

# **ASPECTS OF THE PAKISTAN MOVEMENT**

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Islamabad, Pakistan**

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# **ASPECTS OF THE PAKISTAN MOVEMENT**

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*For*  
*My Parents*

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## PREFACE

Originally seven articles, published in various national and international journals over the years, as indicated in Preface to the first edition, this third, revised and expanded edition of the book offers two more articles/chapters entitled, "Why did Jinnah Accept the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946?: A Note of Critical Reappraisal", *Asian Profile* Vol. 31, No. 3 (June 2003) and "Charisma, Crisis and the Emergence of Quaid-i-Azam" in *Historicus*, Quarterly Journal of Pakistan Historical Society, Vol. L, No1 & 2 (January-June, 2002). The importance of these two aspects of the Pakistan Movement hardly needs an emphasis. The Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946, its acceptance and then rejection by Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League, is a watershed in the Muslim struggle for Pakistan. 3 June Partition Plan and the ultimate partition of India and the creation of Pakistan in August 1947 is an inevitable consequence of the rejection of the plan. The charismatic nature of Jinnah's political leadership is a relatively new and important aspect of the Pakistan Movement. This has indeed been the subject of my recent, exhaustive work, *The Charismatic Leader: Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan*, second edition, published by the Oxford University Press Pakistan in 2014. A distinguished American historian, Dr. Roger D. Long, noted that this "analysis of Jinnah as a charismatic figure fills an important lacuna in the field." Both articles have been thoroughly revised and expanded, and their titles have been modified accordingly. Titles of some old chapters have been modified too.

While most of the material used here has come from early publications, including the aforementioned book, and there may be some overlapping in few chapters, the book, as a whole, is self-sufficient, and covers virtually all the major, important aspects of the Pakistan Movement, starting with an introductory chapter, "Origins and Development of the Pakistan Movement", which will be helpful for the beginners, especially for students at the post-graduate level. Hopefully, the book will be relevant and useful for all teachers, researchers, and students interested in the subject and perhaps willing to engage with the arguments developed here. Engagement, of course, is the missing link in our historiography, indeed South Asian historiography. (Literature review, at best, is a partial engagement, unless its contents or discussion is purposefully carried

forward into the main text). Generally, historians write without engaging with other writers on their arguments, angularities, or perspectives on the subject. They work in silos. I hope this book will help change that a bit.

I am grateful to Professor Dr. Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, Director of the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, and a former colleague at the Department of History, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, for agreeing to publish this revised, expanded edition of the book. I also appreciate Dr. Sajid Mahmood Awan and Syed Umar Hayat's (Office Incharge of the institute) kind offer to re-print the book in the first instance. However, I thought it was better to revise, expand, and update it into the next edition. I am thankful to Muhammad Munir Khawar, Publication Officer, and his staff for making it possible. I thank my friends and colleagues, Dr. Saeed Shafqat, Director, Centre for Public Policy and Governance and Dr. Grace Clark, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, and indeed all my colleagues at History Department of the FC College University, Lahore, Professor Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, Dr. Yaqoob Khan Bangash, Khizar Jawad, Saadia Sumbal, and Umber Ibad for their support. I am also thankful to my Rector, Dr. James A. Tebbe, for encouraging research on the campus. I am grateful to Mohammad Irfan for meticulously typing several drafts of the manuscript before it was finalized and brought into a book form. I also acknowledge Rhymer Roy's help with various chores necessary for the completion of a book project. Of course, I alone am responsible for all the facts and their interpretation in the book.

Finally, I must express my gratitude to my family – my wife Samina, our children, Tina, Umar and Ali, our son-in-law, Nauman, and our two grandchildren, Ayaan and Emaad, for their love, care, and understanding. The book is dedicated to the memory of my parents for their boundless love and affection. May their souls rest in eternal peace. Amen!

Lahore  
1 September 2015

Sikandar Hayat

## **PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION**

This book brings together articles on various aspects of the Pakistan Movement, published in major national and international journals in the late 1980s. The first edition of the book was published in May 1991 (Lahore, Progressive Publishers). Apart from minor editing, the articles were presented in their original form. A detailed preface explained their contents and significance which is reproduced here in the subsequent pages for the benefit of new readers.

There are no substantial changes in this second edition except that the opportunity has been availed to improve the presentation and to correct misprints and errors. In addition, titles of a few chapters have been modified. However, the terms and tone of analysis remains unaltered. I have not eliminated anything of any substance.

It is hoped that scholars interested in the subject will find the discussion useful. The students will be encouraged to know more about the Pakistan Movement, especially now that Pakistan is fifty years old and can look back to its origins with satisfaction and pride. Indeed, it would be most rewarding if the book provides stimulus to further study and thought.

I am grateful to Dr. M. Naeem Qureshi for providing guidance in the preparation of this edition. Dr. M. Rafique Afzal read the whole text and offered several useful suggestions for its improvement. I am deeply indebted to him. I am also indebted to Dr. Rizwan Malik and (late) Dr. Agha Hussain Hamadani for accepting the book for publication under the auspices of the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research. My special thanks go to Mr. Shafqat Amin and his staff at the Institute for the help in compiling the index and carrying the book through all its stages of publication. Finally, a word of gratitude to my wife and three children. Without their constant encouragement and support, this work would not have been completed.

Islamabad

Sikandar Hayat

18 June 1998

## PREFACE (FIRST EDITION)

The book is a collection of seven articles which deal with salient aspects of the Pakistan Movement. Written over the past few years and published in national and international journals, these articles have been brought together in one volume, with slightly modified titles, for reference and utilization by teachers, researchers and students who may have an abiding interest in the subject. Even though these chapters do not make a continuous narrative, there is a rough chronological sequence underlying their arrangement. It is hoped that the facts, analyses and interpretations given here will stimulate further study and research in this very important field of political history of British India.

The first chapter, "Origins and Development of the Pakistan Movement"<sup>1</sup>, traces the flow of events, political actors and interactions from the 1857 'War of Independence' and the subsequent role of Syed Ahmad Khan to the demand for Pakistan and its ultimate fulfillment under the able leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Almost all significant milestones in this journey towards freedom have been briefly analyzed in this article. They include momentous events, such as the 1905 Partition of Bengal, the 1906 Simla Deputation and founding of the All-India Muslim League, the Act of 1909, annulment of the Partition of Bengal, the Lucknow Pact, the Act of 1919, the Khilafat Movement, Revival of the Muslim League (1924), Delhi Muslim Proposals, the Simon Commission, Nehru Report, Jinnah's "Fourteen Points", Allama Muhammad Iqbal's Allahabad address of 1930 focussing on the idea of a separate Muslim State, the Round Table Conference, the 1932 Communal Award, the India Act of 1935, the Congress rule of 1937-39, the Lahore Resolution, Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's mobilization of the Indian Muslims under the banner of the Muslim League, constitutional advance at the centre, and the eventual partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. This broad survey is intended to serve as an introduction to the more specific and specialized accounts of various aspects of the Pakistan movement that follow.

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1 See "Introduction to the Course", in Sikandar Hayat and Shandana Zahid, eds., *Genesis of Pakistan Movement*, Vol. 1, Lahore: Ferozsons and Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, 1988, XIII-XXXI.

The second chapter, "Hindu-Muslim Communal Tangle: Genesis of the Pakistan Demand"<sup>2</sup>, analyses the role of those "dialectical" factors and dynamics of Hindu-Muslim relations which led to the demand for Pakistan in March 1940. The dialectical factors discussed here are religious (i.e. incompatibility and contrast between Hinduism and Islam) as well as economic and political. The contemporary situation in the latter field was inherently biased in favour of Hindus. These factors, in the end, made unity between the two communities virtually impossible. The argument here is that the demand for Pakistan was not simply a function of dialectical factors. The failure of the leaders of the two communities, particularly the Hindu leaders to reconcile their interests with those of the Muslims within the framework of a united India, was also responsible for the Muslim demand of Pakistan. The evolution of Hindu-Muslim relations has been traced in this article through seven distinct phases covering the period from 1857 to the year 1940 when Jinnah gave up in helplessness and frustration his efforts at Hindu-Muslim unity. As a consequence, the demand for Pakistan was put forth as the only viable solution of the communal problem in India. Discussions on the communal problem in India have tended to concentrate on either dialectical factors, particularly religious ones, or the patterns of Hindu-Muslim relations, as reflected in different developments, especially negative ones. This article offers a new perspective in the sense that it considers both categories of analysis as equally relevant, and thus views the communal problem in its totality.

The third chapter, "Muslims and System of Representative Government in British India"<sup>3</sup>, is a critical study of the British system of representative government introduced in India, and its impact on Muslim fortunes in particular. The ground for discussion is provided by Farzana Shaikh's recent article published in *Modern Asian Studies* (1986). Farzana Shaikh holds that the system of government introduced by the British was "liberal-democratic", ideologically opposed to the Islamic system of representation

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2 See "Hindu-Muslim Communalism and its Impact on Muslim Politics in British India: The Making of the Pakistan Demand", *Proceedings of the Tenth International Symposium on Asian Studies, 1988*, Vol. IV, South and Southwest Asia, Hong Kong: Asian Research Service, (1989), pp. 969-85.

3 See "Muslims and System of Representative Government in British India: A Note of Critical Reappraisal", *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* (Karachi), Vol. XXXVI, part 1 (January 1988), pp. 13-40.

“concerning the relationship between the individual and his communal group, the nature of political consensus and the organization of power in society”. She, therefore, maintains that the failure of “liberal democracy in a united India” and the ultimate demand for Pakistan “stemmed from the clash of two wholly irreconcilable set of norms”. This is neither a correct estimate of the system of government introduced by the British in India nor a correct analysis of Muslims’ difficulties with the system. No doubt the “ideological divide” between the Hindus and the Muslims was the main difficulty in arriving at a constitutional settlement in the 1940s. But then, what about the earlier decades, i.e., the 1930s, 1920s, or even before that? How did the Muslims look at the system then? How far were they satisfied with it? If not, what were their complaints? How and why did the system fail to satisfy Muslim interests and demands? Above all, how far was the system truly “liberal-democratic”? These, and many more related questions, need careful analysis.

The argument presented here is that the “ideological” element got primacy in the constitutional matters only after the system of government introduced by the British in India failed to satisfy the Muslims. There was an inherent flaw in the system. Based on the “majority” principle of rule, it made the Muslims a “permanent minority”, with no hope whatsoever of turning the majority rule in the opposite direction. And the more the Muslims saw powers vested in the centre, such as in the Act of 1935, the more they feared that it will work against their vital interests. The working of the Congress provincial governments from 1937 to 1939 clearly demonstrated that their fears were not imaginary. Indeed, the Congress rule convinced them that the system was inherently biased towards the majority community of Hindus, and thus there was nothing they could ever do about it. Even the British authorities in India were convinced, by 1943, that the system was not suitable for India. They now reckoned that, instead of the British system, the Swiss or American system of government might have been a more appropriate choice. But then, it was rather too late in the day. The Muslims had already made up their mind to reject the current system of government and to call for a new system of authority where they would be well-placed, where, indeed, they would be their own masters. They made the demand for Pakistan on the basis of Muslim-majority areas of India. Ideology had now come to play its part in the constitutional and political life of India.

The fourth chapter, “Devolution of British Authority in India as a Factor in

the Muslim Crisis of the 1940s"<sup>4</sup>, attempts to provide a different and a completely new dimension to the study of Muslim predicament in India. R.J. Moore, in his book, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-40* (1974) has worked on the problem of devolution of British authority in India. But then, he had been more concerned with the problem in the overall Indian framework than in exclusive Muslim terms. He did not really concentrate on the ways in which the emerging pattern of devolution of British authority adversely affected the Muslim interests in India. This article demonstrates how and why did the devolution of British authority in India, especially in the perceived context of the imminent departure of the British after World War II, contributed to the growth of Muslim crisis in the 1940s.

The devolution of British authority manifested itself at two levels: 1) the declining ability of the British to use coercive power and the increasing erosion of their legitimacy to rule India, especially after World War II; and 2) the impending threat of Hindu rule after the British departure from India. The Muslims desired to be as much free from the British raj as from the Hindu rule. The Muslims realized that, with the British gone, nothing would stand between the absolute authority of the Hindus and their own subjugation in a system which was heavily biased against them. This heralded a "crisis" in which the Muslims having earlier lost power to the British were now confronted with the possibility of losing it "permanently" to the Hindus. Such was the importance of the devolutionary process which, unfortunately, has not received any serious attention of the scholars working on the Pakistan Movement. Hopefully, this article will provide the necessary stimulus for further analysis of the British authority in India and its impact on the Muslim community.

The fifth chapter, "Leadership Roles in Muslim India: The Case of Traditional Political Leaders"<sup>5</sup>, focuses on the role of Muslim traditional

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4 See "Devolutionary Process as an Approach to the Study of Indian Muslim Crisis in the late Nineteen Thirties", *Asian Profile*, Vol. 16, No.3 (June 1988), pp. 257-65; and "Devolution of British Authority in India: A New Approach to the Study of Indian Muslims Crisis in the Late Nineteen Thirties", *South Asian Studies* (Lahore), Vol.4, No.1 (January 1987), pp. 35-51.

5 See "Leadership Roles in Muslim India: A Study of Traditional Political leadership", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.XII, No.3 (Spring 1989), pp.52-84.

political leaders in India, which comprised: 1) social elites like nobility, titled gentry, and landowners; 2) provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces; and 3) the ulama. It is argued that these traditional leaders failed to respond effectively and systematically to the political difficulties of the Muslim community, and thus had to yield before the modernizing nationalist leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the struggle for Pakistan. Given the preoccupation of the scholars with the rise and role of modernizing nationalist leaders, the study of traditional leaders has not been given due attention in the literature. The traditional leaders, more than any other kind of leaders, represented the traditional symbols and social values of the ex-colonial societies. Thus, political battles in these societies were not simply battles between the colonial rulers and the opposing nationalist leaders. There were traditional leaders too. They had to relinquish before the modernizing nationalist leaders could take over the final battle against the colonial rulers.

Muslims India offered a typical case. The Muslim traditional leaders held their sway for a considerable length of time. But the inability to produce a far-sighted leader who could identify and articulate their collective interests and suggest ways and means to secure them, forced them to make way for the modernizing nationalist leaders. The social elites failed to see that the British policies of "protection and patronage" had their inherent limitations. They did not realize that the British were on their way out after the World War II, and hence their patronage would be lost to them. The provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces remained invariably preoccupied with their narrow provincial interests, and failed to recognize that provincial rule could not safeguard their interests when the centre is dominated by the Hindu majority after the British departure from India. The ulama, associated with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, too, could not clearly visualize India minus the British, and therefore, could not suggest a way out of the Muslims' more enduring difficulties in the wake of prospective Hindu majority rule. It was precisely this weakness of the traditional leaders that pushed them out of the main stage by the end of 1930s and brought Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah to the fore of Muslim politics as never before. This perspective is generally missing in accounts explaining Jinnah's spectacular rise to Muslim leadership, indeed, to the exalted position of the *Quaid-i-Azam*, the Great Leader. It is hoped that this article will not only help place Jinnah's rise in Muslim politics in the cataclysmic decade of 1937-47 in proper perspective but will also encourage scholars

to probe further into the role of traditional political leaders in Muslim India and elsewhere.

The sixth chapter, "Lahore Resolution and its Implications"<sup>6</sup>, aims at two aspects of the subject: 1) it seeks to evaluate and assess various interpretations and criticisms of the demand for Pakistan, particularly those of Ayesha Jalal in her recent study, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (1985); and 2) it attempts to develop an overall argument on the Lahore Resolution, especially as Jinnah, its chief formulator and exponent, saw it and explained it to its supporters as well as its opponents. The idea is to examine the Lahore Resolution as fully and as systematically as possible.

Ayesha Jalal's criticisms merit special attention because she has raised a number of issues about the Lahore Resolution on systematic grounds. Her main criticisms are: 1) the Resolution was dictated by the British needs; 2) the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow "pressed Jinnah to state the League's 'constructive policy' as a counterweight to the Congress demand for independence and a Constituent Assembly"; and 3) Jinnah "served the best guarantee the British could find in India against an united political demand". The article seeks to analyze in detail these criticisms, and argues that the Lahore Resolution was essentially an outcome of Muslim interests, aspirations and ideals. Jinnah, after exploring all other avenues of Muslim survival and security in India, had reached the conclusion that the only way the Muslims could save themselves from the stranglehold of a Hindu majority government and secure their future life in line with their own ideals, "spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political", was to have their own "homelands, their territory and their state". In this sense, the Lahore Resolution offered a simple straightforward goal to pursue.

However, some critics, including Ayesha Jalal, have indicated some "ambiguities" in the Resolution itself. For example, they maintain that 1) it was not clear whether the goal the Resolution contemplated was "one sovereign state" or "more than one"; 2) the Resolution did not suggest a connecting "link" between its two proposed zones (north-western and eastern); and 3) the Resolution failed to define "areas" in which the

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6 See "Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah and the Demand for a Separate Muslim State: Lahore Resolution Reappraised", in *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* (Lahore), Vol. XXIV, No.4 (October 1987), pp. 1-44.

Muslims are numerically in a majority, particularly in the sense whether “area” meant a province or part of a province. The article attempts to explain each one of these so-called ambiguities, suggesting, in the final analysis, that most of these ambiguities were tactical in nature. The idea was to keep the Resolution deliberately ambiguous to save it from attacks from the Muslim League’s powerful adversaries, the British and the Congress, in the given situation of 1940. (A more detailed and comprehensive analysis of criticisms on the Lahore Resolution is given in my article, “Lahore Resolution: A Review of Major Criticisms”, in K.F. Yusuf, *et al.*, *Pakistan Resolution Revisited*, published by the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad, 1990).

The seventh chapter, “Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah and Political Mobilization of the Indian Muslims, 1940-47”<sup>7</sup>, analyses carefully and systematically the strategy that Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah followed in mobilizing the Indian Muslims in support of the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan. Very little effort has been made by scholars on the Pakistan Movement to undertake this kind of study. Barring the efforts of professors Khalid bin Sayeed, Saleem M.M. Qureshi, Z.H. Zaidi, and Sharif al Mujahid, there is hardly any worthwhile contribution on this aspect of the movement. Furthermore, a host of important questions on Jinnah’s political strategy have remained unanswered. For example, how did he succeed in reorganizing the League and simultaneously developing it into a well-knit disciplined organization of the Muslims in spite of the fact that it now came to include both old, traditional forces and the newly mobilized social groups? How did he mobilize the support of Muslim-majority provinces, where the League advance was a threat to the interests of the powerful provincial leaders? How did he mobilize support for Pakistan among the various section of the Muslim society, “traditional” as well as “modern”. How did he get the support of diverse groups and classes such as students, women, ulama, pirs and sajjadanashins, industrial and commercial classes, farmers and the general mass of Muslim youth? How did he exploit the war situation in India to mobilize support for the League? These and many more related questions are the subject-matter of discussion here.

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7 See “Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah, Muslim League, and the Achievement of Pakistan: A Study in Political Mobilization”, in *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* (Islamabad), Vol. VII. No.2 (July-December 1986), pp. 61-90.

It has been suggested in this chapter that Jinnah's political strategy was based on four major moves. First, he "expanded" the Muslim League in a way that it could make room for the new entrants, particularly those who were inspired and motivated by the Pakistan idea and wanted to contribute to its realization. Secondly, after going through the expansion phase, he brought the newly mobilized as well as the old, traditional groups in the League, under a single, national authority by "concentrating" powers in the hands of the President. The idea was that if the League was to become the "sole representative body of Muslim India", it was imperative that it must also have a "sole representative" leader who could speak on its behalf without any fear of contradiction. Thirdly, Jinnah launched a mass mobilization campaign to reach all sections of the Muslim society and to explain to them the Pakistan idea, and to appeal to them to lend support to the League for the purpose of achieving Pakistan. His appeal was both at the 'normative' level and at the 'structural' level, winning him the support of general masses as well as various groups and classes of the Muslim society who saw unlimited opportunities in a new Muslim nation-state of Pakistan. Some of the groups such as, students, ulama, pirs and sajjadanashins, and women, indeed went on to take it upon themselves to carry his message further down to the masses. Fourthly, Jinnah hoped to exploit opportunities of the on-going war to win maximum support for the League. The acts of omission and commission committed by the British and the Congress provided him plenty of opportunities.

These careful, calculated moves operated simultaneously, reinforcing one another. The result was that, in the 1945-46 elections, the Muslim League, in fact, emerged as the "sole representative body of Muslim India". It was able to secure an overwhelming majority of Muslims seats, 474 of the 524 Muslim seats in the central and provincial assembly elections. This was a remarkable performance as compared to the 109 seats which the League had polled in the 1937 elections. The result indeed revealed beyond any shadow of doubt the successful culmination of Jinnah's well thought-out and well executed strategy in mobilizing the Muslims in the crucial years of 1940-47.

These seven chapters have been organized into seven independent chapters and they appear in the book in the same order in which they have been discussed here. Apart from minor editorial changes in the text, these chapters are produced here as they were first published in various Journals. For the sake of uniformity, notes have been standardized. I wish

to take this opportunity to thank all the publishers and editors of these articles. My special thanks are due to Dr. Hafeez Malik, Professor of Political Science at Villanova University, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., and editor, *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*. I am also grateful to Mr. Nelson Leung, Director, Asian Research Service, Hong Kong. Both have contributed a lot to the cause of scholarly publications on Asia, especially on Pakistan, a much ignored and marginalized area of interest abroad. I hope they will continue to give Pakistan its rightful place in the literature they produce.

A lot of gratitude must be acknowledged to my friends and colleagues at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and elsewhere who made this publication possible. I am particularly grateful to Syed Rifaat Hussain who read all of this book in a manuscript form and gave many helpful suggestions. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Saeed Shafqat, Dr. M. Aslam Syed, Dr. Muhammad Waseem, Dr. M. Naeem Qureshi, Dr. M. Rafique Afzal, Muhammad Qasim Zaman and Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik for all the guidance, encouragement and help I have received from them through various hazards of research and writing. Many eminent scholars have been constantly encouraging me to publish my work. I would especially like to thank professors A.H. Dani, Sharif al Mujahid, Lateef Ahmad Sherwani, S. Razi Wasti, Lal Baha, Muneer Ahmad Baluch, and finally Dr. K.F. Yusuf, the former Director, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad. I must also record my deepest gratitude and debt to late professors Waheed-uz-Zaman and Abdul Hamid who, very kindly, read, corrected and improved much of the material used here. May their souls rest in peace (Amen). My sincerest thanks and appreciation is also due to my family, especially my wife for her encouragement, support and patient forbearance. Finally, I must thank my publisher, Sh. Raza Mehdi, for his generous offer and help in preparing this manuscript for publication.

Needless to say, I alone am responsible for all interpretations and conclusions and for any errors that might have remained.

Islamabad

Sikandar Hayat

1 September 1990

## Chapter 1

### Origins and Development of the Pakistan Movement

Although writers have suggested a number of starting points on the road to Pakistan, ranging from the Arab conquest of Sind (now Sindh) in 711 to the 'War of Independence' in 1857, it is plausible and empirically testable to argue that the Pakistan Movement really started with the proceedings and ultimate adoption of the Lahore Resolution in the now famous session of the All-India Muslim League held on 22-24 March 1940. In his presidential address on 22 March to an enthusiastic, responsive gathering of thousands of Muslims drawn from all parts of India, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, after highlighting the Muslim sufferings and difficulties in the recent years, declared that the only way the Indian Muslims could get out of their distressful situation and could indeed free themselves both from the British and the now imminent Hindu rule was to have their own "homelands, their territory and their state".<sup>1</sup> They could not accept any system of government which must necessarily result in a Hindu-majority government. The differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, he stressed, were "fundamental and deep-rooted", and thus there was no way the two communities could "at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation merely by means of subjecting them to a democratic constitution and holding them forcibly together by unnatural and artificial methods of British Parliamentary Statute".<sup>2</sup> The experience of the past clearly showed that it was "inconceivable that the fiat of the writ of a government so constituted can ever command a willing and loyal obedience throughout the subcontinent by various nationalities except by means of armed force behind it".<sup>3</sup>

Jinnah thus went on to claim that the problem in India was not "inter-communal" but an "international" problem, involving two 'nations' – Hindus and Muslims.<sup>4</sup> The Muslims were not a "minority". They were "a nation, according to any definition of a nation", and thus, like all other nations, had

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1 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. 1 (Lahore, 1968), p. 171.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 168.

