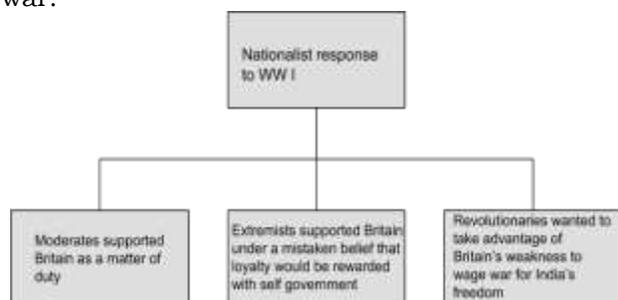


12. First World War and Nationalist Response

Indian Response to World War:

- There were two strands of response first one led by revolutionary.
- Second strand was of nationalist leader they supported British in war effort. As a hope that British will give self-rule in return after the war.



First World War (1914-1919), Britain allied with France, Russia, USA, Italy and Japan against Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey.

Home Rule League Movement: It was Indian response to First World War, inspired by Irish Home Rule Leagues.

Factors responsible for it:

- Nationalists believed that popular pressure was required to attain concessions from the government
- The Moderates were disillusioned with the Morley-Minto reforms.
- People were feeling the burden of wartime miseries caused by high taxation and a rise in prices, and were ready to participate in any aggressive movement of protest.
- It was an imperialist war that exposed the myth of white supremacy
- Tilak, after his release in 1914, was ready to assume nationalist leadership and was inspired by the Irish home rule league.
- Annie Besant began to take active part in nationalist movement.

The Home Rule League Programme:

- **Objective:** The aim of the movement was self-rule.
- Modus operandi of the movement: It was to be achieved through political education and discussion through public meetings, holding conferences, organizing classes for students on politics, propaganda through newspapers, plays, religious songs, etc., collecting funds, organizing social work, and participating in local government activities.

Branches	Participation	Government response
1) Tilak and Besant set up separate leagues to avoid friction	1) Leaders who joined the movement - Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhulabhai Desai, Chittaranjan Das, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, TejBahadur Sapru and LalaLajpat Rai.	1) It responded with severe repression.
2) Tilak's league was set up in April 1916 and its activities covered Maharashtra (excluding Bombay city), Karnataka, Central Provinces, and Berar. It had six branches. Its demands included swarajya, formation of linguistic states and education in the vernacular.	2) Gokhale's Servants of India Society also joined the agitation	2) In June 1917, Annie Besant and her associates, B.P. Wadia and George Arundale, were arrested. In response, Sir S. Subramaniya Aiyar renounced his knighthood while Tilak advocated a programme of passive resistance.
3) Annie Besant set up her league in September 1916 in Madras and covered the rest of India (including Bombay city). It had 200 branches, was loosely organised as compared to Tilak's League and had George	3) Most of the Muslims and non-brahmins from the South did not join as they felt Home Rule would mean rule of the Hindu majority, and that too mainly by	

Arundale as the organising secretary. Besides Arundale, the main work was done by B.W. Wadia and C.P. RamaswamyAiyar.	the high caste.	
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Home Rule League faded out by 1919 due to the following reasons:

- lack of effective organization
- Communal riots were witnessed during 1917-18
- The Moderates were pacified by talk of reforms
- Talk of passive resistance by the Extremists kept the Moderates away from activity from September 1918 onwards
- The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which became known in July 1918 further divided the nationalist ranks.
- Tilak had to go abroad (September 1918) in connection with a case while Annie Besant vacillated over her response to the reforms and the techniques of passive

Gains made from the home rule league movement:



▪ **Lucknow Pact, 1916:**

- Extremists were readmitted to congress
- It was the coming together of the Muslim League and the Congress and the presentation of joint demands by them to the government and congress accepted league position on separate electorates.

Why the Muslim League change its stand?

1. Britain’s refusal to help Turkey during World War I
2. Annulment of Bengal’s partition
3. Refusal by British government to set up university at Aligarh with powers to affiliate colleges
4. Rise of younger members in the League who were more anti-imperialistic- Maulana Azad (his work ‘Al Hilal’), Mohammad Ali (his work ‘Comrade’)
5. Congress agreed to the League’s demand of separate electorate. Muslims were granted a fixed proportion of seats at all-India and provincial levels.

Joint demands made by them include: self-government, representative assemblies, reforms in viceroy’s council, secretary of state to be paid by British treasury

▪ **Montagu statement of August 1917:**

The Statement Said: “The government policy is of an increasing participation of Indians in every branch of administration and gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of British empire.