

DECLARATION ON PAKISTAN AND UNITY OF INDIA

(To be adopted by the Indian National Congress)

The Congress had been wedded to Indian freedom and any break in that unity whether in the present urgent situation or in the future when it would be needed more than ever for maintaining the gains of freedom, would be injurious to all concerned.

Nevertheless the Congress cannot think in terms of compelling the people of any individual nationality inhabiting a given territorial unit to which it is attached by historical tradition, having its own language, culture, and psychological make-up and common economic life, to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will.

The Congress recognises that the people of every one of such individual nationalities which have lived together on the soil of India developing their own individual national life as well as a common fraternal bond with the broader unity through centuries, must have in free India the right of autonomous state existence on its own territory as an equal and free member of the future Indian Union or Federation accompanied by the unconditional right to political secession.

It must, however, be clearly understood that the territorial units thus visualised by no means coincide with the present provinces. In fact, the national territorial units based on individual Indian nationalities as defined above are today cut up by the artificially-created boundaries of states and provinces which hinder the healthy growth of individual nationalities as well as their common national union.

The rights of other interspersed minorities in the newly-formed autonomous states regarding their culture, language, education and schools will be guaranteed by statute. Similarly, all privileges and discriminations based on caste, race, and community will be abolished by statute.

If from among the autonomous states which will thus come into existence in a free India, one or several states having Muslim or any other faith, wish to secede from

the Union in accordance with the freely expressed wish of the people of those states, they will, of course, be free to do so. But it would be the constant endeavour of the Congress to persuade the peoples of all Indian nationalities to remain in the united Indian union, to build on the secure basis of freedom from foreign rule, of democracy, of perfect equality of nationalities, of common interest and goodwill, a greater and more lasting unity of India than our history has ever seen.