4 *Ibid.*

the right to self-determination.<sup>5</sup> The difficulty with the Hindu leaders, he lamented, was that they “fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism”. The two were so “different and distinct”. As he explained:

They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality... The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other, and likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.<sup>6</sup>

The only way out of this predicament, Jinnah suggested, was the partition of India. In the process, he hoped, the perennial conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims would be resolved, leading ultimately to the cherished goal of peace and freedom for all. The Muslim League leaders endorsed the call on 23 March, and in a resolution adopted on 24 March, the League demanded ‘Independent States’ in Muslim-majority areas of India.

This demand had an irresistible appeal for the Muslim masses. Facing agony and frustration at the hands of Hindus, the promise of their own separate homeland, named Pakistan soon after, not only provided them “a reassuring anchor” in a climate of turbulence and uncertainty<sup>7</sup> but also, more importantly, gave them “a sense of purpose and worth”<sup>8</sup> and power, political power, which they were fast losing in the face of India’s advance towards self-government and freedom, with its inherent bias towards the

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5 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

7 Cynthia H. Enloe, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development* (Boston, 1973), p. 15.

8 Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York, 1966), p. 112.

majority community. They will be safe and secure too. The Muslims rallied in their thousands to support the demand and the resultant movement for Pakistan.

Thus, this movement was not an ordinary movement. Nor was it a movement started in a fit of anger or in a flurry of excitement. It was a well-founded movement, based on religion, culture, history, and political aspirations, all formulating Muslim nationhood, and sought a separate homeland of Pakistan for the Muslims to enable them to live their lives in their own way with freedom, power, and security. The sense of urgency was of course provided by the distressful situation of Muslim India which, in turn, was both a cause and consequence of a host of factors affecting the Muslim politics in India in general and the Muslims in particular. The purpose of this chapter indeed is to highlight all those factors. How did the movement for Pakistan start? What was its rationale? Why did the Muslims who had lived with the Hindus for centuries in India feel compelled to charter their own separate course, leading ultimately to the creation of a separate state of Pakistan? Who were the principal leaders of the Muslims? How did they struggle to protect and secure Muslim interests in India before they got convinced that the only way they could save the Muslims from their present predicament was to have their own separate state of Pakistan? What was the Hindu majority community's attitude towards the Muslims and their particular interests? How did the system of representative government introduced by the British in India affect the Muslim interests? How did the Muslims respond to it, and how did the system ultimately fail to satisfy their demands and interests? How did Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal break from 'Indian nationalism' and emerge as the fiercest champions of Muslim nationalism? How did Jinnah mobilize and organize the Muslims under the banner of the Muslims League? How did he finally wrest the initiative from the British (and the Hindus) and force them to concede Pakistan if they did not wish to leave India in a civil war and bloodshed? These, and many related issues are the subject matter of discussion here.

The historical setting is provided by the cataclysmic events of 1857 affirming the fall of Mughal Empire and ascendancy of the British rule in India. The Muslims found themselves in a very difficult situation. The defeat in the 'War of Independence' made them villains. The British came to regard them as their arch enemies, who had converted a "sepoys mutiny" into a "political conspiracy aimed at the extinction of the British

Raj".<sup>9</sup> Substitution of English for Persian and Western education for traditional learning deprived them of their positions of influence and authority in the country. The doors of civil and military services were closed to them. The British indeed put a seal on the decline of the Muslims in all walks of life.<sup>10</sup>

To compound their difficulties, Hindu-Muslim relations had touched their lowest ebb. Religio-cultural differences together with communal distinctions on the one hand contending with an instinct for communal separateness nurtured by centuries of contact and conflict on the other, had left the two communities completely alienated from each other. Different responses of the Hindus and the Muslims to the British rule politically, socially and economically, in fact, went on to affect radically the final outcome of events in India's modern history. While the Hindus welcomed the change of 'masters', and reconciled themselves with the new rulers without much consternation, the Muslims proclaimed a sort of war against the British. In their reluctance to accept the new order, the Muslim masses followed the traditions of Shah Waliullah and Sayyid Ahmad Bareilvi in terms of resistance to the concentration of power in non-Muslim hands in India.<sup>11</sup> The implications were quite obvious.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, Syed Ahmad Khan, born in Delhi, in a traditional noble family, with links both to the Mughals and the British, stepped into the political arena to save the Muslims from political decay and destruction. He reckoned that there was no way out but to adjust to the realities of new life in India. He devised a three-pronged strategy. First, he strived to reconcile the Muslims to the British rule. He was convinced that the Muslims should cooperate with the British if they did not wish to be left out in government services and professions and indeed

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9 Thomas Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt* (Princeton, 1964), p. 298. Also see, M. Ahsen Chaudhry, "The Impact of the Revolt of 1857 on British Colonial Policy", *Journal of Pakistan Historical Society* (July 1963), pp. 208-19; and Ahmad Saeed and Kh. Mansur Sarwar, *Trek to Pakistan* (Lahore, 2012), Ch. 1, "The War of Independence (1857)", pp. 1-13.

10 Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1858-1948* (London, 1968), pp. 13-14; W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (Calcutta, 1945), p. 161; and I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1969), p. 18.

11 Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford, 1964), p. 28.

marginalized completely. He assured them that their lives and properties were safe under the British and no restrictions had been placed on their religious freedom. *Jihad*, he reminded them was incumbent on the Muslims only if they were denied peace and could not practice their religion without the fear of persecution. Since none of these conditions prevailed in India, he insisted, it was obligatory for the Muslims to be 'loyal' to the British rulers.<sup>12</sup> Indeed he warned them that, with the ultimate reprisals that followed, there was no other way to recover except by cooperating with the British. Secondly, Syed Ahmad Khan wanted the Muslim community to take to Western education. The Hindus had already taken advantage of the new system of education. The Muslims must not lag behind. The connection between education and government was too obvious for him to emphasize.<sup>13</sup> In emphasizing the need for Western education, however, Syed Ahmad Khan was by no means suggesting that the Muslims should ignore their traditional subjects of interest. He wanted them to acquire Western education in addition to traditional curriculum.

Finally, Syed Ahmad Khan wanted the Muslims to realize that they had their own political interests, as a community, which must be secured and promoted through their own separate group life. He refused to accept the claim made by the newly formed Indian National Congress that India was 'one nation' and that the Congress had therefore the right to speak on their behalf too. The founders of the Congress, he charged, did not take into consideration the fact that "India is inhabited by different nationalities". They professed different religions, spoke different languages, their ways of life and customs were different, their attitude towards history and historical traditions was different. There was no one nation in India as such.<sup>14</sup> This also explained to a large extent why Syed Ahmad Khan opposed the Congress and its principal demand regarding the introduction of Western representative system of government in India, pure and

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12 Syed Ahmad Khan, however, was not asking the Muslims to be 'loyal' to the British for loyalty sake. He made it clear that the attitude of the Muslims towards the British would in the long run depend on the treatment meted out to them. Altaf Hussain Hali, *Hayat-i-Javed* (Lahore, 1957, rep.). Also see, Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, p. 59; and G.F.I. Graham, *The Life and Work of Sayyid Ahmad Khan* (Karachi, 1974, rep.), p. 53.

13 Graham, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, p. 77.

14 G. Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents* (Lahore, 1977), p. 3.

simple. He could clearly see that the system was bound to reflect the domination of the Hindus, the overwhelmingly majority community, over the Muslims. The Hindus would obtain four times as many votes as the Muslims because their population was four times as large. "It would be like a game of dice", he contended, "in which one man had four dice and the other only one".<sup>15</sup> These and other related concerns became the focal point of Syed Ahmad Khan's efforts to mobilize the Muslims in the years ahead.

Syed Ahmad Khan's efforts continued to inspire his associates and successors who worked hard to defend and promote the Muslim cause after his death. The Urdu-Hindi controversy that began in his time soon became one of their prime concerns. In April 1900, Sir Anthony MacDonnell, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces (UP), issued an order stating that Hindi written in the Devanagiri script would enjoy equal status with Urdu as the language of courts as well as of recruitment to government jobs except in a purely English-demanding position. This came as a rude shock to the Muslims. Far from being a language of the Muslims only, Urdu had been the *lingua franca* of North India for several hundred years. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Secretary of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) Aligarh College, and one of the leading associates of Syed Ahmad Khan, responded by launching a movement for the protection of Urdu as the official language of the province. He even established an Urdu Defence Association for the purpose. Although the Muslim leaders failed to get the government change its policy as long as MacDonnell was at the helm of affairs, things improved considerably under his successor, Sir James La Touche. The new governor responded favourably to the Muslims' campaign, and did not insist on strict implementation of the new policy.

Syed Ahmad Khan's successors made two further moves to protect and promote Muslim interests. First, they arranged a deputation of leading representatives of the community to call on the Viceroy, Lord Minto, in October 1906, to ask for separate representation for the Muslims in the system of government. Secondly, they founded the All-India Muslim League in December that year as a distinct representative political

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15 See, Syed Ahmed Khan, *The Present State of Indian Politics: Speeches and Letters*, ed., Farman Fatehpuri (Lahore, 1982), pp.36-37.

organization of the Muslims. But before we proceed to examine the nature and objectives of these two very important developments, let us take into account yet another development, the partition of Bengal, which not only radically affected Muslim interests, but also preceded these developments in time.

In 1905, the British partitioned the unwieldy province of Bengal. Dacca (now Dhaka), Rajshahi and Chittagong Divisions (excluding the Darjeeling district) and the district of Malda were separated from it and, along with Assam, were constituted into a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The Muslims came to form an overwhelming majority, nearly two-third of the population.

While the authors of the partition, Lord Curzon and other British officials, insisted that the partition scheme was no more than an administrative device<sup>16</sup> to tackle the administrative problems of a huge province (with an area of 189,000 square miles and a population of 80 millions), the Hindus hastened to describe it as a policy of 'divide and rule', a ploy to arrest the growth of "Indian nationalism". In fact, this 'divide and rule' ploy has permeated all discussions of Muslim separatism, Muslim nationalism, demand for Pakistan, partition of India, and the eventual creation of Pakistan in Indian accounts ever since. But nothing could be farther from the truth here, and for a number of good reasons: 1) the partition was meant not to divide Hindus and Muslims – only Bengal province. The new province of 31 million people still had one-third of its population comprising Hindus. The remainder of Bengal with some 50 million people was a Hindu-dominated province; 2) there was no definite sense of solidarity between the Hindus and the Muslims in the first place. The Muslims in Bengal were "too disorganized and backward"<sup>17</sup> to really count in the political life of Bengal, which was safely in the hands of the Hindus; 3) even after the announcement of the partition, clearly to the benefit of the Muslims, the Muslim opinion was divided on the issue. At first even the Muslim Nawab of Dacca moved a resolution against the partition of

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16 David Dilks, *Curzon in India: Frustrations*, Vol. II (New York, 1970), pp. 200-2; Bamfylde Fuller, *Some Personal Experiences* (London, 1930), pp. 123-5; and Andrew H.L. Fraser, *Among Indian Rajas and Ryots* (Philadelphia, 1912), pp. 317-24.

17 Haridas Mukherjee and Uma Mukherjee, *The Growth of Nationalism in India, 1857-1905* (Calcutta, 1957), p. 24.

Bengal (at 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress session).<sup>18</sup> In fact, it was the partition rather than the prospect of partition which later on formulated and developed Muslim opinion against anti-partition agitation launched by the Hindus; and 4) even if one were to concede for the sake of argument that the partition of Bengal was a “deliberate” move on part of the British Government to sow the seeds of conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims, the question still arises, why did not the Hindus move to put forward “an alternative scheme” to satisfy legitimate grievances of the Muslims?<sup>19</sup> After all, the partition meant a great relief to Bengali Muslims.

The fact of the matter is that the Hindus felt agitated because the new province of East Bengal threatened their dominance in public service and professions. Trade coming to Calcutta (now Kolkata) would go to Chittagong, and Calcutta lawyers would lose their clientele to Dacca, the capital and legal centre of the new province. The agitation indeed came to suffer in the end for want of honesty of purpose. By the end of 1910, it was virtually dead. But then the British Government had its own plans. In order to facilitate a warm welcome to King George V in India by the Hindu majority community, the government contrived to annul the partition. On 12 December 1911, King George V himself announced the annulment leaving the Muslims disillusioned with the British attitude towards their interests and welfare.

The Muslims, however, had some solace in the earlier British response to Simla Deputation of 1906. Led by the Aga Khan, the deputation, comprising 36 members, had waited on the Viceroy at Simla on 1 October 1906. The deputation complained that the representative institutions introduced by the British in India were not suited to Indian conditions. They have made the Muslims a ‘minority’, a permanent minority. The Muslims should have substantial representation in the legislative councils, municipalities, and district boards, indeed at all levels of government. Therefore, they should be granted ‘separate electorates’ to elect their own representatives, and that too “commensurate” not only with their numbers

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18 Annie Besant, *How India Wrought for Freedom: The Story of the Indian National Congress told from Official Records* (Madras, 1951), p. 451.

19 Sayeed, *The Formative Phase*, p. 27.

but also, significantly, with their “political importance” and their “contribution to the defence of the Empire”.<sup>20</sup>

The Muslim demand for separate electorates was based on genuine complaints about the system of government, resting on the majority principle. Results of the elections of 1893 were a great disappointment for the Muslims. Even some non-Muslim leaders such as, G.K. Gokhale, conceded that Muslim apprehensions regarding their future could not be summarily dismissed. If the Hindus had been a minority, they would not have reacted differently. Yet it was after a lot of efforts, and particularly after the unrelenting campaign launched by Syed Ameer Ali in London to mobilize parliamentary and public support over the issue that the British Government finally agreed to include separate electorates in the constitutional reforms of 1909.<sup>21</sup>

The favourable response to the Simla deputation also helped the Muslim leaders in directing their attention to the establishment of a political organization of their own, to pursue their own particular political interests. So far, the Muslims, under the influence of Syed Ahmad Khan, had shunned political activities. But now the changed conditions of India, particularly in the context of anticipated constitutional advance under the Act of 1909, and growing Hindu-Muslim tension, forced them to get involved and to found the All-India Muslim League on 30 December 1906. The first step in this direction of course was taken in Lucknow in the middle of September 1906, when the Simla deputation was meeting to prepare its brief. It was decided that a Muslim political organization should be established at the next annual meeting of the Muhammadan Educational Conference. The matter was again discussed in Simla in October 1906 by the members of the deputation. It was decided finally to settle the aims and objectives of the proposed organization after the conclusion of the annual session of the Educational Conference in the last

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20 For the full text of the memorial see, Matiur Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation: A Study of the Muslim League in British Indian Politics, 1906-1912* (London, 1970), App. 1, pp. 29-98. Also see, Saeed, *Trek to Pakistan*, Ch. 7, “The Simla Deputation”, pp. 72-79.

21 For a detailed discussion of Syed Ameer Ali’s role in this connection see, in particular, Razi Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905-1910* (London, 1965), pp. 176-90; and M.Y. Abbasi, “Syed Ameer Ali”, *Journal of Pakistan Studies*, Vol. II (1968).

week of December. In accordance with the decisions taken at Lucknow and Simla, a meeting of the delegates to the conference and of other prominent Muslim leaders was held in Dacca on 30 December 1906. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, a colleague and follower of Syed Ahmad Khan, presided. A resolution proposed by Khwaja Salimullah, Nawab of Dacca, and seconded by Hakim Ajmal Khan was unanimously adopted, and the long-awaited political organization was founded under the name of the All-India Muslim League. One of its most important objectives clearly was: "to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India..."<sup>22</sup> This new found interest and identity got further boost in subsequent developments ranging from the granting of principle of separate electorates in the Act of 1909 to the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911.

The Act of 1909 recognized the Muslim demand for separate electorates. Some seats were reserved in each council, except that of the Punjab, to be filled exclusively by Muslim voters. The Muslims could of course take part in the elections for general seats and thereby enhance their representation. However, the rules made under the Act also granted special representation to other minority communities of India as well such as, the Depressed classes, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Sikhs, Europeans, besides landlords, university graduates, commercial and industrial classes. The idea was to ascertain and acknowledge the wishes of all the Indian people, to the extent possible. There was nothing "parliamentary" about it. "If it could be said", Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, indeed claimed, "that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one, would have nothing at all to do with it".<sup>23</sup>

But while the Muslims (like other minorities) gained constitutionally and politically through the separate electorates under the Act of 1909, the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911, as discussed earlier, left them very disappointed with the British Government. They saw the annulment a clear instance of concession to the Hindus against the

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22 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. 1 (Karachi, 1969), p. 6.

23 Quoted in Reginald Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India: Part I; The Indian Problem, 1833-1939* (London, 1968), p. 26.

partition of the province on malicious grounds. The annulment, however, was not the only cause of Muslim discontent. A number of developments starting from the government's refusal to raise the MAO College Aligarh to the status of a university to the Cawnpore mosque tragedy to the attitude of the British towards the Ottoman Turkish empire during the course of wars in Balkans in 1912-13, agitated the Muslim community. They held that all this was due to a consciously laid out British policy to suppress the Muslims inside as well as outside India. Thus, an anti-British sentiment began to grow among them forcing them to join hands with their erstwhile antagonists, Hindus, to press the British and make a united demand on the system of government in the country.

In November 1916, as President of Lucknow session of the Muslim League, Jinnah moved the League and the Congress leadership to draft a radical constitution acceptable to both organizations. The scheme, popularly known as the Lucknow Pact, besides demanding 'a system of government suitable to India', gave the Muslims a few special concessions. Two of these concessions need special mention. One, the Congress accepted the system of separate electorates granted by the British in the Act of 1909. It also conceded separate electorates to the Muslims in the provinces such as, the Punjab and the Central Provinces (CP), where they did not exist previously. Two, the Muslims were given 'weightage' in Hindu-majority provinces.<sup>24</sup> This was the first political settlement between the leadership of the Hindus and the Muslims. For his keen efforts in making this settlement possible, Jinnah was hailed as the "Ambassador of Unity".<sup>25</sup>

But this was not to be the only occasion the Hindus and the Muslims were to join hands. They were to work in concert soon in the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement, though without Jinnah at the centre of the stage. Jinnah was of course not indifferent to the fate of the Khilafat in Turkey nor was he unmindful of the Muslim sentiment on the issue.<sup>26</sup> He simply could

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24 For the text of the pact see, Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981), App. 7, pp. 462-65.

25 Mrs. Naidu, in fact, published a selection of his speeches and statements under the title of *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: An Ambassador of Unity* (Madras, 1918).

26 Addressing the Calcutta session of the Muslim League on 1 September 1920, he bitterly criticized the British Government for "the spoliation of the Ottoman

not agree to the non-cooperation methods forced by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the new Congress leader, to promote the cause of the Khilafat.<sup>27</sup>

Jinnah was opposed to “methods rather than to motives”. As Naeem Qureshi explained at some length:

He had been a consistent and staunch supporter of Turkey and pan-Islam though his approach was pragmatic and not emotional. In fact, he was one of the first Indian leaders who took up the Khilafat issue from the League platform as early as December 1916. At times he even donned a Turkish *fez* after the popular fashion to demonstrate his Ottoman sympathies. But he was a constitutionalist and did not believe in threats which he knew could not be translated into action.<sup>28</sup>

The turn of events was soon to prove him right. The non-cooperation methods caused not only severe setback to the Khilafat movement but to experiment with Hindu-Muslim unity in this manner, involving masses without any serious deliberation over the impact of the methods adopted for the purpose. But before we proceed with a discussion of the Khilafat movement and its failure to realize its self-evident goals, let us first turn to the Act of 1919 which, in a way, set the stage, at least initially, for Hindu-Muslim cooperation against the British.

The main feature of the Act of 1919 was a new system of government, called ‘dyarchy’, introduced in the provinces of British India.<sup>29</sup> The essence of the system was the division of administration of a province into two separate areas, namely, the ‘Reserved’ and the ‘Transferred’. The reserved subjects were to be administered by the provincial governor with the help of executive councilors, responsible to the Government of India. These subjects were quite important and included land revenue, irrigation, justice, finance, police, jails, etc. But still a host of subjects were included in the transferred list such as, local self-government, public health,

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Empire and Khilafat”. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *The Collected Works of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Karachi, 1984), p. 388.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 396.

28 M.Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 97-98.

29 For details see, L. Curtis, ed., *Papers Relating to the Application of the Principle of Dyarchy* (London, 1920).

sanitation, education, public works, agriculture, etc. This meant transferring of some powers and responsibility to Indian hands; a significant development since the British took control of India in 1857-58. The size of provincial legislative councils was also enlarged. Direct elections were introduced. Separate electorates for the Muslims were retained.

The actual working of the system of government, however, turned out to be far from satisfactory. The division of responsibilities into the reserved and transferred subjects proved to be a real problem. Education, for instance, was a transferred, but European and Anglo-Indian education was a reserved subject. The provincial governors did not behave like constitutional heads, acting on the advice of the ministers. Instead, they overruled their ministers frequently, and thus frustrated all chances of the development of 'responsible government' in the provinces. The resignation or removal of a minister did not affect his colleagues. It was, therefore, correctly said that there were ministers but without a sense of ministerial responsibility. Thus, despite the advance over the Act of 1909, not much power was really transferred to the Indians.<sup>30</sup>

A number of events, such as the passage of the Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, and, above all, the fate of the Khilafat made the whole exercise all the more disconcerting. In 1918, the Muslims had launched the Khilafat movement, as Maulana Mohamed Ali, its principal leader, aptly put it: "Not for aggression, not even for the defence of Turkey, but for the defence of our Faith". But since the institution of Khilafat rested in Turkey, the Indian Muslims felt obliged to demand and secure the safety and survival of the Turkish Ottoman empire as well. Its ruler, the Khalifa, was the defender of their faith. Maulana Mohamed Ali, therefore, demanded: "The Khilafat shall be preserved, that there shall be no Christian mandate over any part of the Island of Arabia, and that the Khalifa shall remain, as before the war, the Warden of the Holy Places".<sup>31</sup>

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30 For a useful discussion on the subject see, P.G. Robb., *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921* (London, 1920).

31 Afzal Iqbal, ed., *Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohamed Ali*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1969), pp. 21-23.

The British authorities were aware of the Indian Muslim sentiment on the Khilafat. They, indeed, exploited more than once the attachment of the Indian Muslims to the Khalifa to mobilize support for their rule in India. The Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, therefore, was constrained to hold out an assurance to the Muslims that their feelings would be “given the fullest representation”, and that no effort would be “spared, no stone left unturned to place before those, with whom the decision will rest the plea of Indian Mausalmans for the most favourable possible treatment of Turkey”.<sup>32</sup> In fact, some of these assurances were being violated even at the time they were being given, as the British troops were already on the move in Mesopotamia.

