifle that used cartridges greased with pork and beef fat. This angered Muslims and Hindus within India which resulted in a rebellion that caused many deaths on both sides.

October 10, 1869 – Rise of Gandhi

Gandhi begins nonviolent protests in India. He gained many followers and became a leading figure in the Indian independence movement,

December 28, 1885 – Formation of the Indian national congress

Gandhi led the Congress Movement in 1920 and created support for home rule. The British being under pressure promised them self-rule later and gave a little more power to the local government.

March 22, 1906 – The formation of the Muslim league

The Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah was created because they were worried about Hindu nationalism. Distrust and Tension racial and religious groups from cooperating.

March 12, 1930 – Salt march

Gandhi organized a 200-mile salt march to create salt from sea water in order to avoid paying tax. This broke the law of the British Raj. All 50,000 Indians and Gandhi were arrested. After the March the British began to wonder if India was worth it.

May 24, 1947 – Hindu-Muslim conflict

Divisions between the Muslim League and Hindu Congress Party began growing. The Muslims feared that since they were a minority their rights would be ignored. The Muslim leader, Muhammad Ali, wanted a separate nation.



Current Situation:

The Viceroy Mountbatten has announced a bill to the British government that would seek the partition and/or independence of the British Raj. The British government has appealed to the Security Council in order to assist with the current situation in India.

Religious cleansing has become prevalent on the streets of India causing a refugee crisis resulting in mass exodus. There is a call for aid and a call to redesign borders or keep India as a whole. There is a projection of 2 million deaths and 20 million displaced.

There is only 2 months before this bill needs to be applied.

Important bloc positions:

1. **One India** (Held by most Indians in 1947 and Mahatma Gandhi)

- a. Keep India as one however there are several ways to divide power

(Supported by countries within Asia with strong ties to India or Countries with Muslim minorities or with secular or atheist states with diverse ethnic groups)

2. **Partitioned India** (Held by the British Raj and Muhammad Ali Jinnah)

- a. Divide India into 2 or more countries

- b. If the council would like to suggest to the British parliament another way to partition India in a better way, the SC would look upon that

(Supported by the UK and Muslim majority countries)

Possible solutions:

The continued union of India

1. Keep India as one with a proportional representation system
2. Keep India as one with a federal system (Much like USA where states have far more independence from the governing body)
3. Keep India as one with Muhammad Ali Jinnah as prime minister to avoid racial violence against Muslims (as proposed by Mahatma Gandhi) with either a proportional representation system or a federal system.

The partition of India

1. Divide India into 2 new countries as proposed by Viceroy Mountbatten with the support of Muhammad Ali Jinnah (if all resolutions fail this will be immediately put into effect)
2. Divide India into 2 or more countries that the SC argues would better suit India

Other resolution types

1. The council would also look favourably on attempts to send aid to India with the protection of peacekeepers or other resolutions with the same desired effect
2. Resolutions that help end political/economic and religious violence



Further reading:

- <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/the-partition-british-india-timeline>
- <https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/events-leading-up-to-partition-of-india--20>
- <https://thelogicalindian.com/story-feed/awareness/partition-1947/>
- <https://www.neversuchinnocence.com/introduction-and-timeline-of-events-partition-of-british-india>
- <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/independence-and-partition-1947>
- <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/the-road-to-partition/>
- <https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick/veto>

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- Ansari, S. (2019). How the Partition of India happened – and why its effects are still felt today. [online] The Conversation. Available at: How the Partition of India happened – and why its effects are still felt today.
- Banerjee, S. (2002). Actions, practices and historical structures: the partition of India. International Relations of the Asia-Pacific, [online] 2(2), pp.197–221. Available at: Actions, practices and historical structures: the partition of India.