But Maulana Mohamed Ali and other Indian Muslim leaders decided to launch a campaign in favour of the Khalifa and the Khilafat cause nonetheless. They constituted a Khilafat Committee, and launched a country-wide Khilafat movement. In the process, they moved to seek the support of the Hindus. A number of political developments in India, as indicated above, had already taken place forcing the Muslims to reject the old policy of ‘loyalism’, and seek cooperation and understanding with the Hindus. The Hindus, too, on their part, given their own experiences and frustrations, had come to recognize the importance of Muslim support. They needed the support to remedy the “Punjab wrongs”, the situation in the Punjab after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and to put maximum pressure on the British authorities to concede ‘responsible government’ to India.<sup>33</sup> Nothing could express this shift in attitude more than Gandhi’s high profile public support to the Khilafat movement with his ‘non-cooperation’ campaign against the government.

The Khilafat-non-cooperation movement gathered momentum in no time. Maulana Mohamed Ali and other leaders went on a whirlwind tour mobilizing support all over the country. They developed a network of alliances ranging from religious centres and educational institutions to social and political groups and interests. They established close links with

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32 K.K. Aziz, ed., *The Indian Khilafat Movement, 1915-1933: A Documentary Record* (Karachi, 1972), pp. 72-73.

33 According to Keith Callard, the cause of Indian freedom happened to coincide with the cause of Islam in the Muslim world situation. Keith Callard, *Pakistan: A Political Study* (London, 1968), p. 34.

Deoband, Nadva, and, of course, Farangi Mahal of Mian Abdul Bari. Aligarh also became one of the important centres of the Khilafat activities. Students came out of the government-aided schools and colleges, and lawyers boycotted the courts. Many thousands of people – Hindus and Muslims – courted arrest. A new dimension was soon added to the movement by the religious edict issued by the Muslim leaders that India had become *Dar al-Harb* (Abode of War), suggesting that it was incumbent upon the Muslims to migrate to a *Dar al-Islam*, an Islamic country.<sup>34</sup> Thousands of Muslims responded to this edict and left India for Afghanistan; many were refused entry resulting in much hardship and hundreds of deaths on the way back home.<sup>35</sup>

But in spite of these sufferings and sacrifices, a number of developments caused irreparable loss to the movement. The most important development was the Mappilla 'rebellion' of 1921, creating a feeling of bitterness and hostility between the Hindus and the Muslims, indeed inflaming Hindu-Muslim communalism like never before. This was followed by the Chauri Chaura incident where an unruly mob set fire to a police station and burnt twenty-two policemen who at that time were inside the building. Gandhi abruptly, and without consulting the Khilafat leaders, called off the movement, leaving the Muslims bewildered and indeed shocked. The movement received a further blow a little later, when on 21 November 1922, the Turkish Parliament decided to separate Khilafat from the Sultanate. The fate of the Khilafat was eventually sealed by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk on 3 March 1924, when he sent the Khalifa, Abdul Majid, into exile and abolished the institution of Khilafat. The Khilafat movement, however, continued to linger on for a while but without much enthusiasm.

The petering out of the Khilafat movement deeply affected the Hindu-Muslim relations. There were continuous Hindu-Muslim riots during the

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34 "When a land", explained Maulana Mohamed Ali in a letter to the Viceroy on 24 April 1919, "is not safe for Islam, a Moslem has only two alternatives – *Jihad* or *Hijrat*... In view of our weak condition, migration is the only alternative". Quoted in Afzal Iqbal, *Life and Times of Mohamed Ali* (Lahore, 1974), p. 139.

35 T. Morison, in John Cumming, ed., *Political India, 1832-1932* (London, 1932), p. 97; and Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Towards Pakistan* (Lahore, 1978), p. 28.

next few years – resulting in the loss of many lives on both sides.<sup>36</sup> Eleven riots were reported in 1923, eighteen in 1924, six in 1925, and thirty-five in 1926.<sup>37</sup> The alarming increase in the number of riots was encouraged further by the Hindu movements of *Shuddhi* and *Sangthan*, meant to convert Muslims to Hinduism and to organize the Hindus against the Muslims. The two movements professed to work for the complete annihilation of Muslims in India. In such a tense atmosphere, communal riots sparked off on trifles. Serious riots were reported from one or another part of the country almost every day. The spirit behind the Hindu-Muslim unity of the Khilafat days had long been dead and forgotten. The turn of events, however, had impressed upon the Muslims the need to give up the idea that they could depend on the Hindus to secure their political rights and interests. They had come to reckon that the Hindus would not hesitate to leave them in the lurch if it suited their purposes. Their only hope lay in relying upon their own inherent strength and working out a separate political platform for themselves. Expressed through the revival of the Muslim League (1924), Delhi Muslim Proposals (1927), amendments to Nehru Report (1928), and Jinnah's 'Fourteen Points' (1929), the Muslims indeed did move in that direction.

Jinnah was convinced that the only way the Muslims could secure their political interests in the country in the changed circumstances was to revive the Muslim League, which had been pushed into the background during the Khilafat-non-cooperation phase. Thus, its revival was important, he believed, not only to identify, articulate and express Muslim interests but also to persuade the Congress to see the validity of those interests and to accept them as a basis for cooperation between Hindus and Muslims in the common cause of Indian freedom. He revived the Muslim League in May 1924. A session was held at Lahore, helped by Mian Fazl-i-Husain and his supporters from the Punjab, and was attended, among others, by Maulana Mohamed Ali, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, and other Khilafatists. Jinnah presided the session. He was the new leader. Although some of the Khilafatists were "indignant at

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36 For some of the details on these riots see, Sharif al Mujahid, "Communal Riots", in *A History of Freedom Movement*, Vol. IV, Part II (Karachi, 1970), pp. 42-89.

37 B.R. Nanda, *Road to Pakistan: The Life and Times of Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (New Delhi, 2010), p. 95.

the prospect of the leadership slipping out of their hands... [but] they had no solution for the new situation. Jinnah at the head of the All India Muslim League seemed to be more suited to take up the challenge".<sup>38</sup>

On 20 March 1927, Jinnah called a meeting of representative Muslim leaders to suggest a way out of the present difficulties. After a lengthy discussion, the Muslim leaders agreed to renounce separate electorates on behalf of the Muslims if the Hindus accept, among other things, the separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency, political reforms in North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), and Baluchistan (now Balochistan) to bring them at par with other provinces in India (under the Act of 1919), proportion of representation in the Punjab and Bengal in accordance with their population, and one-third representation in the central legislature. To surrender separate electorates in spite of the opposition of a strong section of their own community, led by Mian Muhammad Shafi from the Punjab, was a great concession on part of these Muslim leaders. The Congress, however, in spite of its early favourable response to the Muslim proposals, refused to reciprocate the sentiment. All Parties Conference convened on 19 May rejected the proposals. The conference, however, agreed to constitute a special committee under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to "consider and examine the principles of the constitution for India".<sup>39</sup> Though this move kept alive the prospects of Hindu-Muslim talks on the future constitution of India, it could not be denied that Jinnah's "bold and patriotic initiative" was blown away.<sup>40</sup> This was the first time that the bulk of the Muslim leadership had agreed to renounce separate electorates for Hindu-Muslim settlement, for the greater cause of India.

In November 1927, the British Government announced the appointment of a commission, headed by Sir John Simon, to examine the pace of constitutional advance in India. The appointment of such a commission had been provided in the 1919 Act. The Simon Commission, comprising

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38 Naeem Qureshi, "Jinnah and the Khilafat Movement (1918-24)", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. I, No. 2, Iqbal Centennial issue (December 1977), p. 128.

39 Matlubul Hasan Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970), p. 128.

40 Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV (Lahore, n.d., rep.), p. 107.

seven members (all white), however, failed to impress the Congress and the League faction led by Jinnah who was still keen to work with the Congress, and its constitutional committee headed by Motilal Nehru. Other faction of the League, led by Shafi, cooperated with the commission in the hope that its recommendations would be more helpful to the Muslims. The Simon Commission Report, published in two volumes in 1930, recommended the abolition of 'dyarchy', setting up of a federal system of government with maximum autonomy for the provinces, and continuation of the principle of separate electorates. However, it did not accept the Muslim demands of raising the NWFP to the status of a full-fledged province, statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, and one-third representation at the centre. The commission also postponed consideration of the Muslim demand for the separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency till its financial implications were fully examined. The Muslims were disappointed.<sup>41</sup>

But the Muslims were even more disappointed with the Nehru Report. The report (1928) repudiated the principle of separate electorates, accepted by the Congress more than a decade ago, as already pointed out, under the Lucknow Pact of 1916. It called for "joint mixed electorates" for all assemblies. The Muslim demand for reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal legislatures was dismissed as opposed to "the principles on which responsible government rests". The Muslims were to get proportional representation in the central legislature and not one-third of representation, as recommended in the Delhi Muslim Proposals of March 1927. Though it was conceded in theory that the form of government would be federal, in actual fact, the residuary and other substantial powers were transferred to the central government.<sup>42</sup> Muslims could not be hurt more.<sup>43</sup>

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41 This included not only the erstwhile critics of the commission but also its supporters. Allama Iqbal expressed his disappointment clearly in his 1930 Allahabad address. See Latif Ahmad Sherwani, ed., *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 13, 19.

42 For some of the details on the Nehru Report, see Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, App. 9, pp. 468-72.

43 Jinnah, Maulana Mohamed Ali, Allama Iqbal, and almost all important Muslim leaders were deeply hurt. Jinnah indeed insisted that the Nehru Report was "nothing more than a Hindu counter-proposal to the Muslim Proposals which were made in 1927...." Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements*

But Jinnah, a great champion of Hindu-Muslim unity that he was, still went to the All Parties Convention held at Calcutta in the last week of December 1928 to propose some amendments to the report to help make them acceptable to the Muslims. He fervently pleaded for "statesmanship" and, referring to the cases of Canada and Egypt, for instance, pointed out that "the minorities are always afraid of majorities. The majorities are apt to be tyrannical and oppressive and particularly religious majorities, and the minorities, therefore, have a right to be absolutely secured...."<sup>44</sup> But to no avail. The Hindus were adamant, especially those belonging to the Hindu Mahasabha, the rising Hindu nationalists. Gandhi was not moved either. In fact, mindful of Motilal Nehru's threat that he would 'resign' if the report was not accepted, he rushed to extend his support to it. That ended the matter. The convention turned down Jinnah's amendments without any consideration. The Muslim point of view was completely ignored. Jinnah was shocked. He called it 'the parting of the ways', and ultimately proceeded to draft Muslim demands in the form of 'Fourteen Points', insisting that the provisions embodied in these points must be incorporated in the future constitution of India.

The main provisions included an 'Indian Federation' through federal constitution, with residuary powers vested in the provinces, Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and NWFP, a new province of Sind, and political reforms in the NWFP and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces of British India. The idea was to have a maximum number of Muslim-majority provinces, with full provincial autonomy to guard against the threat of Hindu domination at the centre.<sup>45</sup> The Muslims wanted to fend for themselves. They wanted to promote their own agenda. This was a position different, radically different, from the position taken in the Delhi Muslim Proposals. While in those proposals, Jinnah had endeavoured to represent both Hindu and Muslim demands, the 'Fourteen Points' were clearly the work of Muslim interests. Jinnah spoke for the Muslim community now which had come to see more clearly their fate in a

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*of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1976), p. 297.

44 Desika Char, ed., *Readings in the Constitutional History of India, 1757-1947* (Delhi, 1983), p. 550.

45 For the text of "Fourteen Points" see, Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, App. 10, pp. 473-81.

situation that was fast pushing them to the periphery of the system. Jinnah indeed decidedly moved to the “Muslim camp”. He did not become “a communalist” as such, but, as William Metz perceptively observed, he “could no longer be called the Ambassador of Unity in the same sense as the title had been applied to him theretofore”.<sup>46</sup> Jinnah and the Muslim leaders now recognized the need to seek a new constitutional order. This was reflected most clearly in Allama Muhammad Iqbal’s Allahabad address of 1930, and in subsequent discussions during the three sessions of the Round Table Conference held in London in 1930-32, the Muslim reaction to the Communal Award (1932), and in the working of the Act of 1935.

Allama Iqbal’s Allahabad address deserves special mention, because it laid the intellectual foundation of Muslim nationalism in India, which ultimately led in March 1940 to the demand for Pakistan. In a highly philosophical address, Iqbal analyzed the political situation of India, and went on to dismiss the notion of a united Indian nation in which the various communities had to submerge their cultural and communal identities. This, he warned, would be particularly the fate of the Muslims because they were a ‘minority’ in India, and as such, they could never hope to see Islam as a principle of “solidarity” in national political life. Islam, he insisted, was “an ideal plus some kind of polity”.<sup>47</sup> Thus, it was not possible “to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and reject it as a polity in favour of national politics in which religious attitude is not permitted to play any part?”<sup>48</sup> Islam, he emphasized:

...is not mere experience in the sense of a purely biological event, happening inside the experient and necessitating no reactions on its social environment. It is individual experience creative of a social order. Its immediate outcome is the fundamentals of a polity with implicit legal concepts whose civic significance cannot be belittled merely because their origin is revelational. The religious ideal of Islam, therefore, is organically related to the social order which it has created. The rejection of the one will eventually involve the rejection of the other. Therefore,

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46 William Metz, *The Political Career of Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2010), p. 59.

47 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*, p. 3.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

the construction of a polity on national lines, if it means a displacement of Islamic principles of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim.<sup>49</sup>

Islam in India, in fact, Iqbal claimed, made the Indian Muslims something more than a community, a "nation". Indeed, he argued that they "are the only people who can fitly be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word". The Hindus, though ahead of the Muslims in all walks of life "have not yet been able to achieve the kind of homogeneity which is necessary for a nation", and which Islam had given the Indian Muslims "as a free gift".<sup>50</sup> He, therefore, proposed that the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan be amalgamated into a single state. This "appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India".<sup>51</sup>

On its part, however, the British Government hastened to convene a Round Table Conference in London to discuss the political and communal problems of India which held three sessions in 1930, 1931, and 1932. The Congress refused to participate in the first session. It participated in the second session, with Gandhi as its only official delegate. This, in itself, showed the callousness of the Congress, and, in fact, compromised the representative character of the whole Indian delegation. Gandhi of course proved to be chief wrecker of the conference. He was not interested in Hindu-Muslim settlement. He opposed the Muslim demand for statutory majorities in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. He objected to the maintenance of Muslim separate electorates, a matter of prime concern to the Muslims ever since its recognition by the British in 1909 and the Congress itself in 1916. To complicate the matters further, Gandhi refused to work for a 'genuine' federation, with full autonomy to the provinces. All that he could promise on behalf of the Congress was that: "the residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless [sic] on further examination, it is found to be against the best interests of India",<sup>52</sup> but that was neither here nor there. The result was tedious and inconclusive negotiations between the delegates forcing the British in the end to come out with their own solution of the problem. On 16 August

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49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

52 *Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) September-December 1932*, App. 1, pp. 1391-92.

1932, the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, announced the so-called 'Communal Award'.

Although the Communal Award conceded the Muslim demand for separate electorates, it failed to deliver on other issues. The award turned down the demand for statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. The award took no concrete decision on distributing powers between the centre and provinces on genuine federal lines. Muslim demand that residuary powers should be vested in the provinces was not accepted.<sup>53</sup> Not surprisingly, then, the constitutional advance in the Act of 1935, based essentially on the proceedings and recommendations of the Round Table Conference, and the resultant Communal Award, failed to carry Muslim support and approval.

The 1935 Act, in fact, promoted a federation with a strong unitary bias. The Act not only empowered the centre to legislate the 'Federal' list of subjects, but also the 'Concurrent' list, if it so desired. In addition, the Act failed to protect the autonomy of the provinces. Ministerial functions were still restricted by 'safeguards' placed in the hands of the executive. To further restrict the scope of the ministerial responsibility, the Act placed the governors under the 'superintendence' and 'general control' of the Governor-General. Thus, the Act fell considerably short of the federal objectives emphasized by the Muslim leadership all along. Indeed the Act promoted a strong unitary structure. But the Muslims were not prepared to submit to a central government dominated by the Hindu majority community. They had a genuine fear based on the results of the working of the representative system of government in India for so long. They were a "permanent minority", and thus could not hope to turn the majority rule in the opposite direction. The more they saw powers vested in the centre the more they feared that it must necessarily, in practice, favour the Hindus who formed the major bulk of the population. Therefore, Jinnah did not hesitate to claim that the Act was "devoid of all the basic and essential

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53 Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, p. 126; and Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom: The Formation of the Government of India Act, 1935* (Lahore, 1979), pp. 200-1. For some details on the Communal Award see, Saeed, *Trek to Pakistan*, Ch. 21, "The Round Table Conference, 1930-1932", esp., pp. 180-81.

elements and fundamental requirements which are necessary to form any federation".<sup>54</sup>

The Congress won the 1937 elections in seven out of eleven provinces (essentially in the Hindu-majority provinces) and assumed power for the first time. The Muslims, like all other minorities in India, were keen to see how it would deal with their particular interests and demands. Will it accommodate them? Will it make room for the Muslim League in their governments? Will it share power with them? But the Congress was indifferent, even though there was an overwhelming evidence of Muslim sufferings reported in the *Pirpur Report*, *Shareef Report*, and indeed Fazlul Haq's *Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule*. It insisted on the formation of one-party governments in the provinces to flaunt its national status and to prove its claim to be the natural successor to the British authority. Not only it rejected the League's moves at coalition-building but openly flouted the reservations and safeguards written into provincial part of the constitution. The Muslims felt that the Congress attitude was nothing short of an attempt at Hindu domination. Attempts, with Gandhi's blessings, to force Sanskritized Hindi and to remould the educational system particularly in the primary stages of education through *Vidyamandir* scheme further suggested to them that the whole idea was to obliterate Muslim culture in India and to prepare "a generation which would cease to be Muslim in thought, character and action".<sup>55</sup> The fear of the future that weighed heavily on the Muslim mind since the introduction of British parliamentary institutions in India now showed to Jinnah and other Muslim leaders that Gandhi, Congress, and indeed the Hindu majority community aimed to establish Hindu rule in India. In 1935, Jinnah was prepared to consider the provincial part of the Act of 1935 for whatever its 'worth', but now he condemned it outright for its failure to safeguard Muslim interests. Indeed, he rejected the very system of

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54 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 9. For a full discussion of the Act, see Jinnah's speech on the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Indian Constitutional Reforms in the Legislative Assembly on 7 February 1935. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-20.

55 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, "The Congress in Office (1937-39)", in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. IV, Part 1 & 2 (Karachi, 1970), pp. 41-42. Also see, *Trek to Pakistan*, Ch. 23, "The Congress Raj (1937-39)", pp. 189-202.

government itself. Parliamentary system, “based on the majority principle”, he claimed, “must inevitably mean the rule of the major nation”.<sup>56</sup>

One sure indicator of this anxiety and fear was the rapidity with which the Muslims had devised schemes – zonal schemes, partition schemes – to rid themselves of the Hindu-dominated centre. Schemes such as, ‘A Punjabi’s’, *The Confederacy of India*, Professors Syed Zafarul Hassan and Muhammad Afzal Hussain Qadri’s, The Aligarh Professors’ scheme, Chaudhri Rahmat Ali’s scheme contained in his pamphlet, *The Millat of Islam and the Menace of ‘Indianism’*, S.A. Latif’s scheme in his, *Muslim Problem in India*, Sikandar Hayat Khan’s, *Outline of a Scheme of Indian Federation*, and Abdullah Haroon Committee’s scheme, under the instruction of the Muslim League, were some of the more prominent ones. The March 1940 Lahore Resolution, in fact, was a logical and historical extension of these schemes. However, the resolution differed from the early schemes in one very important respect. Those schemes were generally regional, territorial solutions within the all-India set-up. Lahore resolution demanded a split, partition and a separate homeland. Jinnah clearly saw the inherent difficulties in the regional solutions. He wanted to make the Muslim destiny independent, safe and secure.

The Lahore resolution, proposed on 23 March, and adopted on 24 March 1940 resolved that the separate homeland should be,

designed on the following basic principles, viz, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States’ in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.<sup>57</sup>

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56 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 124.

57 See Liaquat Ali Khan, comp., *Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from December 1938 to March 1940* (Delhi, n.d.), pp. 47-48. Although it was abundantly clear through Jinnah-Gandhi talks of 1944 that what the Lahore resolution really meant was one separate state for the Muslims, the League Legislators’ Convention held at Delhi on 7-9 April 1946 left no doubt about it whatsoever. It categorically demanded one sovereign state of Pakistan.

As to the fate of Muslim minorities left behind in India, the resolution suggested that,

adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.<sup>58</sup>

Jinnah understood that “the Musalmans, wherever they are in a minority, cannot improve their position under a united India or under one central government. Whatever happens, they would remain a minority”. The question for the Muslim minorities in India, he, therefore, asked was, “whether the entire Muslim India of 90,000,000 should be subjected to a Hindu majority raj or whether at least 60,000,000 of Musalmans residing in the areas where they form a majority should have their own homeland and thereby have an opportunity to develop their spiritual, cultural, economic and political life in accordance with their own genius and shape their own future destiny...”<sup>59</sup> Jinnah was convinced that a separate homeland was “not only a practicable goal but the only goal...to save Islam from complete annihilation in this country”.<sup>60</sup> The Muslims “cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government.”<sup>61</sup>

But this was not to be an easy undertaking. While the idea of a separate homeland brought relief to the Muslims and gave them a renewed sense of identity and purpose, it made the other two parties involved in the Indian situation, the Hindus and the British, quite upset. The Hindus in particular could not bear the ‘vivisection’ of India. Whether they belonged to the Hindu Mahasabha or the Indian National Congress, the Hindus had always considered the territorial integrity of India as the very essence of Hinduism. As Rajendra Prasad, one of the prominent leaders of the Congress and the first President of India, claimed: “It cannot be denied that irrespective of who rules and what were the administrative or political divisions of the country, Hindus have never conceived of India as

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58 *Ibid.*

59 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 174-75.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 253.

61 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 170.

comprising anything less than what we regard as India today".<sup>62</sup> The British, on their part, could not agree to the undoing of their most trumpeted achievement, the so-called "political unity" of India either. The very idea of Pakistan, thus, wrote one British writer, "stirred distaste in British governing circles".<sup>63</sup> That their entire work should end in the partition of India, into two separate countries, was "not something which sincere British officials in India could contemplate without abhorrence".<sup>64</sup> To complicate the matters further, there were the "nationalist Muslims" such as, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who insisted that "history would never forgive us if we agree to partition".<sup>65</sup> Jinnah, thus, had to make the most of his leadership abilities and skills at two levels, rather simultaneously. He had to mobilize and organize the Muslims under the banner of the Muslim League and around the demand for Pakistan as well as to enter into negotiations with the British (more so with the British – because they were the *de facto* rulers of the country) and the Congress over the issue of Pakistan.

Jinnah planned a strategy comprising four major tactical moves. First, he initiated the task of re-organizing the League to make room for the new entrants, particularly those who were moved by the Pakistan idea, and thus were willing to join it,<sup>66</sup> and serve its cause. He gave it a new organizational set-up, opening up new avenues of association and participation within the organization. The result was that the League soon came to represent not only the old 'traditional' groups such as, the landlords, nawabs, and other titled gentry but also the 'modern' educated, urban middle classes, merchant-industrialists, traders, bankers, professionals as well as the ulama. Indeed, in the end, it came to transform itself into a Muslim nationalist organization. Secondly, Jinnah moved to seek the support of strong provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces. This was a daunting task. The provincial leaders were reluctant to yield to the control of the centre. But with lot of patience, hard

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62 Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided* (Bombay, 1977), p. 67.

63 Ian Stephens, *Pakistan: Old Country, New Nation* (London, 1967), p. 15.

64 Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj* (London, 1961), p. 17.

65 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 186.

66 See, for instance, the 1940 Constitution of the League, in *The Constitution and Rules of the All India Muslim League*, published by Liaquat Ali Khan, Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League (Delhi, April 1940).

work and direct appeal to the masses over the demand for Pakistan, he left them with no choice but to follow the League. The Second World War and constitutional deliberations at the centre helped matters. The provincial leaders increasingly lost their roles and relevance. Central leaders gained in strength.

Thirdly, Jinnah launched a mass mobilization campaign to reach all social groups and classes of the Muslim community. Some of them not only responded enthusiastically to the promise held out by the Pakistan idea but also took it upon themselves to carry the message further to the masses, particularly rural masses, during the elections of 1945-46, and the two referendums in NWFP and Sylhet (Assam). Educated, urban middle classes, particularly the students, led the way. Soon, they were joined by the ulama, pir and sajjadanashin, and women, especially during the 'civil disobedience' movements in the Punjab and NWFP. These groups went on to serve and promote the cause of the League with enthusiasm, devotion and dedication and thus "changed the course of [the] history of India".<sup>67</sup>

Finally, Jinnah made the most of his efforts to organize the Muslims under the banner of the Muslim League by taking full advantage of the acts of omission and commission of the British and the Congress during the war years. The Congress provided him the most momentous opportunity by resigning its ministries in reaction to the decision of the British Government in 1939 to declare war on behalf of India, and thus leaving the political field entirely to the League. Jinnah moved quickly to install the League ministries in its place, especially in the Muslim-majority provinces of Assam, Bengal and the NWFP. The Punjab was already under the League-Unionist coalition, with the so-called 'Jinnah-Sikandar Pact'. The war itself provided Jinnah an ideal opportunity to mobilize support for the League. The British, in view of the Congress attitude of non-cooperation and indeed 'civil disobedience' during most of these years, were constrained to woo the non-Congress parties, especially the League, the second largest party in the country. However, as far as the Muslims were concerned, the League clearly was the largest representative party of the Muslims in the country.

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67 Quoted in Sarfraz Hussain Mirza, *The Punjab Students Federation, 1937-1947* (Islamabad, 1999), viii.

This, of course, did not mean that Jinnah was 'willing to acquiesce' in the British war effort. He would have nothing to do with it unless the British, in turn, were prepared to offer the Muslims "their real voice and share in the Government of the country".<sup>68</sup> On 8 August 1940, the British Government stated publicly that it "could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life".<sup>69</sup>

Although Jinnah did not accept the August Offer as it did not address itself directly and sufficiently to the League's demands, as the later events were to show, the die was cast. Henceforth, no move could be made at the centre without the League influencing the outcome. The Cripps Mission (1942), the Simla Conference (1945), and the Cabinet Mission (1946) went on to confirm the unassailable position of the League. By the end of 1946, it stood as the "sole representative body of Muslim India", having won all the 30 Muslim seats in the Central Assembly. In the provincial assemblies, it was able to an secure overwhelming majority of Muslim seats. It secured 444 of the 494 Muslim seats. This was a remarkable improvement over the 109 seats it had bagged in the 1937 elections.<sup>70</sup> Jinnah himself was elated. "Now the only thing I can say", he declared at the League Legislators' Convention held in Delhi on 7-9 April 1946, "is this: I do not think there is any power or any authority that can prevent us from achieving our cherished goal of Pakistan. I am confident that we shall march on from victory to victory until we have Pakistan".<sup>71</sup>

Mobilization of the Muslims, however, was the fulfillment of half of Jinnah's mission. He had also to make the British and the Congress concede the demand for Pakistan. He had to secure the creation of Pakistan. The Cripps Mission and other developments on the constitutional plane provided him the much needed space and opportunities.

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68 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 433.

69 Nicholas Mansergh, and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. 1 (London, 1970), App. 1, p. 878.

70 See, Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-47", in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds. C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (London, 1970), pp. 253, 272.

71 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. II (Karachi, 1970), p. 510.

Sir Stafford Cripps came to India in March 1942. He was known for his sympathies with the Congress and its leadership, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru. The constitutional proposals which he carried from London were published soon after his arrival. They stated that the British would help create a 'new Indian Union' after the war. It was conceded, however, that if any province of British India was not prepared to accept the new constitution or indeed the present constitutional set up, the British Government would grant such 'non-acceding provinces' the same status as that of the Indian Union.<sup>72</sup> Apparently, it was a great concession to the Muslim demand for a separate homeland. The Muslims had already rejected the Indian Union. Lahore resolution clearly stipulated a separate homeland for the Muslims. But there was a catch, big catch. Both Muslims and Hindus of a given province had to decide on non-accession. The Muslims alone were not given the right of option. The League, given Hindu opposition to the Muslim demand, could not possibly secure majority support in the Punjab and Bengal.<sup>73</sup> Jinnah, thus, rejected the proposals without much hesitation. "So far as the Pakistan demand is not agreed to", he declared, "we cannot agree to any present adjustment which will in any way militate against the Pakistan demand".<sup>74</sup>

Jinnah-Gandhi Talks in Bombay (now Mumbai) strengthened Jinnah's position further. In May 1944, Gandhi sought negotiations with him. By now, he had "realized" that a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem "could not be accomplished by disregarding Jinnah".<sup>75</sup> The ground for the meeting was prepared by C. Rajgopalachari, a leading member of the Congress. But these talks, held in September, proved fruitless. The two leaders saw the problem and its solution very differently. Gandhi wanted the Muslims to abandon their demand till the withdrawal of the British from India. Jinnah, on the other hand, insisted that Gandhi should "accept the

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72 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. 1, pp. 565-66.

73 The British Government was indeed convinced that the "situation proposed in Cripps Offer practically amounts to rejecting Pakistan claim, since League could not obtain necessary majorities in Bengal and Punjab". Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), p. 938.

74 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 397.

75 Francis G. Hutchins, *India's Revolution: Gandhi and the Quit India Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), p. 278.

fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution and proceed to settle details".<sup>76</sup> One of the main outcome of these talks, however, was that Jinnah made it known to all concerned that no interim solution of the constitutional problem could be agreed upon unless the principle of Pakistan was conceded first.

The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, ignored this stance and paid the price in the failure of the Simla Conference of 1945. And this was in spite of the fact that Jinnah had told him pointblank on the very first day of the conference that the League "would not agree to any constitution except on the fundamental principle of Pakistan". Though the conference in the end focused primarily on the interim arrangement, that is, the composition of the Viceroy's expanded Executive Council for the war period, the implications of Jinnah's demand for an exclusive right to nominate its Muslim members were absolutely clear. The long-term and short-term arrangements were connected, indeed reinforced each other. As he himself put it, "we know that this interim or provisional arrangement will have a way of settling down for an unlimited period and all the forces in the proposed Executive plus the known policy of the British Government and Lord Wavell's strong inclination for a united India, would completely jeopardize us..."<sup>77</sup> Jinnah, thus, refused to compromise the principle of Pakistan for the sake of a doubtful advantage in the provisional scheme of things. The Simla conference, however, marked a breakthrough in Indian political history as far as the Pakistan issue was concerned. Pakistan issue emerged as *the* issue. The League won the 1945-46 elections on this very issue. Only Nehru had the audacity to suggest, as he did to Cripps on 27 January 1946, that: "Vote for the Muslim League in the election is no vote for Pakistan, it is only a vote for the organization which represents a certain solidarity of Indian Muslims."<sup>78</sup> The British Government of course knew better.

Thus, soon after the elections, the British Government sent a mission of three Cabinet Ministers, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Stafford Cripps (again)

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76 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 124.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 187.

78 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII (London, 1979), p. 439.

and A.V. Alexander to India to bring about an agreement on the future constitution of India. The Cabinet Mission reached India in March 1946. The Mission brought no concrete proposals, but after a series of inconclusive interviews and discussions with the political leaders in Simla, both Congress and League leaders included, decided to formulate and announce their own plan for constitutional advance in India. Announced on 16 May, the main thrust of the plan was to offer India a three-tiered constitutional structure in which provinces were 'grouped' to form three "sections". The sections were to determine themselves what subjects would be under the jurisdiction of their respective sectional governments. Section A comprised the provinces of Madras, Bombay, United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces, and Orissa. Section B included the provinces of the Punjab, NWFP and Sind. (Baluchistan was not a full-fledged province then). Section C was to consist of the provinces of Bengal and Assam. The three sections had to come together along with representatives of the Indian States to settle the Union Constitution after the provincial constitutions had been formed. Once the Union Constitution had come into force, a province could 'opt out' of its group. The Mission also stressed the importance of setting up an Interim Government immediately with the support of major political parties. The plan was thus divided into two parts: a long-term plan and a short-term plan. However, the two plans were a package deal. They were interwoven, inter-dependent, and were to be accepted or rejected as a whole. It was further made clear that if either of the two parties, that is, the Congress and the League, refused to join the Interim Government, the Viceroy would seek the help of the other party to form the government.<sup>79</sup> In fact, the Viceroy, Wavell, assured Jinnah that:

...can give you, on behalf of the Delegation, my personal assurance that we do not propose to make any discrimination in the treatment of either party; and that we shall go ahead with the plan laid down... if either party accepts...<sup>80</sup>

The Cabinet Mission was sure that the Congress would accept the plan. Its members were equally sure that the Muslim League, given its

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79 For details see, Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII (London, 1977), pp. 582-91.

80 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 785.

insistence upon the Pakistan demand, and the recent overwhelming vote in its favour, would reject it outright. But contrary to their expectations, and to the credit of Jinnah and his brilliant strategy, the League accepted the plan in the hope that it would ultimately pave the way for Pakistan. The Congress, on the other hand, accepted the plan with reservations, particularly about the 'grouping' of the provinces. This was in spite of the fact that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy publicly declared that the "reasons for the grouping of the provinces are well known and this is an essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreement between the parties".<sup>81</sup> But the Congress insisted on "its own interpretation on the grouping of the provinces".<sup>82</sup> On 10 July 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru delivered the final, fatal blow to the Cabinet Mission Plan by declaring that "...the big probability is that from any approach to the question, there will be no grouping..."<sup>83</sup>

The Mission was thus supposed to ask the League to form Interim Government. It had accepted both long-term and short-term plans. But there was no way the British could by-pass the Congress and hand over the reins of government to the League. Wavell even denied that there was any 'assurance' given to Jinnah. It was audacious, given his statement cited above, but this turnabout exposed the main objective of the plan, which was to hand over government to the Congress, with or without the League, to deal with Jinnah and his Pakistan demand on their own terms. And to achieve that objective, the Cabinet Mission went back on its 'plighted word'.<sup>84</sup> This "pusillanimous attitude of the British Government" which "encouraged the Congress to persevere in its unjustified and misplaced claims" led to "India's eventual break up".<sup>85</sup>

The League immediately withdrew its earlier acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan, and decided to resort to 'Direct Action' to "achieve

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81 *Ibid.*, p. 689.

82 See the full text of the Congress Working Committee Resolution, in *Ibid.*, pp. 679-82.

83 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 26.

84 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 305.

85 Muhammad Iqbal Chawla, *Wavell and the Dying Days of the Raj: Britain's Penultimate Viceroy in India* (Karachi, 2011), p. 130.

Pakistan".<sup>86</sup> The League's rejection of the plan, in fact, marked the end of any prospect of united India in the ensuing struggle for the transfer of power. Jinnah refused to attend the Constituent Assembly (on 9 December 1946, 20 January 1947, and 3 February 1947) and indeed sealed its fate. This boycott was in spite of the fact that he eventually agreed in October 1946, in the wake of wide-spread communal riots and the threat of "civil war in an odious and horrible form",<sup>87</sup> to join the Interim Government at the centre. But this, again, was a tactical move.

The League joined the Interim Government to act "as sentinels which would watch Muslim interests" in the day-to-day affairs of the government. The idea was to "resist every attempt which would directly or indirectly militate or prejudice our demand for Pakistan".<sup>88</sup> Jinnah wanted to secure his Pakistan at all costs. The Interim Government thus accentuated hostility and bitterness between the Hindus and the Muslims on the one hand and the League and the Congress on the other.

On 20 February 1947, Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister, realizing the gravity of the situation in India, was constrained to announce in the British Parliament that the "present state of uncertainty is fraught with danger and cannot be indefinitely prolonged". He also announced the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as the new Viceroy for the purpose of "transferring to Indian hands responsibility for the government of British India in a manner that will best ensure the future happiness and prosperity of India..."<sup>89</sup> How far Mountbatten succeeded in this task was another matter, and much has been written about it, and need not be recounted here. The 3 June Partition Plan and the subsequent division of the two Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal and the injudicious demarcation of their boundaries speak volumes on the subject. The 3 June plan itself was "a clear concession to India. While the Hindu-majority provinces remained intact and automatically became the constituent parts of the Indian Union, the Muslim provinces were not made over to Pakistan

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86 The League Council in its meeting of 29 July resolved that, "now the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan..." Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, pp. 557-58.

87 Percival Spear, *India: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, MI., 1961), pp. 415-16.

88 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 363.

89 For the full text of his statement see, V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957), pp. 506-9.

as such but were only given the option to decide their future. They alone were to face the 'ifs' and 'buts' of a hazardous journey to statehood".<sup>90</sup> But that was Mountbatten's way of ensuring "future happiness and prosperity of India..." and he had no qualms about it. "In his graphic words", as H.M. Seervai noted, "Congress was to be given a building, the Muslim League could only be given a tent and no more".<sup>91</sup> Yet, in spite of all the difficulties, East Bengal, West Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province and Sylhet (the last two through referendums), all voted for the new Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. On 14 August 1947, Pakistan emerged as a separate, sovereign state on the map of the world. The long and arduous struggle of the Muslims, under the able and devoted leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, had finally borne fruit. Pakistan movement had triumphed against all odds.

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90 Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Myth and Reality* (Islamabad, 1976), p. 99. For a critical discussion on the evolution of 3 June Plan see, Rabia Umar Ali, *Empire in Retreat: The Story of India's Partition* (Karachi, 2012), Ch. 2, "Evolution of the Partition Plan: The Hurried Scuttle", pp. 66-95.

91 H.M. Seervai, *Partition of India: Legend and Reality* (Rawalpindi, 1991), p. 159.

## Chapter 2

### Hindu-Muslim Communal Tangle in British India

Most writers analyzing the Hindu-Muslim communal tangle in British India lay stress on the religious contrast and incompatibility between Islam and Hinduism. "By far the most effective force" in the communal situation, they claim, has been "religious".<sup>1</sup> It would be difficult to name, they argue, "two creeds, two attitudes to life so violently opposed" as Hinduism and Islam.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, as a "religio-cultural force", they insist, Hinduism and Islam are the very "antithesis" of each other.<sup>3</sup>

While it is true that the communal problem was an outcome of the deeply ingrained religious differences that made unity between the Hindus and the Muslims very difficult, if not impossible, the argument suffers from at least two limitations. First, it leaves little to comment on the magnitude of change in communal relations between the two communities in different periods of the British rule. Secondly, the inherent contradiction between Islam and Hinduism tends to put the whole perspective in a necessary dialectical framework, precluding any discussion of the role of personalities and events in politics to affect the situation. These interventions led to cooperation or conflicts between the Muslims and the Hindus. This was clearly discernable in the communal history of India at different points in time.

But this is not to deny religious dialectics for understanding Hindu-Muslim relations. The dialectical factors impacted upon the events and their outcomes. But this impact must not obscure the role of personalities, that is, political leaders in shaping Hindu-Muslim relations. Indeed, as Paul Brass in his detailed study of Muslim separatism in the United Provinces (UP) has pointed out, "what stands out in the history of Muslim separatism is not the ineluctable movement of events on an historical predetermined course, but the process of conscious choice by which men decide,

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1 Norman Brown, *The United States and India, Pakistan, Bangladesh* (Cambridge: Mass., 1972), p.30.

2 H.N. Brailsford, *Subject India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 97.

3 Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (London, 1964), p. 73.

because it suits their interests to do so..."<sup>4</sup> Thus, unless we reconcile dialectics with personal choices we are bound to reify Hindu-Muslim communalism into something that existed outside the role of men influencing and directing events.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to analyze Hindu-Muslim communal problem in British India in its 'subjective' objectivity and to show that it was mainly the failure of political leaders of the two communities to reconcile their interests that led to the ultimate split and parting of the ways. The Muslim leaders went on to assert that they were essentially different from the Hindus, and thus had the perfectly legitimate right to demand and seek their own separate homeland where they could live according to their own religion, culture and traditions, indeed their own way of life.

Hinduism and Islam are two different, indeed, sharply opposed religions. Hinduism is a complex of creeds and cults, mostly derived from non-Aryan sources but supported with Aryan thought and practices. It is practically hard to define in concrete terms. The main source of its 'inspiration' is traced back to a body of very ancient Sanskrit scriptures, the *Vedas*. Divinity prevades all things, including mountains, rivers, trees, stones, plants, animals, particularly cow. According to Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, cow is "the central fact of Hinduism, the one concrete belief common to all Hindus".<sup>5</sup> This emphasis on a wide range of divine beings, in turn, necessitates different modes of worship of different gods and goddesses, diverse rituals, and conflicting ceremonial observances. The castes – once only four in number, Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaisyas and Shudras – have developed into an amorphous structure with a multitude of off-shoots, with their own customs and taboos and distinctions and gradations. In addition, there also exists from time immemorial a group of people popularly known as 'untouchables'. Indeed, there are so many creeds and cults in Hinduism that it would not be an exaggeration to say that heresy in Hinduism is almost non-existent.<sup>6</sup> Still, in spite of this "bewildering diversity", there is vertical division between "higher" and

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4 Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge: Mass., 1974), p. 179.

5 Cited in Javed Hassan, *India: A Study in Profile* (Rawalpindi, 1990), p. 80.

6 See, in particular, Brown, *The United States and India*, pp. 30-34.

folk Hinduism”, and with “ever increasing ‘sanskritizing’ of the society there is a movement of the latter upwards in the direction of the former”.<sup>7</sup>

Islam, on the other hand, is a religion of doctrinal unity. Only one view of God is acceptable, namely, that of Allah. There is no God but Allah. Only one series of revelations concerning Him exists, which are codified in the Holy Book, the Quran. These revelations were conveyed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWW), who is the last Prophet. Consequently, all Muslims believe in the authority of the Quran and the Sunna – the traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAWW) – as the abiding source of their faith. This is indeed the only standard of duty open to Muslims. This not only makes them equal before Allah, but also, of logical necessity, amongst themselves, creating, in the process, a community of believers who view mankind as being born equal and thus to be treated as equal.

These fundamental differences in Hinduism and Islam naturally influence Hindu-Muslim relations. The Muslims, for instance, reject the Hindu worship of many gods and goddesses. In addition, the Muslims find it extremely hard to comprehend the sanctity given to the cow under the Hindu Law. They consider it as a legitimate sacrificial animal. In this sense, frequent Hindu-Muslim riots over cow-slaughter are a manifestation of the opposing religio-cultural values between the Hindus and the Muslims rather being the cause of it.<sup>8</sup> They are merely a symptom of the clash of the tenets of religions and cultures.

To complicate the matters further on the social plane, the Muslims strongly disapprove of the principle of the caste system, which challenges their sense of equality. The institution of caste, “wherein all men are born to graded places in society, with the Brahman on top as ‘a god on earth’ and the untouchables at the bottom, deeply offends the Muslims, since it relegates them, as it does all non-Hindus, to low status...”<sup>9</sup>

The result of this social milieu is that there has been very little interaction between the Hindus and the Muslims. They lived side by side in the same village, and yet social ties were almost non-existent. Hindu laws of caste

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7 Hassan, *India*, p.85.

8 For a narrative of a typical communal riot, see Penderel Moon, *Strangers in India* (London, 1944), pp. 86-98.

9 Brown, *The United States and India*, p. 134.

neither provided for social contact nor encouraged natural ties of neighbourhood or locality. Alberuni, a Muslim traveller and scholar, who visited India as early as the eleventh century, thus described the Hindus:

...they totally differ from us in religion as we believe in nothing which they believe, and vice-versa... all their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them — against all foreigners. They call them *maleecha*, i.e. impure and forbid bearing any connection with them, be it by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating, and drinking with them, because thereby, they think, they would be polluted... They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it, or was inclined to their religion. This, too, renders any connection with them quite impossible, and constitutes the wide gulf between us and them.<sup>10</sup>

Nirad C. Chaudhuri, a distinguished Indian Hindu writer in the later half of the twentieth century, found himself in accord with him. In his own words:

I was shocked when I read Alberuni's account of Hindu xenophobia for the first time, for I had been nurtured in the myth of Hindu tolerance and catholicity. But subsequent reading and inquiry has convinced me that Alberuni was substantially right. The hatred of the Hindu is directed against all men who are not fellow-Hindus or, theoretically, blood kins...<sup>11</sup>

The wide gulf' between the two communities, in fact, had existed all along, in spite of the best efforts made by most of the Muslim rulers, starting from Muhammad bin Qasim in 711 to the Mughals whose rule was terminated and replaced by the British in 1857. Even Emperor Akbar's conscious, deliberate effort at the 'synthesis' failed in yawning the communal chasm between the Hindus and the Muslims. The communal units remained isolated and indeed became hostile to each other as the Muslim authority at the centre began to collapse and the prospects of Hindu power increased steadily.<sup>12</sup>

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10 Edward C. Sachau, ed., *Alberuni's Indica*, Vol. 1 (Lahore, 1962, rep.), Pref. XXIX and p. 22.

11 Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (London, 1951), p. 410.

12 For a detailed analysis of the efforts made by Muslim rulers to develop harmony and understanding with their Hindu subjects see, Sikandar Hayat,

Communalism became all the more a source of conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims in the wake of economic disparities and political inequality generated and developed during the British rule. The dialectical element in the situation came to be reinforced by economic and political factors. Economic growth and development in British India clearly favoured the Hindus, the early entrepreneurs. Most of the gainers were high caste Hindus, though the Parsis and Sikhs also did fairly well. The main losers were the Muslims who had formed the major part of the Mughal aristocracy, officer corps, lawyers, and artisans in the luxury handicrafts.<sup>13</sup> The British not only dispossessed them from positions of power and pelf but also singled them out for “deliberate repression”<sup>14</sup> in the wake of failed 1857 ‘War of Independence’. To add to their miseries, the Muslims themselves resisted what they regarded as the imposition of Western system of education.

By the time the Muslims got reconciled to Western education, and indeed the British rule, mainly due to the efforts of Syed Ahmad Khan, they were already considerably behind the Hindus both in terms of education and literacy. As late as 1921-22, in a population of around seventy millions, the number of Muslim students was only 1,966,442.<sup>15</sup> This affected their strength in government jobs. Indeed by the time the Muslim educated classes could begin to enter clerical positions and professions, the Hindus were already well- entrenched. In spite of W.W. Hunter’s pleas towards the end of the nineteenth century to improve the plight of Muslims in professions in India in general and Bengal in particular, in 1926, there were 25.0 per cent Muslims in the executive branch of the Bengal Provincial Services, 4.0 per cent in the judicial branch, 20.0 per cent in the Education Department, 5.0 percent in the Agriculture Department, and 2.5 per cent in the Medical Department. There was none in the Forest, Marine and Irrigation departments. In Calcutta (now Kolkata) Police, there were

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“Hindu-Muslim Separatisms in India: A Survey of the Muslim Rule”, *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. V., No.2 (July-December 1984).

13 Angus Maddison, *Class Structure and Economic Growth: India and Pakistan Since the Moghuls* (New York, 1971), p. 70.

14 Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), p. 162.

15 Y.B. Mathur, *Growth of Muslim Politics in India* (Lahore, 1980), p. 55.

only 15.0 per cent Muslims.<sup>16</sup> The situation was no different in the Punjab, another Muslim-majority province, prompting a movement launched by the Muslims, in 1929, to demand “56% of all high posts, reflecting the same ratio of Muslim population in the province”.<sup>17</sup>

The business sector presented an equally dismal picture. Hindu business classes were well-established in the new economic order by the time the Muslims began to move. By the 1940s, the Hindu capitalist group had developed to a point where, as W. C. Smith wrote in 1946, it was “ready to dominate the entire country...”<sup>18</sup> Birlas, Tatas, and Dalmias were big industrialists, lending their financial support to Hindu interests in general and the Indian National Congress in particular.<sup>19</sup> Muslim industrialists were very few and far between. In fact, they were essentially traders belonging to a few communities such as, Memons, Bohras and Ismailis operating from their Bombay (now Mumbai) base.<sup>20</sup> Muslim-majority regions were not favoured by the British for industrial purposes.<sup>21</sup> Muslim areas were agrarian, and, indeed, the Punjab, the land of the five rivers, was developed as the granary of India.<sup>22</sup> Not surprisingly, then it was almost entirely Hindu entrepreneurial and professional groups who dominated commerce, industry and professions.<sup>23</sup> Gustav F. Papanek, thus, described the state of Pakistan’s economy at independence: “The country was among the poorest in the world and had no industries to

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16 “Past and Present Conditions of Muslims – Presidential Address, by Haji A.K. Ghaznavi”. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

17 Mohammad Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan* (Lahore, 1980), p. 69.

18 Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 189.

19 See G.D. Birla, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma: A Personal Memoir* (Bombay, 1955).

20 Gustav F. Papanek, *Pakistan’s Development: Social Goals and Private Incentives* (Cambridge: Mass., 1967), pp. 40-42.

21 Maddison, *Class Structure and Economic Growth*, pp. 53-54; and Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 190. The regions with concentration of modern industry were Calcutta, Bombay and Ahmadabad.

22 See Jagdish Raj, *The Mutiny and British Land Policy in North India, 1856-1868* (Bombay, 1965); B.H. Baden Powell, *A Short Account of the Land Revenue and its Administration in British India* (Oxford, 1894); and Kanhia Lal, *British Land Policy and the Economy of the Punjab* (Lahore, 1937).

23 M.E. Chamberlain, *Britain and India* (Newton Abbot, 1974), p. 215; and Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 184.

speak of, almost no industrial raw materials, no significant industrial or commercial groups. It was difficult to see how Pakistan's economy could grow..."<sup>24</sup> Indeed, many were convinced that Pakistan was an 'economic wreck'.

To add to the woes of the Muslims was the British system of government based on the 'majority' principle, thus putting the Hindus, the overwhelmingly majority community, always in a dominant position. The system was introduced with the extension of the elective principle in local self-government in the wake of Ripon Reforms of 1882-83, followed by constitutional reforms in the provinces through the 1909 and 1919 Acts. The communal divisions at the provincial level brought about by the working of these Acts not only strained relations in politics but also in social spheres of life, resulting in communal riots and attempts to reconvert the communal rivals, as reflected in *Shuddhi* and *Sangthan* campaigns. Communalism emerged as a dominant force of Indian politics, reinforcing Muslim fear of Hindu domination. The principle of majority rule convinced them that the political system was bound to make them "virtually feudatories of the Central Government in all respects".<sup>25</sup>

The distribution of Hindus and Muslims along the regional lines, for most part, made this majority-minority complex even more problematic. The Hindus, the majority community in India, was mainly concentrated in the centre and south. The Muslims were concentrated in the northwest and northeast, with more than 50.0 per cent of the population of the Punjab and Bengal, two major provinces, being Muslim. This peculiar demographic pattern of distribution of Hindu-Muslim population, like their total numbers, was to become a further obstacle in Hindu-Muslim relations as India began to advance towards self-government and freedom.<sup>26</sup>

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24 Papanek, *Pakistan's Development*, pp. 1-2.

25 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. 1 (Lahore, 1968), p. 226.

26 Ainslie Embree, *India's Search for National Identity* (New York, 1972), p. 18. Not surprisingly, then, the Muslims did not hesitate to make a "novel suggestion" to the authors of the Nehru Report in 1928 "that they should at least dominate in some parts of India". *All Parties Conference 1928: Report of the Committee Appointed by the Conference to Determine the Principles of the Constitution for India*, Allahabad, 1928, cited in Reginald Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India: Part I; The Indian Problem, 1833-1935*

In spite of all these built-in difficulties in the situation, both Hindu and Muslim leaders made conscious, and, at times, forceful efforts to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, in particular, tried very hard to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. "If I can achieve this unity", he declared at one point, "believe me, half the battle of the country's freedom is won..."<sup>27</sup> Jinnah, indeed, persisted in his efforts, in spite of several setbacks at the hands of Congress leadership, until it became clear to him beyond any shadow of doubt in 1940 that Hindus in general and the Congress leaders in particular were "not at all prepared for any kind of understanding" with the Muslims. They would neither allow a system of government to evolve where the Muslims could have "a sense of security" nor would they agree to share "power" with them.<sup>28</sup> It was only then that he opted for a different course, a radically different course, to secure the Muslims power, security, and freedom in a separate homeland, leading to the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan.

Hindu-Muslim communalism was thus far from a settled fact of Indian politics. It was a political process, involving personal choices and preferences, and manifested itself, between 1858, the year British directly took over the administration of India, and 1940, the year Jinnah gave up in helplessness and frustration his efforts at Hindu Muslim unity for the common cause of India, in at least seven distinct, discernable phases in Hindu-Muslim relations.

The first phase (1858-1905) was of course one of Hindu-Muslim separateness. In his efforts to help revive Muslim fortunes in the aftermath of 'War of Independence', Syed Ahmad Khan exhorted the Muslims to stay away from politics and particularly from the newly formed political

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(London, 1968), p. 89. The point was reiterated in Maulana Mohamed Ali's address to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference on 9 November, 1930, in Allama Muhammad Iqbal's presidential address at the Allahabad session of the League in 1930, and in Jinnah's "Fourteen Points". Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Glimpses of Quaid-i-Azam* (Karachi, 1960), p. 74; Afzal Iqbal, ed., *Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohamed Ali*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1969), p. 358; and Lateef Ahmad Sherwani, ed., *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1977), p. 19.

27 Jinnah, 18 February 1935. Quoted in R.J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-1940* (Oxford, 1974), p. 292.

28 I. H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1969), pp. 149-50.

party, ironically sponsored by the British, the Indian National Congress. He believed that the Congress was not only tending to agitational politics, something that the Muslims could hardly afford in the difficult circumstances but that its demands, particularly the extension of representative principle to India, would result in the domination of Hindus, the majority community, over the Muslims. Hindus, he reckoned, would obtain four times as many votes as the Muslims because their population was four times as large. "It would be like a game of dice in which one man had four dice and the other only one".<sup>29</sup> He wondered as to how would the Muslims be able to guard their interests in such a political system? Even if the electorate was limited through a method of qualifications such as, income, he doubted the Muslims would do any better. "Suppose, for example, that an income of Rs. 5,000 a year be fixed on, how many Mahomedans will there be?"<sup>30</sup>

Syed Ahmad Khan was indeed convinced that representative system of government was possible only when voters belonged to a homogenous population. In India, he argued, "where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population... the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests... would be attended with evils... The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community".<sup>31</sup> In a nutshell, Syed Ahmad Khan challenged the "Congress faith in one nation".<sup>32</sup> He insisted that the Muslims were a separate '*qaum*' ('nation') and had to charter their own separate course to deal with the new

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29 Syed Ahmad Khan, *The Present State of Indian Politics: Speeches and Letters*, ed., Farman Fathepuri (Lahore, 1982), p. 36.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 37. Representative institutions in India, in fact, started off with educational and economic qualifications rather than adult suffrage. These qualifications included ownership of land, payment of income tax and graduation from a university. For a detailed analysis of the subject see, in particular, Norris Steven Dodge, "Political Behavior and Social Change: Causes of the Growth of the Indian Electorate in the Last Half Century", unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1971.

31 G. Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 1-2.

32 Embree, *India's Search for National Identity*, p. 38.

dispensation in the country.

Separatism was of course not new to the Muslims. Even during the Muslim rule in India, the Muslims and the Hindus had moved in their separate courses, following their separate traditions. But what was implicit in Muslim separatism then became explicit and definite in Syed Ahmad Khan's efforts to mobilize the Muslims to the reality of British rule and British representative institutions in India. It was now that the Muslims felt, clearly and consistently, that they were separate from the Hindus, that their interests were separate from those of the Hindus, and that their interests could be secured and promoted only through a separate group life and activity. As Nirad Chaudhuri acknowledged, the so-called "common heritage was a pleasant *modus vivendi* for the Hindus and Muslims in certain conditions. But it could do nothing, nor did it do anything, either to modify the group-consciousness of the members of the two societies or to make them forget that they were antithetical in all matters except a few essentials".<sup>33</sup> The Hindus and the Muslims thus remained estranged and distant in this phase of Hindu-Muslim relations.

The second phase (1905-12), dominated by the thought and activities of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and other Hindu revivalists and the convulsions caused by the partition of Bengal was one of rancour and hostility in Hindu-Muslim relations. Tilak revived militant Hindu religious traditions of Sivaji, promoting an era of religious fanaticism and political violence aimed particularly at the Muslims. Tilak, however, was not alone in this kind of revivalism. Swami Dayanand and Lajpat Rai had founded the *Arya Samaj*, with the battle cry, "back to the Vedas". The Punjab was the main centre of their activities.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee influenced and promoted the use of Hindu symbols and traditions in Bengal, identified with the *Kali* cult. These traditions which in the course of time also travelled into the Congress politics could hardly be expected to attract the Muslims to the Congress platform even if there had been no Syed Ahmad

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33 Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography*, p.483.

34 Lajpat Rai, *A History of the Arya Samaj* (Bombay, 1967), esp., Ch. IV, pp. 49-65, 106, 203; and Kenneth W. Jones, "Communalism in the Punjab: The Arya Samaj Contribution", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXVIII, No.1 (November 1968).

Khan to tell them to stay away from it in the first place.<sup>35</sup> In fact, Tilak and other revivalist Hindu leaders – including Gandhi, who followed in these traditions – used the Hindu religion politically in such a way that the Muslims eventually became convinced that the so-called ‘national’ movement in India was primarily Hindu nationalist movement, aimed at systematic revival of Hinduism and that the government of India would entirely rest with the Hindus if the Congress ever attained power. Indeed, according to R.P. Dutt, this “emphasis on Hinduism must bear a share of the responsibility for the alienation of wide sections of Moslem opinion from the national movement”.<sup>36</sup>

The partition of Bengal in 1905, creating the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam with Muslim majority gave further impetus to Hindu revivalism. The movement which began in opposition to a so-called “unpopular measure” against the partition soon assumed religious frenzy and was characterized by violence against the Muslims.<sup>37</sup> Meetings addressed by the Muslim leaders were disrupted, some were attacked, and those who refused to participate in the campaign against the partition were condemned.<sup>38</sup> While the authors of the partition, Lord Curzon, Sir Bamfylde Fuller, and Sir Andrew Fraser insisted that the partition scheme was no more than “an administrative device” to tackle the administrative problem of a far too unwieldy province,<sup>39</sup> the Hindus viewed it as an attempt to pursue the policy of ‘divide and rule’, a ploy to arrest the growth of ‘Indian nationalism’.

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35 See John R. Mclane, *Indian Nationalism and Early Congress* (Princeton, 1977), pp. 337, 362; and Leonard A. Gordon, *Bengal: The Nationalist Movement, 1876-1940* (New York, 1974), pp. 79-81.

36 R.P. Dutt, *India Today* (Bombay, 1949), p. 125.

37 Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India* (Lahore, 1967), p. 57.

38 I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 28.

39 David Dilks, *Curzon in India: Frustrations*, Vol. II (New York, 1970), pp. 200-3. Also see Bamfylde Fuller, *Some Personal Experiences* (London, 1930), pp. 123-5; and Andrew H.L. Fraser, *Among Indian Rajas and Ryots* (Philadelphia, 1912), pp. 317-24. Also Nicholas Mansergh, and Penederel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII (London, 1977), p. 63.

Even if one were to grant the argument<sup>40</sup> that the partition of Bengal was a deliberate move on the part of the British Government to sow the seeds of conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims, and to stunt Indian nationalism, the question still remains, why did not the Hindus put forward “an alternative scheme” to satisfy legitimate grievances of the Muslims in Bengal.<sup>41</sup> What was holding them back? After all, they were fully aware that the partition meant a great relief to Muslims in East Bengal. The fact of the matter was, the Hindus, led by the Congress, felt agitated because the new province of East Bengal threatened their dominance in public services and professions.<sup>42</sup> The creation of the new province meant that trade coming to Calcutta would go to Chittagong, and also that the Calcutta lawyers would lose their clientele to Dacca (now Dhaka), the capital and legal centre of the new Muslim province. Opposition thus originated mainly at Calcutta, especially from businessmen and lawyers. Lord Curzon felt so strongly about it that he went on to inform Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, on 19 February 1906 that: “In so far as it is an unscrupulous and by no means innocent form of political agitation, engineered at Calcutta and worked by blackmail, the boycott and other nefarious means, it will suffer, with results that will be of immense advantage to the purity and honesty of public life in India”.<sup>43</sup> But the partition, in spite of all pious hopes, did not last long. Political expediency prevailed in the end and that, too, on part of the British themselves. The British Government at home yielded to Hindu pressure and propaganda and at the Delhi coronation ceremony on 12 December 1911, King George V personally announced the annulment of the partition.<sup>44</sup> This annulment made the Muslims realize that they could not trust the British for promoting

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40 For a critique of this argument see, in particular, Matiur Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation: A Study of the Muslim League in British Indian Politics, 1906-1912* (London, 1970).

41 Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase* (London, 1968), p. 27.

42 Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India* (Delhi, 1972), pp. 52-53. Also see, Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 151; and Shila Sen, *Muslim Politics in Bengal* (Delhi, 1976), p. 37.

43 David Dilks, *Curzon in India*, p. 204.

44 “His experience of the Indian visit as the Prince of Wales in 1905, when the agitation was strong”, wrote Matiur Rahman, “had probably made him more anxious to appease the anti-partitionists”. See, *From Consultation to Confrontation*, p. 235.

or protecting their interests. They had to learn to work out things themselves, and with the Hindus, if need be. This marked the beginning of the third phase in Hindu-Muslim relations (1912-16).

Although the Muslims were hurt and certainly upset over the annulment of the partition of Bengal, their mounting grievances against the British Government forced them to align with the Hindus and seek cooperation with the Congress. Developments such as, Cawnpore mosque tragedy, refusal of the British to raise the status of Aligarh College to the level of a university, and, above all, the British policy towards the Ottoman Turkish empire, helped matters. But the Congress was equally forthcoming. In fact, its initial response was quite assuring. In line with the Muslim demands, the Congress-League Lucknow Pact in 1916 conceded to the Muslims the principle of separate electorates, weightage in various Hindu-majority provinces, and provisions that any bill or resolution affecting either community could not be passed if three-fourths of the members of that community in provincial or central legislature opposed it. The pact further stipulated that one third of the Indian elected members in the Imperial Legislative Council should necessarily be Muslims.<sup>45</sup>

These concessions were far more wholesome than those provided under the Act of 1909,<sup>46</sup> and thus were a great source of satisfaction to the Muslims.<sup>47</sup> Jinnah, who was the moving spirit behind this pact, was particularly happy to 'conciliate' Hindu opinion on issues of vital concern to the Muslims.<sup>48</sup> One sure proof of this conciliation was the fact that even Tilak agreed and extended his support to the pact.<sup>49</sup> Jinnah was declared, "An Ambassador of Unity".

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45 S.V. Desika Char, ed., *Readings in the Constitutional History of India, 1757-1947* (Delhi, 1983), pp. 33-42.

46 Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 48.

47 It was in the 1920s that the Muslims complained that in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, the pact deprived them of their majorities. Subsequently, they did their utmost to restore statutory majorities, but did not succeed. That explained why the Muslim League could not form government in the Punjab even after it had swept the polls in 1946.

48 Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981), pp. 12-13.

49 Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 146.

Hindu-Muslim relations moved into the fourth phase (1916-24) on this exhilarating note. The duplicitous policy pursued by the British towards the Turkish empire on the one hand and repression in the Punjab on the other, as reflected in the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy of 13 April 1919, which claimed hundreds of lives, further brought the two communities closer to each other. The bonds were cemented further by their opposition to the Rowlatt Act, which was a draconian law and allowed the internment of person without any due process. The result was a formidable alliance between the Hindus and the Muslims, evidenced in the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement, led by both Muslim and Hindu leaders, including Gandhi, the new leader of the Congress.

The Khilafat-non-cooperation movement, in fact, turned out to be the most unifying movement of modern India. Hindus and Muslims joined hands as never before. Thousands of Hindus and Muslims courted arrest and only in the two months of December 1921 and January 1922 about 30,000 people were interned. The focus of political struggle significantly shifted from the upper class leaders of the two communities to the lower classes and the masses. But here was the problem, a real problem. Contact between the masses generated the latent feelings of hostility, and indeed violence. The Mappillas 'rebellion' of August 1921 was a case in point. Mappillas, a Muslim community on the Malabar coast of South India, attacked their prosperous Hindu landlords and money-lenders, marked as their oppressors. In the end, they turned on the Hindu community in general. They even forced some Hindus to convert to Islam. While the government brutally suppressed the rebellion, under the cover of 'martial law', there were communal riots in various parts of the country. Swami Sharaddhanand launched his *Shuddhi* movement to convert Muslims back to Hinduism. In the end, the Hindu-Muslim alliance was forsaken by Gandhi when he abruptly called off the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement, primarily shaken by the events of Chauri Chaura on 5 February 1922.

Thus, the alliance between the Muslims and Hindus did not last long. It failed in not only shaking the political edifice of British rule in India but also in fostering Hindu-Muslim unity. The clash of 'primary loyalties' was too strong to auger well for the success of the unity.<sup>50</sup> Gandhi's claim that,

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50 Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, p. 146.

“so far as the vast mass of Hindus are concerned, they are interested only in the Cow and music resolution”<sup>51</sup> proved to be superficial. There were deeper sentiments at work. The ultimate petering of the movement marked not only the end of the most enthusiastic chapter in Hindu-Muslim relations but also, practically, of all hopes for the future. Indeed, by introducing religion into “political questions”, the leaders of the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement “prepared the path for further Hindu-Muslim antagonism in a fiercer form”.<sup>52</sup> The Hindus, represented in the Congress and outside, particularly in the Hindu Mahasabha, became indifferent, if not hostile, towards the Muslims. The fifth phase in Hindu-Muslim relations (1924-29) was but one manifestation of this trend, though not without desperate efforts on part of Jinnah once again to mend things.

Jinnah, who had largely remained in background during the Khilafat-non-cooperation period, was still hopeful that a settlement with the Hindus was possible. But not through pleas and entreaties. The Muslims, he thought, needed to develop their own strength to be able to attract the attention of the Hindus in general and the Congress in particular. The growth of provincial politics under the Act of 1919 had shown to him that it was more desirable to build up a Muslim position in the Muslim-majority provinces than to depend on the Congress for the protection of their particular interests. In fact, he proposed to the Congress a revision of the 1916 Pact, demanding, in addition to the Muslims-majority provinces of the Punjab, Bengal and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), a separate province of Sind (now Sindh) separated from Bombay Presidency, and full provincial status for Baluchistan (now Balochistan), within a federal set-up, with “full and complete provincial autonomy” ensured. These particular measures, he claimed, will help unite the Muslims with the Hindus in their common cause of self-government and freedom.<sup>53</sup> ‘Political unity’, he stressed, was the key. As he put it:

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51 *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XXV (Delhi, 1979), p. 436.

52 S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their Role in India's Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), p. 58.

53 See Jinnah's presidential address at the Lahore session of the All-India Muslim League held in 1924, in Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1976), pp. 131-36.

...one essential requisite condition to achieve *Swaraj* is the political unity between the Hindus and the Muhammadans; for the advent of foreign rule and its continuance in India is primarily due to the fact that the people of India, particularly the Hindus and Muhammadans, are not united and do not sufficiently trust each other. The domination by the Bureaucracy will continue as long as the Hindus and Muhammadans do not come to a settlement. I am almost inclined to say that India will get Dominion Responsible Government the day the Hindus and the Muhammadans are united. *Swaraj* is almost interchangeable term with Hindu-Muslim unity.<sup>54</sup>

But the Congress leadership, sensing the ultimate prospect of a Hindu majority government in the first signs of the transfer of power to the Indian hands, in the Act of 1919, had come to imbibe different notions. Not only did they decide to assert their majority status but also to use it forcefully for the promotion of their own interests. So far, Hindu-Muslim problem had been in the nature of spontaneous outbursts, provoked by such indiscretion as the playing of the music before mosque or cow slaughter. The new reforms and the prospect of self- government for India transformed this apolitical feature into a political conflict between the two communities, more intense and pervasive than ever before. Thus Gandhi's assertion that the Hindu-Muslim question also involved "a decision of political power – spoils of office"<sup>55</sup> was clearly symptomatic, and marked a clear advance, though an unfortunate one for Hindu-Muslim relations, over the position he had espoused in the Khilafat days. He was convinced that India had inevitably moved towards *Swaraj* and that the future was on their side.<sup>56</sup> This confidence moved him and the Congress to exalt Hindu power much more openly and boldly. He came to make an increasingly excessive use of Hindu idiom in politics. Even while appealing for Hindu-Muslim settlement, he "made the appeal not as a national leader appealing to both sections, but as a Hindu leader..."<sup>57</sup> Muslims did not

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54 *Ibid.*, p. 132.

55 *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XLIII, p. 55. On another occasion, Gandhi remarked: "Hindu-Muslim quarrels are in a way unknown to us, a fight for *Swaraj*. Each party is conscious of its impending coming". D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. II (Delhi, 1960), p. 235.

56 Embree, *India's Search for National Identity*, pp. 83-85.

57 R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, p. 237.

matter any more. Nothing could illustrate this attitude more fully than the Nehru Report of 1928.

The Nehru report was the work of a committee headed by Pandit Motilal Nehru, a prominent Congress leader, and supported by various political organizations of the country including the Jinnah faction of the Muslim League. Jinnah was opposed to the all-British Simon Commission on constitutional reforms announced in 1927. "Unless a Commission on which British and Indian statesmen are invited to sit on equal terms is set up", he declared alongwith some other prominent leaders of India, "we cannot conscientiously take any part or share in the work of the Commission as at present constituted".<sup>58</sup>

The Nehru report turned out to be a great disappointment for Jinnah and other Muslim leaders. They saw it as "the charter of the Hindu intelligentsia".<sup>59</sup> The report rejected most of the Muslim demands, accepting only the demand for the formation of governors' provinces of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Sind and that too at the expense of compensatory concession to the Hindus in the creation of a new Canarese-speaking province. The report rejected separate electorates as well as the principle of weightage for the Muslims. "If communal protection was necessary for any group in India", the report concluded, "it was not for the two major communities – the Hindus and the Muslims. It might have been necessary for the smaller communities which together form 10% of the total".<sup>60</sup> The report further upset the Muslims by recommending a system of government which was all but in name a unitary form of government. The report, thus, far from uniting the two communities, went on to alienate and separate the Muslims.<sup>61</sup>

Jinnah, however, hoped that the situation could be saved with timely intervention. He went to the All Parties Convention held in Calcutta in December 1928 to help modify the report to accommodate Muslim interests and demands, and thus make it acceptable to the Muslims as well. He demanded, in particular, that the Muslims should be allowed one-

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58 Char, *Readings in Constitutional History*, p. 535. Also see Afzal, *Selected Speeches*, pp. 268-69.

59 Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, p. 198.

60 For details see Char, *Readings in Constitutional History*, pp. 547, 548-50.

61 Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement* (London, 1945), p. 124.

third of seats in the central legislature, residuary powers should be vested in the provinces and not the centre, and that the Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal should be allowed to have seats on the basis of their respective populations at least for ten years, if not more. He fervently pleaded for “statesmanship”, and referring to the cases of Canada and Egypt, pointed out that:

We are dealing in politics. We are not in a court of Law and, therefore, it is no use resorting to hairsplitting and petty squabbles. These are big questions and they can be settled only by the highest order of statesmanship and wisdom... Believe me that there is no progress for India until the Musalmans and the Hindus are united, and let no logic, philosophy or squabble stand in the way of coming to a compromise and nothing will make me more happy than to see a Hindu-Muslim union.<sup>62</sup>

But the Hindus were in no mood to oblige. M.R. Jayakar, speaking for the Hindu Mahasabha, not only questioned Jinnah’s credentials as Muslim spokesman,<sup>63</sup> but even warned that it was with great difficulty that he had restrained his Mahasabha supporters from revolting against the report, and that it was no longer possible for him to persuade them to make any more concessions.<sup>64</sup> Gandhi did not move. Apparently, he was already on board. The result was that the convention rejected Jinnah’s amendments by majority vote.<sup>65</sup> Jinnah was shocked. He called it ‘the parting of the ways’,<sup>66</sup> and went on to aggregate and articulate Muslim demands in his

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62 Char, *Readings in Constitutional History*, p. 550.

63 In a letter to Gandhi on 23 August 1929, Jayakar stated that it was “not clear on whose behalf Mr. Jinnah spoke, and what bulk of the entire Mohammadan community would be placated if his demands were conceded.” B.N. Pandey, ed., *The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Select Documents* (London, 1979), p. 88.

64 Matlubul Hasan Saiyid, *Muhammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970), p. 135.

65 They were all lost by a majority, excepting two relatively insignificant ones. His proposals regarding one-third representation in the central legislature, about residuary powers, etc., were rejected. *Indian Quarterly Register*, October-December 1928 (Calcutta, 1928), p. 31.

66 The Calcutta experience, however, as Abdul Hamid described it, “bitter as it was left Jinnah in chastened, not a changed frame of mind. He did not part

now famous “Fourteen Points”, insisting that “no scheme for the future constitution of the government of India will be acceptable to Musalmans of India until and unless these basic principles are given effect to and provisions are embodied therein to safeguard their rights and interests...”<sup>67</sup> The main thrust of these points was to secure Muslim interests in an ‘Indian Federation’ through a federal constitution, with residuary powers vested in the provinces and uniform measure of autonomy in all the provinces, Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and NWFP, a new province of Sind, reforms in the NWFP and Baluchistan, and one-third Muslim representation in the central legislature. This marked emphasis on Muslim interests defined the sixth phase of Hindu-Muslim relations (1929-37).

However, Jinnah, despite his dampened enthusiasm in this phase of Hindu-Muslim relations, was still ready to work for a Hindu-Muslim settlement. It was mainly for this reason that he went to attend the Round Table Conference (RTC) in London in 1930. He felt that the prospects of “winning self-government” would help unite the Hindus and the Muslims on common basis. He indeed acted and spoke in the language of a “nationalist”.<sup>68</sup> But Gandhi who came to attend the second session of RTC in 1931 (the Congress having boycotted the first) as sole Congress delegate refused to play his part. He remained indifferent, not even trying to seek an agreement with the Muslims. In the end, as Judith Brown put it, he proved “incapable of leading Indian delegates into a compromise agreement” and thus forging “inter-communal unity”<sup>69</sup> sought by Jinnah

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company with his old comrades. Nor did he walk out of the nationalist camp”. Abdul Hamid, *On understanding the Quaid-i-Azam* (Islamabad, 1977), p. 23.

67 Text of the draft resolution prepared by Jinnah for the Council of the League meeting held in Delhi on 28 March, 1929. Afzal, *Selected Speeches*, p. 302. According to William Metz, “the Fourteen Points, then, mark a definite departure from the spirit which motivated Jinnah’s political activities upto the All-Parties National Convention... After the Fourteen Points, although he did not by any means immediately become a communalist, he could no longer be called the Ambassador of Unity in the same sense as that title had been applied to him theretofore”. William Metz, *The Political Career of Muhammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2010), pp. 57-59.

68 *Ibid.*

69 Judith Brown, *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics* (London, 1977), pp. 249-389.

and other Muslim leaders. The main Muslim demand at this stage was a genuine federation, with provincial autonomy, that is, powers vested in the provinces, and of course the continuation of separate electorates for the Muslims. But Gandhi was not willing to help, much less negotiate. In fact, his stance suggested that he did not care much about the Muslim demands or the RTC itself. He was more interested in activities on the outside, and of course making case for India's 'independence' off and on (based on the mandate given to him by the Karachi Congress) without taking the Muslims into confidence or acknowledging the Hindu-Muslim problem as such.

Jinnah was greatly disappointed. He received, as he put it, the "shock" of his life. "In the face of danger" he recalled years later, "the Hindu sentiment, the Hindu mind, the Hindu attitude led me to the conclusion that there was no hope of unity. I felt very pessimistic about my country".<sup>70</sup> In fact, Jinnah was so disillusioned with the state of affairs, including with the conduct of Muslim leaders at the RTC, that he decided not to return to his country. He settled down in London. But interestingly and characteristically, when he did return to India in 1935, invited by the Muslims to lead them through the impending crisis, he was still anxious to reach an understanding with the Hindus. He wanted a Hindu-Muslim settlement. The election manifesto issued by the Muslim League in 1936 carried the mark of Jinnah's mind and commitment and differed in no significant way from that of the Congress's.<sup>71</sup> Jinnah was committed to the common cause of India. More importantly, the manifesto recalled the spirit of the Lucknow Pact implying that Jinnah was still keen to revive the Hindu-Muslim unity of 1916.<sup>72</sup>

The Congress, however, after winning in seven out of eleven provinces, all of them Hindu-majority provinces, saw things differently, and quite arrogantly decided to take a solo flight in pursuit of its aims and objectives. It rejected the League's offer of coalition governments and did not include any of its representatives in its ministries. This was particularly odd and 'inexplicable' in the case of United Provinces (UP) and Bombay Presidency, where the League had done pretty well. This of course hurt

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70 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 41.

71 *The Indian Annual Register*, 1936, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1936), pp. 299-301.

72 Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, pp. 152-53.

the Congress in the long run. As Rajmohan Gandhi argued, accommodative “gestures from Congress to the League” in these Hindu-majority provinces “would have made it more difficult for Jinnah to convince the *qaum* (the Muslim nation)” at a later stage “that Congress was its enemy”, but that was not to be.<sup>73</sup> In a circular issued to Provincial Congress Committees on 3 March 1937, Jawaharlal Nehru, its President, bluntly stated: “You may also be approached by other groups in the legislature. It is highly desirable that the response to all such requests should be clear and definite and uniform all over India. With other groups we can form no alliances”.<sup>74</sup> This attitude did not auger well for the League-Congress as well as Hindu-Muslim relations. The Muslims felt that it was nothing short of an attempt at “Hindu domination”.<sup>75</sup> Attempts, with Gandhi’s blessings, to force Sanskritized Hindi and to remould the educational system particularly in the primary stage of education through *Vidyamandir* scheme further suggested to them that the idea was to prepare “a generation which would cease to be Muslim in thought, character and action”,<sup>76</sup> and thus obliterate Muslim culture in India. The Muslim apprehensions in fact went as far as they could go. The fear of the future that weighed heavily on the Muslim mind since the introduction of British parliamentary institutions in India, based on the numbers, the majority-minority syndrome, now showed to Jinnah and other Muslim leaders that Gandhi, Congress and indeed Hindu majority community as such was hellbent on Hindu rule in India.

It was for the first time that the Congress had assumed power and the Muslims, like all other minorities in India, were keen to know how it would live up to its professed “national character”.<sup>77</sup> But the Congress was not pushed, not even in the face of the overwhelming evidence of Muslim

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73 Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (Albany, NY, 1986), pp. 146-7.

74 S. Gopal, ed., *Selected Works of Nehru*, Vol. VIII (Delhi, 1978), p. 52.

75 Smith, *Modern Islam*, pp. 214-17.

76 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, “The Congress in Office (1937-39),” in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. IV, Part I & II (Karachi, 1970), pp. 41-42.

77 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 21. Also S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi* (Lahore, 1976), p. 168; B.R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942* (London, 1976); Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 217; and P.J. Griffiths, *The British in India* (London, 1946), p. 166.

sufferings under their rule as given in the inquiry reports such as, *Pirpur Report*, *Shareef Report* and Fazlul Haq's *Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule*.<sup>78</sup> Despite the fears which were spreading far and wide and which also did not spare the provincial leaders of Muslim-majority provinces,<sup>79</sup> the Congress did nothing to take the Muslims into confidence. In fact, the Congress leaders were not even prepared to accept that they had done anything wrong to offend the Muslims or the League. Its Muslim President at this point in time, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, had the audacity to claim that: "Every incident which involved communal issue came up before me. From personal knowledge and with a full sense of responsibility, I can therefore say that the charges leveled by Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League with regard to injustice to Muslims and other minorities are absolutely false".<sup>80</sup> The trouble with the Congress leadership was that they saw the Hindu-Muslim question as "a boggy", indeed "the direct product of the British Rule".<sup>81</sup> It had no objective existence. It will go away with the British. But, as B.R. Tomlinson aptly remarked, it showed how "little they understood nationalism" and how "little they knew each other".<sup>82</sup> This was the character of the last and fateful phase in Hindu-Muslim relations (1937-40).

The Congress, during this period, lost not only the support and sympathies of Jinnah, "the last bridge" between the League and the Congress,<sup>83</sup> but also caused the loss of support of most Muslims for the very simple reason that they refused to recognize, let alone address their grievances. They did not see any problem. They were in a state of denial, so to speak. Thus, they could not offer any remedy or solution of the

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78 K.K. Aziz, ed., *Muslims Under Congress Rule, 1937-39: A Documentary Record*, Vol. I (Islamabad, 1978), pp. 307-86, 388-420.

79 The provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces were certainly alarmed and thus rushed to join the Muslim League. Most prominent among them were Sikandar Hayat Khan, Maulvi A.K. Fazlul Haq, and Muhammad Saadullah, the chief ministers of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, respectively.

80 Abul Kalam Azad, *Indian Wins Freedom* (New Delhi, 1988), p. 22.

81 D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. IV (New Delhi, 1969), p. 187.

82 Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj*, p. 107.

83 Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington D.C., 1963), p. 249.

problem.<sup>84</sup> In his correspondence with Jinnah on the subject, in 1938-39,<sup>85</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, for instance, was nonchalant. He seemed “prepared to talk about the issues but not to negotiate them”. This was “a failing”, wrote Michael Edwards, “that was to lead in 1947 to the partition of India...”<sup>86</sup> Jinnah subsequently approached Gandhi for the purpose, but he was not interested either, not even when the two met face to face in Bombay (now Mumbai) on 28 April 1938. Earlier, in their long correspondence, Jinnah had pressed for a clear understanding between the League and the Congress to secure Hindu-Muslim settlement for the greater cause of self-government and freedom of India. To add insult to the injury, the Congress launched a Muslim Mass Contact campaign, aimed at mobilizing Muslim support over and above the heads of the League leaders. “There can be no doubt”, thus observed B.R. Ambedkar, a distinguished leader of the untouchables and a keen observer of the Indian communal scene, “that this mad plan of mass contact has had a great deal to do with the emergence of Pakistan”.<sup>87</sup>

Indeed, the Congress’s failure to talk to Jinnah and the League and to take them into confidence and forge Hindu-Muslim unity at this point in time had the ultimate effect of making the partition of India a foregone conclusion. The demand for Pakistan, or for that matter the creation of the state of Pakistan eventually, many writers argue, was the direct result of the policy adopted by the Congress during its provincial rule in 1937-39. They find it almost “inexplicable, unless explained in terms of terrible lack of political prescience and foresight”.<sup>88</sup> Hindu-Muslim unity so far, though challenging and increasingly difficult, was at least possible and worth trying, again and again. But now Muslim faith in Congress’s policies and programmes nearly came to the end of its tether.

Jinnah who had, for decades, tried and worked for Hindu-Muslim unity more than anybody else was now convinced that the time had come to

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84 Smith, *Modern Islam*, p. 219.

85 Gopal, *Selected Works of Nehru*, Vol. VIII, pp. 223-44. Also see the text of correspondence in K.K. Aziz, *Muslims Under Congress Rule*, pp. 226-55, 273-79; and Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah’s Correspondence* (Karachi, 1977), pp. 244-89.

86 Michael Edwards, *Nehru: A Political Biography* (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 122.

87 B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 30.

88 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 168.

“revise our notions of settlement in the light of experience and lessons we have learnt during the past 25 years”.<sup>89</sup> He had come to recognize and ultimately reckon the role and relevance of the dialectical religio-cultural factors in Hindu-Muslim relations in India. In an article he wrote for the *Time and Tide*, he stressed:

The British people, being Christians, sometimes forget the religious wars of their own history and today consider religion as a private and personal matter between man and God. This can never be the case in Hinduism and Islam, for both these religions are definite social codes, which govern not so much man's relations with his God, as man's relations with his neighbour. They govern not only his law and culture but every aspect of his social life, and such religions, essentially exclusive, completely preclude that merging of identity and unity of thought on which Western democracy is based.<sup>90</sup>

On 22 March 1940, Jinnah publicly articulated the Muslim claim for nationhood and a separate state in the Indian Sub-continent. Addressing the Lahore session of the Muslim League, attended by nearly 100,000 Muslims drawn from all parts of India, he suggested that the only way the Hindu-Muslim problem could be solved was to allow the Muslims to have their “homelands, their territory and their state”.<sup>91</sup> The Muslims could not accept any system of government which must necessarily result in a Hindu-majority government. The differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, he emphasized, were “fundamental” and “deep-rooted”, and there was no way the two communities could “at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation...”<sup>92</sup>

Jinnah, indeed, went on to assert that the problem in India was not “inter-communal” but an “international” problem, involving two nations – Hindus and Muslims.<sup>93</sup> The Muslims were not a “minority”. They were “a nation according to any definition of a nation”, and thus, like all other nations, had the right to self-determination.<sup>94</sup> Hindus and Muslims, he explained at some length,

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89 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 195.

90 *Ibid.*, p. 124.

91 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68.

93 *Ibid.*, p. 168.

94 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

...belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.<sup>95</sup>

On 23 March 1940, the Muslim League followed Jinnah's lead and in a resolution, adopted on 24 March, demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims. The dialectical element in Hindu-Muslim relations had come to gain primacy to affect radically the future course of India's modern history. India could not remain united. It had to be partitioned to make room for the Muslims in the separate, sovereign state of Pakistan.

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95 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

### Chapter 3

#### Muslims and System of Representative Government in British India

Major writings on the history of British India in the post-1857 period are concerned with the enormity and complexity of the constitutional problem and its impact upon the political situation in the country. This concern is both past and present and ranges from Lionel Curtis and Reginald Coupland to R.J. Moore, P.G. Robb, Waheed Ahmad, and David Page.<sup>1</sup> These writers focused their attention upon the system of representative government as it affected the demands of diverse and often antagonistic social groups and classes. Their main effort was to show how far the various constitutional provisions were responsive or not to the needs of these groups. One very important exception to this general line of inquiry is a recent study by Farzana Shaikh which concentrates on socio-cultural, religious factors, indeed ideology, to explain the constitutional impasse, especially between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, representing the Hindus and Muslims, two major communities, respectively.

“One of the principal difficulties in arriving at a constitutional settlement in India during the 1940s”, Shaikh writes, “stemmed from the inherent conflict between Congress’s emphasis upon the principle of majority rule and fluid political alignments and the Muslim League’s commitment to the Islamic conviction that numerical configurations were irrelevant to politics and what mattered was the rigid [sic] ideological divide between Muslims and Non-Muslims”.<sup>2</sup> Any real understanding of the constitutional problem

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- 1 See Lionel Curtis, ed., *Papers relating to the Application of the Principle of Dyarchy* (London, 1920); Reginald Coupland, *Report of the Constitutional Problem in India, Part I: The Indian Problem, 1833-1935* (London 1968) and *India: A Re-Statement* (London, 1945); R.J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-1940* (Oxford, 1974); P.G. Robb, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies Towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921* (London, 1976); Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom: The Formation of the Government of India Act 1935* (Lahore, 1979); and David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932* (Delhi, 1982).
  - 2 Farzana Shaikh, “Muslims and Political Representation in Colonial India: The Making of Pakistan”, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 20, No.3 (1986), p. 539.

in India, in fact, she asserts, “depends upon some discussion of the chief differences that characterize Islamic and liberal democratic approaches to representation”. The British system of political representation in India was essentially based on “liberal-democratic” premise, and therefore the failure of a “liberal democracy in a united India” and the ultimate demand for Pakistan “stemmed from the clash of two wholly irreconcilable sets of political norms”. In this sense, she claims, “It was not enough therefore that Congress did not actually represent the vast majority of Indian Muslims, for what was really at stake was the institutionalization of politics on the basis that Congress *could not* represent Indian Muslims”.<sup>3</sup>

In a subsequent detailed and developed work entitled, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947*,<sup>4</sup> Shaikh systematically explores “the influence of distinctively Islamic paradigms on the development of Muslim representative politics in late colonial India”.<sup>5</sup> These “paradigms”, she explains, rest on “the key Islamic concepts of *umma* (community) and *ijma* (consensus)” which are “deeply embedded in Islamic history”.<sup>6</sup> These concepts, in turn, are “grounded in the normative prescriptions of a religious tradition that privileged the community over the individual and that recognized the consensus of the moral community as intrinsically superior to the rules of arithmetical democracy that were believed to sustain the political community”.<sup>7</sup>

While there is no denying that the normative context mattered and, in the end, the “ideological divide” between the Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly the Hindus, the majority community, was the main difficulty in resolving the constitutional problem of India, the fact remained that it was the failure of the kind of representative system of government introduced by the British in India, first and foremost, that forced the Muslims to fall back on their “normative prescriptions of a religious and political tradition which shaped and constrained the conduct of colonial Muslim politics”<sup>8</sup> in the 1940s, after the adoption of the Lahore Resolution demanding a

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3 *Ibid.*, pp. 539-57.

4 Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947*, 2nd ed (Delhi, 2012).

5 *Ibid.*, xv.

6 *Ibid.* 6.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

separate homeland for the Muslims. That is how Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared that: "Pakistan not only meant freedom and independence but [sic] the Muslim ideology which has come to us as a precious gift and treasure and which we hope others will share with us".<sup>9</sup>

But Jinnah, like Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Mohamed Ali, and Allama Muhammad Iqbal before him, had tried hard to work out the system of government, in spite of its inherent majority bias, till he realized that it was not workable and the Muslims had to "revise our notions" in the light of "experiences and lessons we have learnt during the past 25 years".<sup>10</sup> In fact, he stressed that the Muslims "cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu raj. Democracy of the kind with which the Congress High Command is enamoured would mean the complete destruction of what is most precious in Islam".<sup>11</sup>

Although the Muslims knew, from the start, that the system of government in India, essentially based on numbers, would result in the domination of Hindu majority over the Muslims, they did not hesitate to try it in the hope that it might secure their particular interests with some "safeguards" and concessions stipulated in the rules. It was only when the system failed to safeguard Muslim interests and demands during the Congress rule of the provinces in 1937-39, in fact the only time the system was really tested at the hands of the Hindu majority community, that Jinnah moved to tell the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in 1939, that he believed that India was not competent to run representative institutions. He and many others like him who had advocated and worked for a system of representative government all along, had in the light of their practical experience, reached the conclusion "that the present system would not work and that a mistake had been made in going so far".<sup>12</sup> However, it was not long after that the British themselves, as subsequent discussion will show, felt the

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9 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 175.

10 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 195.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

12 John Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay* (London, 1971), p. 124.

same way, and even went on to suggest the Swiss or the American system of government in India instead.

It was also a truism of Indian political life that the system of representation introduced by the British in India was different from the concept of liberal democracy in vogue in the mother country, and hence any attempt at comparing it with Islamic notions of representation would be futile. The British never really intended to introduce 'liberal-democratic' system of representation and government in India. All the representative institutions initiated by the British authorities were meant to be merely consultative bodies, and that too in a very limited, prohibitive sense. In fact, it was this stark contrast between the values of representation professed in Britain and their practice in India that forced the Indian political leaders, Muslims and Hindus alike, to criticize and more often than not condemn various constitutional reforms from 1833 to 1935.<sup>13</sup>

It will therefore be more realistic and useful to undertake an analysis of the British system of representative government in India itself and see how it actually affected Muslim interests and needs without worrying too much about orientations of Islamic and Western systems of representation in theory. How far was the system of representation suited to Muslim interests? How far the system responded to and accommodated Muslim interests and demands? Was there any way out of the difficulties for the Muslims without rejecting the system itself? How did the British themselves see the whole exercise in the end? The purpose of this chapter is to answer some of these and related questions. To begin with, an effort will be made to trace the growth and development of the system of representation in India. This will help us understand better not only the basis and rationale of the system but also the extent to which it was meant to be a representative system of government in the liberal democratic tradition in the first place.

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13 Robert L. Hardgrave, *India: Government and Politics in Developing Nation* (Harcourt, 1970), p. 24. The "draconian measures" such as, the Rowlatt Act of 1919, forced Jinnah to resign from the Imperial Legislative Council in protest. Indeed, Jawaharlal Nehru described the British conception of ruling India as "the police conception of the state". Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography* (London, 1958), p. 435.

The British initiated the growth of representative institutions in India with the passage of Charter Act of 1833. But the Act clearly stipulated that the Government of India was to be 'a purely official Government'. Executive authority was vested in the office of the Governor-General and his Council of officials and in the governors of the presidencies and their councils. Legislative authority was settled in the Governor-General in Council alone. All the members of the council were to be British. The only thing 'representative' was a clause in the bill which suggested that some day Indians may hold an office in the government, however high.<sup>14</sup> James Mill, otherwise a firm believer in 'pure democracy', saw no prospects of "anything approaching to representation" in India.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Macaulay was in full accord, for he saw no other method of governing India possible in the given circumstances. As he explained:

We have to frame a good government for a country into which by universal acknowledgement we cannot introduce those institutions which all our habits – which all the reasonings of European philosophies – which all the history of our own part of the world lead us to consider as the one good security for good government. We have to engraft on despotism those blessings which are the natural fruits of liberty. In these circumstances it behoves us to be cautious, even to the verge of timidity. The light of political science and history [sic] is withdrawn—we are walking in darkness—we do not distinctly see whither we are going. It is the wisdom of man, so situated, to feel his way, and not to plant his foot till he is well assured that ground before him is firm.<sup>16</sup>

There were of course many British leaders who were "alarmed" at the very thought of a representative system of government being introduced in India. John Malcolm, for instance, did not mince any words when he said:

I am most alarmed at the effects of the active zeal and desire to enact laws of a permanent legislative council. A long period must elapse before we have sufficient correct materials for such a council to work upon; for every man of knowledge and experience of India must confess that we are as yet much in the dark on those points on which such legislation should be grounded. Every new inquiry that descends minutely into the conditions of a town or district in India, or into the

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14 Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, p. 20.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

habits and history of a community, brings along with it proofs of our ignorance. Government, with the aid it can command, may, in a course of years, through patient inquiries, conducted by men personally and locally suited to the task, obtain materials for framing regulations better suited than those now existing to the various tribes and classes of our extended territories; and where such information is complete, it could assemble when required a competent council or committees to revise the old or frame the new laws, without adding to the machinery of a government already too complex, [sic] the additional embarrassment of a permanent legislative council; for the establishment of which, I confess, I can see no necessity, as far as relates to the good rule of our Indian possession.<sup>17</sup>

In 1853, after two decades of the establishment of the Legislative Council under the Act of 1833,<sup>18</sup> not only the Indians were denied any “representation” in the council but even their consultative role was severely limited. The only way they were consulted was “by selecting persons who to their knowledge are well informed, and talking to them in their own way and at their own times...”<sup>19</sup> However, there were certainly some British leaders who were willing to recommend that Indians “should be members of a consultative council, which might be in attendance on the Governor-General, to whom he might refer to ascertain the wishes and feelings of the natives on several points”. But that is all. No more. They would not allow the Indians to have any proper representation in legislative councils.<sup>20</sup> Some even thought that it was “impossible to do so without creating the greatest jealousy among the numerous sects [religions?] which would necessarily remain unrepresented”.<sup>21</sup>

It was only after the 1857 ‘War of Independence’ which revealed to the British “the gap of ignorance and misunderstanding” that yawned between their government and their subjects that they realized the need to establish closer contact with the Indian people. Sir Bartle Frere underlined the rationale of this contact, when he stressed: “... the addition of the

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17 S.V. Desika Char, ed., *Readings in the Constitutional History of India, 1757-1947* (Delhi, 1983), p. 260.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 267, for details on the Legislative Council.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 284.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 286.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 286-87.

native element has, I think, become necessary owing to our diminished opportunities of learning through indirect channels what natives think of our measures and how the native community will be affected by them".<sup>22</sup> But this rationale still did not create the need for "an Indian Parliament".<sup>23</sup> Thus, when Surendranath Banerjee in a speech on 30 December 1886, echoing the newly formed Indian National Congress's demands for political reforms, proclaimed that "self-government is the ordering of the nature, the will of Divine Providence",<sup>24</sup> the British authorities were not amused. Lord Dufferin not only felt that the demand was not simply "a further step in advance, but a very big jump into the unknown – by the application to India of democratic methods of government, and the adoption of a parliamentary system, which England herself has only reached by slow degrees and through the discipline of many centuries of preparation". He indeed charged that the demand was "eminently unconstitutional: for the essence of constitutional government is that responsibility and power should be committed to the same hands".<sup>25</sup> Again, Lord Curzon, taking part in a debate on the Indian Councils Bill of 1892, firmly ruled out the idea of representative institutions in India. In fact, he berated Indians as a dumb, ignorant mass, and thus not ready or even capable of receiving a system of representation, any system of representation. He claimed:

No system of representation ever devised, nor system of representation that the ingenuity of the honourable member could suggest, no system of representation which would bear 24 hours test of operation could possibly represent the people of India. The people of India were voiceless millions, who could neither read nor write their native tongue, who had no knowledge whatsoever of English... The people of India were ryots and peasants, and the plans and policies of the Congress Party in India would leave the amorphous residuum absolutely

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22 Quoted in Rashiduzzaman, *The Central Legislature in British India, 1921-1947* (Dacca, 1965), p. 1. For details of Frere's views on legislative reforms also see, Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, pp. 404-8.

23 The *Hindu Patriot* observed: "what we want is not the introduction of a small independent element in the existing Council, but an Indian Parliament", *Ibid.*, p. 301.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 307.

25 A.C. Banerjee, ed., *Indian Constitutional Documents*, Vol. II (Calcutta, 1946), p. 55.

untouched. The Government assumed the responsibility of stating that in their opinion the time had not come when representative institutions, as we understand the term could be extended to India. The idea of representation was alien to the Indian mind...<sup>26</sup>

But then there were other considerations<sup>27</sup> too that led the British to conclude that the system of representation was not meant for India. Two deserve special mention. One was their estimate of the traditional rulership in India which they saw as absolute and autocratic. Thus, they had no qualms about a government where power must firmly rest with them. They were not bound to grant representative institutions to India. The only problem was that they still needed some set-up, some procedure, to consult with the people and indeed be able to ascertain their wishes. Lord Morley, who played a leading role in the formulation of 1909 reforms, articulated this position at some length:

I am no advocate of 'representative government for India' in the Western sense of the term. It would never be akin to the instincts of the many races composing the population of the Indian Empire. It would be a Western importation unnatural to Eastern taste. From time immemorial in India the power of the State has rested in the hands of absolute rulers. Neither under Hindu Kings nor Mohammedan Emperors had the people any voice in the affairs of the state... As heirs to a long series of Indian rulers we are bound to reserve to ourselves the ultimate control over all executive action and the final decision in matters of legislation; as trustee of British principles and traditions we are equally bound to consult the wishes of the people and to provide machinery by which their views may be expressed as far as they are articulate. To say

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26 *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82. This view of life and society was not peculiar to the conservative politicians, such as Curzon. Even to minds as liberal as Mills there was a "hideous state of society" in India, thus incapable of receiving representative institutions. Macaulay had held similar views a generation earlier. See Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India* (Oxford 1959), p. 53; and Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, p. 211.

27 Also important were the strategic, financial and commercial arguments. "The strategic argument for keeping a firm hold on the defence of India", wrote Coupland, "had gained in force with the revival of international rivalries in Europe. The idea that Britain should leave the defence of India in Indian hands should have seemed in those days quite fantastic. The financial and commercial argument for maintaining the stability of the British Raj were also steadily growing stronger". Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 81.

this is not to advocate the introduction of popular representation. The Government of India must remain autocratic; the sovereignty must be vested in British hands and cannot be delegated to any kind of representative assembly.<sup>28</sup>

The other, and perhaps more important factor inhibiting the introduction of 'representative' system of government in India was the sharp communal division between the adherents of Hinduism and Islam. The British understood that the difference between Islam and Hinduism was "not a mere difference of articles of religious faith. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief that constitute a community".<sup>29</sup> Thus, the British Prime Minister, Lord Asquith, did not hesitate to defend the granting of separate electorates to the Muslims in the Act of 1909<sup>30</sup> in view of given divisions in the Indian society:

To us here in this country at first sight it looks an objectionable thing, because it discriminates between people, segregating them into classes, on the basis of religious creed... [But] the distinction between Mohammedan and Hindu is not merely religious, but it cuts deep down not only into the traditions and historic past, but into the habits and social customs of the people. Provided that, as we may assume, the regulations adequately safeguard the separate registration of the Mohammedan electorate, I do not think any practical suggestion has yet

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28 Banerjee, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, p. 139.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 158.

30 It was in fact in the Indian Councils Act of 1892 that the principle of separate representation for the Muslims "was for the first time introduced in the political constitution of India". B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India*, (Bombay, 1946), p. 239. Indeed, prior to this, the Government of India Resolution on Local Self-Government of 18 May 1882 recommended: "As to the system of election to be followed, the Governor General in Council would here also leave a large discretion to the local Governments... New method, unthought of in Europe, may be found suitable to India, and after a time it will probably be possible to say what forms suit best the local peculiarities and idiosyncracies of the different populations..." Char, *Readings in Constitutional History of India*, pp. 371-72. See the correspondence between Morley and Minto on the subject in Mary, Countess of Minto, *India: Minto and Morley, 1905-10* (London, 1934).

been made for more completely giving that kind of representation which undoubtedly as minority they are entitled to demand.<sup>31</sup>

However, rules made under the Act of 1909 not only granted special representation to the Muslims but also to other minority communities of India, such as the Depressed classes, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Sikhs, Europeans, besides landlords, university graduates, commercial and industrial classes. This mode of "representation" indeed "accorded with Indian 'conceptions' and 'conditions' than British..."<sup>32</sup> Not surprisingly, John Morley, the Secretary of State, declared: "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one, would have nothing at all to do with it".<sup>33</sup> Lord Minto, the Viceroy, concurred, and, indeed, much in line with the earlier remarks of Lord Curzon, went on to argue that no representative assembly "could claim to speak on behalf of the Indian people so long as the uneducated masses, forming nearly ninety per cent of the adult male population, are absolutely incapable of knowing what 'representative government' means and of taking any effective part in any system of election".<sup>34</sup>

But while the whole range of British politicians insisted that parliamentary process was neither intended nor desirable, the existence of legislative councils over a period of time itself stimulated the "appetite" for more,<sup>35</sup> and thus strikingly laid the foundation of a "parliamentary government" in India.<sup>36</sup> The British could not deny, halt, or reverse, for that matter, the "progressive realization of responsible government in India". The Act of 1919, using Sir Edwin Montagu's declaration of 1917 for its preamble, boldly admitted:

The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of

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31 Banerjee, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, p. 164.

32 Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 104.

33 Quoted in Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 26.

34 Banerjee, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, p. 139.

35 Montagu on the government of India Bill of 1919. *Ibid.*, pp. 242-43.

36 Ramsay MacDonald, *The Awakening of India*, London, 1910, p. 168.

responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.<sup>37</sup>

The result, according to Reginald Coupland, a leading expert and adviser to the British Government on constitutional reforms in India, was startling: "Step by step, Frere's durbars had in fact drawn nearer to becoming parliaments". But this, as argued here all along, was more by default than design. There was no conscious or deliberate effort to that end. The British simply did not know where they were heading with their system of government in India, wittingly or unwittingly. They proceeded with it for lack of any clear thinking and viable alternatives. Coupland indeed summed up their predicament very well:

One after another, British statesmen had repudiated a particular method of advance towards a self-governing India, but none of them had suggested an alternative. If they had any conception of the direction in which the sequence of Reforms was moving, it was towards what Minto called 'constitutional autocracy'. But they seem never to have considered at what point the process of making autocracy constitutional would stop, nor how in the end a British autocracy could be converted into an Indian one. It might almost be said that they were still 'walking in darkness', as in Macaulay's day, without seeing where they were going.<sup>38</sup>

Whatever the case may be, India was made to receive the parliamentary system of government sooner than it could be contemplated. The Act of 1919 not only adopted the system in provinces under the famous scheme of 'dyarchy', the brainchild of the Indian Study of the Round Table, reformulated by Lionel Curtis,<sup>39</sup> but also created a central legislature for British India, elected through a system of direct franchise consisting of an electorate of five million voters.<sup>40</sup> This was a considerable advance over

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37 Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, p. 467.

38 Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 50.

39 See, in particular, his "Introduction", in *Papers relating to the Application of the Principle of Dyarchy*. "That England has granted responsible government to India in strictness should never be said and it will never be true. The best she could do was to put India in the way of taking responsible government for herself. That she has done and the rest remains for Indians to do." *Ibid.*, LX.

40 Later, the register at first general election in the winter of 1920-21 contained over 6 million names, or altogether 2.5 per cent of the male population of

the Act of 1909 where the electorate comprised five hundred thousand voters on the principle of indirect elections through municipal or local bodies. The 1919 Act also crossed the line between legislative and executive authority. Now Indians were “to govern, so to speak on their own”.<sup>41</sup> They were to take control of many departments of provincial administration, not as official nominees, as had been the case in previous reforms, but as leaders of the elected majorities in their legislatures and responsible to them. Provinces became the major centres of political activities and government. Although the Act still divided responsibilities for government between the provincial governors and elected ministers, it, in effect, committed the British Government to “some form of parliamentary institutions”.<sup>42</sup> But the final seal had to come from the Government of India Act of 1935, the last in the long series of constitutional reforms.

The 1935 Act was an attempt to recognize the increasing Indian demand for self-government. The framers intended to capture the form of a federal constitution, suggesting a new role and status for the provinces of British India. The Act invested the provinces for the first time with a separate legal personality, exercising executive and legislative powers in their fields, in their own right, without the fear of any interference from the centre. It proposed ‘The Federation of India’, comprising both provinces and states, with a federal Central Government and Legislature for the control and management of subjects assigned to the centre. But the Act did not establish a federation by itself. Federation could come into existence after half the Indian States acceded to it, occupying 52 of 104 seats allotted to the states in the upper house of the Federal Legislature, and after British Parliament’s approval.<sup>43</sup> Although it did not happen in actual fact due to the inconsistent and indifferent attitude of the princes, rulers of the states, the Act committed India clearly and categorically to a federal and parliamentary form of government. The Act also transformed

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British India, still a very small fraction of the whole population. The qualifications of membership of the different legislatures varied. Valentine Chirol, *India: Old and New* (London, 1921), p. 233.

41 Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 113.

42 Montagu, quoted in P.G. Robb, *The Government of India and Reform*, p. 78.

43 Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom*, pp. 266-67; and Coupland, *Indian Problem*, pp. 132-48. Also see, Christine Dobbin, ed., *Basic Documents in the Development of Modern India and Pakistan* (London, 1970), pp. 119-21.

the “grammar and syntax” of Indian politics by making room for more than thirty million voters.<sup>44</sup> The increase in the number of general seats in the Legislative Assembly further helped the Indians to claim a large share of responsibility in government.

But the Act failed in reality to culminate in the process of representative and responsible government in India. It fell considerably short of the British parliamentary model. “Responsible government as far as we can define it”, thus declared Jinnah, “was that the will of the legislature which is responsible to the electorates, must prevail over the Executive...”<sup>45</sup> But the Act had the British Parliament supreme over Indian matters, at least in three important respects. First, there was a ‘dyarchy’ at the centre. Foreign affairs and defence were to be the exclusive responsibility of the Governor-General responsible to the Secretary of State. Secondly, all the ‘safeguards’ in the constitution, and there were quite a few of them, were placed in the hands of the Governor-General. This was “a novel device”, showing to the Indians all the more “that India would not attain Dominion Status by the Act of 1935”. And lastly, the federation, if it came into being, would be subservient to the British Parliament. It would be subject to refusal of assent or to reservation by the Governor-General acting under the control of the Secretary of State, responsible to the Parliament.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the ultimate goal of self-government by the Indians was a far cry under the 1935 Act. The only thing worthwhile that came out of it was of course the ‘provincial autonomy’. But, for the Indians, as one writer perceptively observed, “the key to their problem lay at the centre and not in the provinces”.<sup>47</sup> Without responsibility at the centre, they knew fully well, India could not be self-governing. In a speech on the Report of the Joint parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms in the

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44 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 222. Although the property qualifications for suffrage were lowered, still the enfranchised electors amounted to a mere 11.0 per cent of the total population. A negligible number of women were enfranchised, but the landless labour and peasants were not represented. H.N. Brailsford, *Subject India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 47.

45 M. Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1978), p. 116.

46 Coupland, *Indian Problem*, pp. 143-46.

47 Brailsford, *Subject India*, pp. 47-48.

Legislative Assembly on 7 February 1935, Jinnah berated the absence of responsibility in these words:

Here there are 98 per cent safeguards and two per cent of responsibility!... Now, next what we find about the safeguards? I am not going into the various clauses of the Statute. I will give only a short summary to the House in two sentences. Reserve Bank, Currency, Exchange — nothing doing. Railway Board — nothing doing, mortgaged to the hilt. What is left? Fiscal Autonomy Convention (Laughter). Next, what is left? Defence, External Affairs — reserved; Finance — it is already mortgaged to the hilt, our Budget, and the little that may be here, what do we find? Special responsibilities of the Governor General! His powers as to the Budget estimates, his powers as to the interference in legislation, his extraordinary powers, his special responsibility. Sir, what do they leave us? What will this Legislature do?... It is humiliating, it is intolerable...<sup>48</sup>

Ironically, in spite of all the shortcomings and failings, the result of British efforts to fit the parliamentary principles of government upon Indian conditions was severe “stress and strain” on the body politic of India.<sup>49</sup> While there were several reasons to be dissatisfied with the halting advance under the 1935 Act,<sup>50</sup> the Muslims, as a political community, in particular, were confronted with the more fundamental and problematic issue, accentuated more than ever, of accepting the “majority rule” sanctioned by the representative principle. Their old fear and distrust of the system of government, biased heavily in favour of the majority community, reverted alarmingly. Though the Act provided the Muslims, like

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48 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13.

49 Percival Spear, *India: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, M1., 1961), p. 389.

50 Nehru, for instance, asserted on the eve of 1937 elections: “The Government of India Act of 1935, the new constitution, stares at us offensively, this new charter of bondage which has been imposed upon us despite our utter rejection of it... We go to the legislatures not to cooperate with the apparatus of British imperialism, but to combat the Act and seek to end it, and to resist in every way British imperialism in its attempt to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitations of the Indian people. That is the basic policy of the Congress and Congressmen, no candidate for election, must forget this. Whatever we must do must be within the four corners of this policy”. Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, p. 599.

all other minorities in the country, special safeguards, it did not alter the basic fact that they were a minority, and "in democracies majorities rule".<sup>51</sup>

The Muslims were apprehensive and wary of the British system of government in India right from the start. Syed Ahmad Khan was convinced that representative institutions in India would result in the domination of Hindus over the Muslims. It was certain that the Hindus would obtain four times as many votes as the Muslims because their population was four times as large. "It would be like a game of dice", he contended, "in which one man had four dice and the other only one". Even if the electorate was limited through a method of qualifications, such as income, he doubted the Muslims could do any better. "Suppose, for example, that an income of Rs.5,000 a year be fixed on, how many Mahomedans will there be? What party will have the larger number of votes?... In normal case no single Mahomedan will secure seat in the Viceroy's Council".<sup>52</sup> Syed Ahmad Khan felt that representative government was best suited to a homogenous population. But in a country like India, he asserted:

...where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests... would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations... The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community.<sup>53</sup>

But while at first, the Muslims, under the influence and guidance of Syed Ahmad Khan, opposed the new system of government, they were reconciled with it eventually, hoping that some 'safeguards' might help. The most fundamental safeguard they insisted upon was, of course, the right to elect their representatives by 'separate electorates', which they formally demanded of the British Government through the Simla Deputation of 1906. The Muslim leaders were aware that the Act of 1892

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51 Spear, *India*, p. 389.

52 Syed Ahmad Khan, *The Present State of Indian Politics: Speeches and Letters*, ed., Farman Fatehpuri (Lahore, 1982), pp. 36-37.

53 G. Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 1-2.

had not only introduced the principle of representation but, also, in practice, the principle of 'election', and that future reforms were likely to extend the scope of elective principle further.<sup>54</sup> The working of legislative councils in 1893 had already shown to all concerned that the results of "territorial representation" in India had not justified expectations in securing the representation of all the more important classes and groups of India, and especially the Muslims.<sup>55</sup>

Though the Act of 1909 conceded their demand for separate electorates,<sup>56</sup> the Muslims still failed to receive 'adequate' representation in various

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54 Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 33.

55 S. Razi Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement* (London, 1965), p. 160.

56 It is wrong to assume that the demand for separate electorates therefore made by the Simla Deputation of 1906 was inspired or engineered by the British Government, as has often been alleged by some Indian writers. See, for instance, Uma Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism* (Lahore, rep.), pp. 14-16; Y.B. Mathur, *Growth of Muslim Politics in India* (Lahore, 1980), pp. 114-15; and Ram Gopal, *British Rule in India: An Assessment* (London, 1963), p. 299. As late as 23 February 1909, Morley was informing the House of Lords on the demands made by the deputation: "...I told them as I now tell your lordships I see no chance whatever of meeting their views in the way to any extent at all". Morley indeed insisted on "a mixed or composite electoral college, in which Mahomedans and Hindus should pool their votes..." It was in fact the consistent Muslim endeavours and particularly the efforts made by Syed Ameer Ali in London who mobilized considerable parliamentary and public support on the issue that forced the British to yield on separate electorates for the Muslims. Besides, it must also be borne in mind that the British Government, in granting separate electorate to the Muslims, were not going against their "democratic conscience", for, as we have seen above, their plans for constitutional reforms had nothing to do with "democracy" as such. What the British wanted for India had no concern with democratic ideas and practices in England. In conceding separate electorates, the British Government was doing no more than merely recognizing the peculiar facts of life in India. See B.N. Pandey, ed., *The Indian Nationalist Movement* (London, 1979), p. 33; Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, p. 430; Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement*, pp. 176-90; M.Y. Abbasi, "Syed Ameer Ali" *Journal of Pakistan Studies*, Vol. II, 1980, pp. 75-77; Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 160; Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 34; Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 106; Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, p. 160; and Stanley Wolpert, *Morley and India, 1906-10* (Los Angeles, 1976).

councils. Their weak position was clearly reflected in the elections of 1912. In Bengal Legislative Council, for instance, they could manage to elect only 5 Muslim members out of 28. In the Punjab, where they were not conceded the right of separate representation as they were considered strong enough to represent themselves sufficiently, they could secure only 1 Muslim seat out of the 8 elected members in the Legislative Council.<sup>57</sup> Already the Muslims had suffered the most in the municipal elections. In Calcutta (now Kolkata), where the Muslims were almost one-third of the population, they could capture only 5 out of the 48 seats of the municipality.<sup>58</sup> Due to electoral qualifications, stipulating ownership of land, payment of income tax, and graduation from a university, the Muslims could not do well in spite of separate electorates granted to them.<sup>59</sup> Thus, they, under the auspices of the All-India Muslim League, did not hesitate to join hands with the Congress in 1916 to secure better terms in the upcoming 1919 reforms.

However, the Act of 1919 took very little from the Congress-League Pact of 1916 except, of course, the principle of separate electorates. It rejected the Muslim demand of increased representation in the legislatures. Instead of gaining anything significant in the Muslim-minority provinces, the Muslims lost even their proportionate share in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. In the Punjab, for instance, with its 55.2 per cent (1921 census) Muslim majority, their representation was fixed at 49.0 per cent. In Bengal too, another Muslim-majority province, with its 54.6 per cent Muslim population, they were forced into a minority status. In fact, they could not secure more than 45.0 per cent electorate due to their economic and educational backwardness. No wonder, in the Legislative Council, they could capture only 39 of the 114 seats. Muslims, as such, as one writer aptly put it, were "a political minority both in those areas where they were in a population minority and in those where they were in a population majority".<sup>60</sup> The Act of 1919 indeed set the stage for a

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57 Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, p. 242.

58 M.Y. Abbasi, "Syed Ameer Ali", p. 76.

59 For a detailed analysis of the subject see, in particular, Morris Steven Dodge, "Political Behaviour and Social Change: Causes of the Growth of the Indian Electorate in the Last Half Century", unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1971.

60 Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, p. 200.

keen Muslim campaign for statutory majorities in the Muslim-majority provinces and the creation of a federation of self-governing provinces, with strong provinces and a weak centre. This was the only way the Muslims hoped to improve their position in the evolving system of representative government in the country.

This concern was most clearly manifested at the Lahore session of the Muslim League in December 1924, which Jinnah presided, and wherein it was resolved, among other things, that:

- a. The existing provinces of India shall all be united under a common Government on a federal basis so that such provinces shall have full and complete provincial autonomy, the functions of the Central Government being confined to such matters only as are of general and common concern.
- b. Any territorial redistribution that might at any time become necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and NWFP...<sup>61</sup>

Alighrah session of the League in December 1925 reiterated the demands for a federation, provincial autonomy, and statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. The session was representative of almost all shades of opinion in the Muslim camp, led by Jinnah, Mian Muhammad Shafi, Maulana Mohamed Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali (Ali brothers), and Abdur Rahim (of Bengal). The burden of resolutions and of Abdur Rahim's presidential speech was that further constitutional advance was not helpful unless these essential Muslim demands were met – primarily reflecting a provincial strategy to offset the threat of Congress domination at the centre.<sup>62</sup> Jinnah and a number of prominent Muslim leaders, meeting in Delhi on 20 March 1927, were even willing to do away with separate electorates provided the number of Muslim-majority provinces could be raised to five by separating Sind (now Sindh) from Bombay Presidency and giving North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Baluchistan (now Balochistan) constitutional reforms

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61 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. I (Karachi, 1969), p. 578.

62 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. II (Karachi, 1970), pp. 40-68, esp. 60-61.

and full provincial status.<sup>63</sup> (The Punjab and Bengal already had a full provincial status). Though the idea of abandoning the separate electorates was soon withdrawn by the Muslim leadership in view of the Congress's failure to respond to this proposal positively in the Nehru Report of 1928, the move clearly illustrated the extent of the Muslim faith in the provincial scheme to secure their future in India.

The appointment of a Royal Commission (popularly known as Simon Commission) on constitutional reforms which was announced in November 1927 with the purpose of looking into the failings of the Act of 1919,<sup>64</sup> stirred many Muslims. The leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces, particularly in the Punjab, enthusiastically went all the way to welcome and support the commission in spite of an appeal for general boycott by most political parties, including Jinnah faction of the Muslim League. But while the Simon Commission Report submitted in May-June 1930 conceded, in principle, the Muslim demand for provincial autonomy and a federal constitution, it refused to accept the specific Muslim demand that they should be granted statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. Strangely enough, the commission made an issue of the separate electorates and 'safeguards' to deny this demand. As one member of the commission remarked: "...It was only by conceding the Punjab and Bengal point against the Moselms that we got them [Hindus] to agree to communal electorates and weightage for Muslims elsewhere".<sup>65</sup> This rejection of the Muslim demand for statutory majorities evoked bitter reaction against the report not only among the erstwhile supporters of the commission but also, more importantly, among its opponents. Jinnah, in particular, was furious. "So far as India is concerned", he charged, "we have done with it..."<sup>66</sup> The British, too, realizing the futility of constitutional advance through this report decided to shelve it and hold consultations

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63 Some of the more prominent leaders supporting the proposals were Mian Muhammad Shafi, Muhammad Ismail Khan, Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum Khan, Syed Abdul Aziz, and Muhammad Yakub.

64 Indian dissatisfaction with the Act of 1919 could be gauged from this fact alone that, in 1924, the British Government was forced to appoint a Committee of Inquiry (known as Muddiman Committee) to consider ways and means of improving the Act.

65 Quoted in Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom*, p. 9.

66 Jinnah's letter to British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, cited in M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970), p. 142.

with representative Indian leaders afresh at the Round Table Conference (RTC), in London (eventually in three sessions, in 1930, 1931, and 1932).

The Memorandum submitted by the Muslim delegates at the third RTC on 27 December 1932 not only pressed federal and provincial autonomy demands but also went on to link the statutory majorities demand with the “frank” suggestion that the Muslims should be assured of political power in those areas of north-west and east of India where they were in majority.<sup>67</sup> In retrospect, this was an indicator, a sure indicator, of the thinking that would ultimately lead to the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims and the creation of Pakistan, after partitioning of India. But nobody paid any heed. The Congress, led by its sole representative, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, participated in the second session in September-December 1931, and joined the British to oppose what they called “imposition” of Muslim statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. They also came to oppose the maintenance of Muslim separate electorates, weightage, and autonomy of the provinces. Gandhi never seemed to be interested in resolving the Hindu-Muslim problem. In fact, he complicated the communal issue further. He did not help with the federal proposal either. All that he could promise, on behalf of the Congress, was that: “The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless [sic] on further examination, it is found to be against the best interest of India”.<sup>68</sup> But that did not mean much. The result was a foregone conclusion. There was a stalemate. The British Government found it expedient to come out with their own solution of the problem. On 16 August 1932, the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, announced the Communal Award. The third and last session of the RTC was held in November-December 1932, but without making any significant progress.

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67 *Indian Round Table Conference (Third Session) November-December 1932* (Calcutta, 1933), pp. 190-91. “Luckily”, Maulana Mohamed Ali had earlier exclaimed, “there are Muslim majorities in certain provinces....” Afzal Iqbal, ed., *Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohamed Ali*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1969), p. 358.

68 *Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) September-December 1931* (Calcutta, 1932), App. I. “The Congress Scheme for a Communal Settlement, circulated at the request of Mr. M.K. Gandhi”, pp. 1391-92. Also see Char, *Readings in the Constitutional History of India*, pp. 556-57.

Although the Communal Award conceded the Muslim demand for separate electorates, it failed to oblige the Muslims on other points. The seats allotted to them in the Punjab and Bengal were not only less than what their population warranted but also less than the majority seats in each of the provincial legislatures. That is, the award brazenly turned down the Muslim demand for statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. Besides, the award took no concrete decision on the federation, especially the distribution of powers between the centre and the provinces. The Muslim demand that residuary powers should be vested in the provinces was not accepted at all.<sup>69</sup>

Not surprisingly, then, the constitutional advance proposed in the Act of 1935, in the light of this award, failed to carry Muslim support and approval. It fell considerably short of the federal objectives stressed by the Muslim leadership for a long time now. The Act, in fact, promoted a federation with a strong unitary structure. It not only empowered the centre to legislate the 'Federal' list of subjects but also the 'Concurrent' list, if it so desired. In addition, the Act failed to protect the autonomy of the provinces. Ministerial responsibility was incomplete, as ministerial functions were still restricted by "safeguards" placed in the hands of the governors. To further restrict the scope of ministerial responsibility, the Act placed the Governor under the "superintendence" and "general control" of the Governor-General in all those respects in which he could exercise "discretion" or "individual judgement", thereby reinforcing British Government's authority over Indian legislatures.<sup>70</sup> Jinnah thus criticized

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69 See Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, p. 249; Coupland, *Indian Problem*, p. 126; J. Coatman, *Years of Destiny* (London, 1932), pp. 353-58; Brailsford, *Subject India*, pp. 46-47; Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, pp. 287-92; and Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom*, pp. 200-1. Allama Iqbal was particularly critical of the Award. He thought it did not help the Muslim cause at all. Indeed, he argued that the Muslims came to "suffer" adverse consequences because of it. S.A. Vahid, ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1973), p. 347.

70 See Waheed Ahmad for a detailed criticism of the Act. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-75. "Is a Federation on the lines of the Act of 1935 practicable," Coupland asked, and went on to state: "Evidently not because it clashed with both sides of Muslims case. The Federation projected in 1935 purported to do what the existing Federation do—to combine the principle of local variety and autonomy with the principle of single nationhood. While, therefore, it allotted a wide field of power

the Act as: "...totally unacceptable...devoid of all the basic and essential elements and fundamental requirements which are necessary to form any federation".<sup>71</sup>

If the 1935 Act proposed in theory a system of government with a unitary bias, the Congress, during its rule in the provinces (1937-39), left no doubt about it in practice. The Congress insisted on the formation of one-party governments in the provinces, taking upon itself the mantle of national authority "in order to prove its claim to be the successor to the British Raj".<sup>72</sup> It rejected the Muslim League's attempts at power-sharing and coalition-building,<sup>73</sup> and openly flouted the reservations and safeguards written into provincial constitutions.<sup>74</sup> The implications were obvious. Rule of majority meant "Congress rule, exerted from a centre dominated by the

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to the provinces, it constructed a Centre which was to embody the sense of national unity in all India and to secure and stimulate its further growth". Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 267.

- 71 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 9. For a full discussion of the Act, see Jinnah's speech on the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms in the Legislative Assembly on 7 February 1935. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-20.
- 72 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, "The Congress in Office (1937-39)", in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol.IV (Karachi, 1970), p. 25.
- 73 Commenting on the fateful decision, Beni Prasad observed: "It is obvious that homogenous and coalition cabinets alike offered advantages and disadvantages in the Indian provinces in 1937...a flexible policy would have allowed adequate expression to the forces already in occupation of the political field and facilitated their integration with the public interest. The majority 'principle' is at bottom not an ethical maxim but a rule of expediency and has always to be so interpreted as to communal minority affirmation". Beni Prasad, *The Hindu-Muslim Questions* (London, 1946), p. 62. Also see Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, pp. 181-82; and V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957), p. 56.
- 74 "The Congress High Command", wrote S.K. Majumdar, "reduced the provincial autonomy and the idea of responsible government in the provinces to a mere sham and consequently healthy development of parliamentary government in the provinces suffered and has not been secured even upto the present day". S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their Role in India's Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), p. 167. Also see, Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 307.

Hindu majority through an organization which brooked no opposition and refused to share its power".<sup>75</sup>

The Congress, like the British, had always preferred a unitary form of government. This was abundantly clear in the Nehru Report as well as in the stand taken by the Congress leadership at the Round Table Conference in London. In both cases, it had argued for a strong centre. It was not interested in a genuine federation, with powers vested in the provinces, something the Muslims were insisting upon consistently, and for good reason. This would have made the system of government a little balanced and judicious, and thus even acceptable to them. But the Congress could not care less. It had become a willful organization over the years, having taken upon itself to express the "will of the nation"<sup>76</sup> without recognizing Muslim interests or realizing the force of Muslim opinion opposed to its policies and preferences.

The Muslims were not prepared to submit to a central government dominated by the Hindus. They were a minority, a "permanent minority", and indeed, for all practical purposes, were helpless.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the more they saw powers in the centre, the more they feared that, in practice, it will favour the Hindus, who formed the major bulk of the population. They were somewhat protected by the principle of separate electorates, but then, the working of the 1935 Act in the provinces in 1937-39 had clearly shown to them that this electoral device was frightfully inadequate in the face of an overwhelming Hindu majority determined to impose its will. The Congress rule, in fact, according to Abdul Hamid, "foreshadowed a permanent Hindu government ruling over the minorities and demonstrated the unworkability of parliamentary rule, the constitutional safeguards for minorities proving fragile".<sup>78</sup>

In the end, the British too were convinced that their parliamentary system of government introduced into India, though hesitantly and with much modifications, was not suitable for its people, and, in fact, it should not have been tried at all. The Secretary of State for India, L.S. Amery (May

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75 H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide* (London, 1969), p. 75.

76 S. Gopal, ed., *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. VIII (New Delhi, 1978), p. 23.

77 Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, p. 334.

78 Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India* (Lahore, 1967), p. 223.

1940-July 1945), for instance, was not only disappointed with the working of this system, but was prepared to suggest that the Swiss system of government should be given a chance, especially where there was a “deadlock”. Explaining the essence of the system to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, on 15 July 1943, he wrote:

The essence of that system is that the Executive is elected by the Legislature as a whole, by secret ballot on proportional representation, and is thus permanently enthroned for the life time of Parliament. That makes it necessarily a coalition government, and being relatively free from party pressure in the Chamber, more inclined to get down to business and to work together. Moreover, the secret ballot is a further protection against the mischievous power of the party caucuses in Indian affairs. I have sometimes wondered whether the system might not be conceivably introduced in the case of any deadlock without any change either in legislation or even in the Letters of Instructions to the Governors, provided always that the Legislature itself was prepared to play.<sup>79</sup>

Again, writing to Linlithgow’s successor, Lord Wavell, on 21 October 1943, in the context of troubles in the Bengal Ministry, Amery reiterated his point:

The more I hear of the working of the Bengal Government under Fazlul Haq and of all the intrigues and recriminations since, the more I am convinced with [the constitutional adviser] Coupland that the Swiss constitutional system might have a better chance of succeeding in an Indian province than the British. The essence of the Swiss system, of course, is that the Executive is elected, by secret ballot and proportional representation, by the two houses of Legislature together, and remaining independent of the Legislature for the duration of the latter. I

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79 Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV (London, 1973), p. 84. Also see his letter to Linlithgow, again, on 8 September, and 15 September 1943. *Ibid.*, pp. 218, 269. Incidentally, Amery had suggested as early as 10 November 1942, to Linlithgow that: “One or more acknowledged experts in the American federal constitution should be specifically invited to join forces with experts in India in studying the Indian constitutional problem. They and possibly also a Swiss constitutionalist might be coopted on the organization that I suggested...” Nicholas Mansergh and W.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III (London, 1971), p. 259.

believe that it could be introduced in an Indian province with very little change in the law or in the instructions to the Governor.<sup>80</sup>

Although nothing came out of Amery's proposal, and the matter remained more of an abstract ideal, it is still very difficult to believe that executive of all communities and legislature elected by proportional representation in the Swiss type of system could have helped overcome the bitter majority-minority tussle rooted in religion, culture, society and history. The idea merely exposed the weakness of the British system of government even in the eyes of policy makers. Convinced that the British parliamentary system of government was of no help in India, Amery even proposed the idea of American system. In a memo on the political situation of India on 1 September 1943, he stressed:

The one type of government to which there is not the slightest hope of ever reaching agreement in a united India is the British type in which the executive is directly and continuously dependent on a parliamentary majority. For under Indian conditions that means that the executive will be puppet of a Congress, or at any rate Hindu, party caucus – of Gandhi or whoever may succeed him. Only an executive representative of all communities and enjoying a tenure of office independent of parliamentary vote can hold India together. The idea is unfamiliar to us, but it is the basis of the whole American constitutional system. In a somewhat different form it is also the basis of the Swiss system... We should jettison the idea that... a government can be established on conventional British parliamentary lines.<sup>81</sup>

Whether the British at this point in time and at this late stage of constitutional development, could seriously "jettison" the idea that a government in India could be established on "conventional British parliamentary lines" or not, the Muslims had made up their mind already. They could not agree to a system of government that was inherently biased against them, the minority community. As Jinnah described it, the system "has definitely resulted in a permanent communal majority

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80 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), p. 402. Coupland indeed favoured "Swiss or American methods of adjusting the relations between executive and legislature". Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, p. 142.

81 *Ibid.* p. 203.

government ruling over minorities, exercising its powers and functions and utilizing the machinery of government to establish the domination and supremacy of the majority communal rule over the minorities".<sup>82</sup> These feelings and fears became all the more intense and profound with the knowledge that the British too were on their way out in the wake of Second World War and things would soon be left to the Hindus alone. They will be the new rulers of India. The devolution of British authority in India and the threat of imminent Hindu rule indeed left the Muslims with little choice but to fall back on the Islamic concept of nationhood formulated by Allama Iqbal earlier. In his 1930 address to the annual session of the Muslim League held in Allahabad, Iqbal had declared that: "The life of Islam as a cultural force in this country very largely depends on its centralization in a specific territory".<sup>83</sup> Jinnah demanded "a specific territory", a separate homeland, comprising Muslim-majority areas of India.

In his presidential address at the Lahore session of the League on 22 March 1940, Jinnah declared: "We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideal and according to the genius of our people".<sup>84</sup> On 23 March, a resolution was moved by the League demanding "that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States'..."<sup>85</sup> Ideology had now come to play its part in the political life and processes of India, and thereby to make constitutional settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims virtually impossible, leading ultimately to the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for the Muslims of India.

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82 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 95.

83 Latif Ahmad Sherwani, ed., *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1977), p. 10. For a detailed discussion of Iqbal's intellectual formulation of the idea of a separate state see, Sikandar Hayat, "Allama Muhammad Iqbal and the idea of a Separate Muslim State in India", *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. IX, No.1&2 (January-July-December 1983).

84 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 171.

85 Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, p. 341.

## Chapter 4

### Devolution of British Authority and its Impact upon the Muslim Crisis in British India

In the late 1930s, the Indian Muslims were confronted with a severe political crisis. This crisis was caused by a combination of factors. First, there was the communal problem, the perennial source of conflict in Indian politics. It laid stress on the differences and difficulties between the two major communities of India, the Muslims and the Hindus, which as B.R. Ambedkar observed, created "exasperation, bitterness and hostility".<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the system of representative government introduced by the British in India was inherently biased in favour of the Hindu majority community. There was no way the Muslims could have wielded power in the system.<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, the rather ill-conceived and ominous role of the Indian National Congress in the national politics somehow convinced the Muslims, particularly in 1937-39 years of their provincial rule, that it was essentially a Hindu body and could never secure their rights and interests, let alone allow them a palpable share of power.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the process of the devolution of British authority in India, which gained momentum during the Second World War, exacerbated Muslim anxieties and apprehensions regarding their fate in India. With the British gone, they knew that the Hindu rule was inevitable. Hindus will be the new rulers of India. How will they treat them? How will they deal with it? Is there any way out? The Muslims too wanted freedom. They were not prepared to exchange British rule with the imminent Hindu rule. The very thought of it distressed them and made them helpless and insecure.

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- 1 B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 30.
  - 2 The British system of representative government, according to Coupland, had brought to the fore the reality of the "majority rule", wherein the Hindus were bound to be "always in power and the Muslims never". See Reginald Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India, Part-I: The Indian Problem, 1883-1935* (London, 1968), p. 33.
  - 3 The Congress role, according to Sharif al Mujahid, was almost "inexplicable, unless explained in terms of terrible lack of political prescience and foresight." Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981), p. 168.

While much has been said about the three aforementioned factors contributing to the Muslim crisis, very little attention has been paid to the distressful impact of the devolutionary process. Many writers have failed to notice the process altogether. Some have recognized it but only in the passing, without making a serious, systematic effort to discuss its impact on political developments in the country, let alone on the Muslim predicament.<sup>4</sup> The truth of the matter was that the devolution of British authority in India was the most troubling factor in the Muslim crisis in India. The Muslims were apprehensive about their future after the British departure from India. One sure indicator of this apprehension and fear was the rapidity with which they were devising separation schemes to cope with the threat of imminent Hindu rule,<sup>5</sup> leading ultimately to the demand for a separate homeland in March 1940 as the only viable, safe and secure way out of their difficulties. The chapter addresses this neglected area of interest and attempts to show how and why the

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- 4 See, for instance, Wayne Wilcox, "Wellsprings of Pakistan", in *Pakistan: The Long View*, eds., Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti, and W. Howard Wriggins (Durham, 1977), p. 34. The only major exception seems to be the work of R.J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917-1940* (Oxford, 1974). But then, Moore is more concerned with the problem in the over-all Indian framework than in terms of Muslim predicament.
- 5 There were at least six schemes on the ground: 1) 'A Punjabi's', 'The Confederacy of India'; 2) Professors Syed Zafarul Hassan and Muhammad Afzal Husain Qadri of Aligarh's The Aligarh Professors' scheme; 3) Chaudhri Rahmat Ali's scheme contained in a pamphlet entitled, *The Millat of Islam and the Menace of 'Indianism'* (1940); 4) S.A. Latif's scheme, in his *Muslim Problem in India*; 5) Sikandar Hayat Khan's scheme, *Outline of a Scheme of Indian Federation*; and 6) Abdullah Haroon Committee's scheme, under the instruction of the Muslim League. For details on these schemes see, *The Indian Annual Register* (Calcutta, 1939); Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai. eds., *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921-47*, Vol. II (Bombay, 1957), pp. 455-62; Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, pp. 203-4; Mian Ahmad Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon: A Biography* (Karachi; n.d.), pp. 138-48; Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1963); and Y.B. Mathur, *Growth of Muslim Politics in India* (Lahore, 1980), App. II, pp. 293-329. Choudhary Khaliqzaman also claimed having proposed in his 1939 meeting with Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, the establishment of three or four federations of India, including "a federation of Muslim provinces and States in North-West India". See Choudhry Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p. 2.

devolution of British authority in India contributed and indeed precipitated the Muslim crisis like never before.

The devolution of British authority in India worked at two levels: the first pertained to the declining ability of the British to use coercive power and the increasing erosion of their legitimacy to rule India; and the second, and perhaps the more significant, reflected the Muslim desire to be free as much from the British rule as from the impending Hindu rule. The Hindu rule, they reckoned,<sup>6</sup> would confront India “with [the] worst disaster that had ever taken place...”<sup>7</sup>

The British rule in India rested on their military strength and resources to continue to hold their colony. In Lord Birkenhead’s plain words, “India is our prized possession. We in England have to live on it, the Indians may live in it. It is [for] the younger generation to hold India to the last drop of blood.”<sup>8</sup> Although the ‘War of Independence’ of 1857 was successfully put down with substantial help from ‘loyal’ Indian troops including the recently conquered Sikhs, the main burden of the task was carried out by the regular British soldiers and officers.<sup>9</sup> However, soon, the British not only promoted the idea of an “irresistible force of British troops” but also encouraged the formation of a strong, efficient bureaucracy to maintain law and order and to keep Indians under control.<sup>10</sup> In order to help produce “immediate and most salutary results”, the bureaucracy was provided with various Acts and Regulations.<sup>11</sup> Coercive measures such as, the Indian Explosive Substances Act, Summary Justice Act, and the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, were resorted to as early as 1908 to

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6 This explained why Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah decided to return to India from London in 1935. See his speech in Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 42.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

8 Cited in Ajeet Jawed, *Secular and Nationalist Jinnah* (Karachi, 2009), p. 51.

9 Edward Thompson and G.T. Garratt, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (Allahabad, 1962), p. 466. Subsequently, the Indian army had to undergo radical transformation. The most fundamental change was “the introduction of an entirely new principle, that of balancing communities inside the army”. *Ibid.*, pp. 466-67.

10 *Ibid.*, particularly Book VII, Ch. 1, pp. 527-40.

11 Michael O’ Dwyer, *India As I Knew It, 1885-1925* (London, 1925), p. 298.

stop, what the government called, “the saturnalia of lawlessness”<sup>12</sup> of the terrorists in Bengal and the Punjab. Regulation III of 1818, which empowered the government to intern a person without trial for any length of time was used in the Punjab to check ‘rebellious’ activities of the restless sections of the population. But the most clear manifestation of the British intent to put down challenge to its authority by the use of force was reflected in the Defence of India Act of 1915, followed by the Rowlatt Act in 1919, which armed the government with special powers to deal with disturbing situations.<sup>13</sup> Indians could be deported or imprisoned for any number of years. The Indians, of course, agitated and condemned these Acts, but to no avail. The First World War was over, and the Indian army had lost its indispensability and usefulness to the British Empire.

That these Acts were meant for use was soon demonstrated at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in 1919, where not only terror was let loose on a peaceful public meeting but martial law was also brought into force – for the first time after 1857 – to prevent “the boiling wrath” of the local people from spreading to other areas of the Punjab.<sup>14</sup> The indiscriminate firing at the public meeting left some 400 dead, and another 1,200 injured. The tragedy of Amritsar not only made India “mad with pity, grief and horror”,<sup>15</sup> it also left no one in doubt that the massacre was a clear instance of “the love of arbitrary power”.<sup>16</sup> General Dyer admitted that no warning or order

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12 Valentine Chirol, *The Indian Unrest* (London, 1910), p. 98. Between 1906 and 1909, over 550 political cases came up for hearing in the courts of Bengal. The Collector of Nasik was shot dead and an attempt was made on the life of Andrew Frazer, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. In the Punjab, however, disturbances were less clearly violent. See, Thompson and Garratt, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, pp. 579-80.

13 S. Razi Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905-10* (London, 1965), p. 96. For Bengal Regulation III of 1818, see Bengal Code, Vol. I, 5th ed., 1939, pp. 157-61. Cited in Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II (London, 1971), p. 452.

14 Annie Besant, *The Future of Indian Politics* (London, 1922), p. 243; and O’Dwyer, *India As I Knew It*, pp. 285-98.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 243.

16 Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement* (London, 1945), p. 118. “The love for arbitrary power” was also clearly evident in British operations against the so-called Indian “revolutionaries” working from outside India. See, in particular, Soban Singh Josh, *Hindustan Gadar Party: A Short History*, 2 Vols. (New

to disperse was given to the participants of the public meeting. The idea of the brutal charge was to produce “moral effect”, from a military point of view, on those present and elsewhere. This “moral effect” was demonstrated again, in the Muslim areas of Malabar, where the British Government responded brutally to an “outbreak”, which even Michael O’Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab during the Amritsar massacre, was willing to concede, “might have been averted”.<sup>17</sup> The military authorities were equipped with “power to impose the death sentence on rebels after conviction by a court martial”.<sup>18</sup> In all, according to one estimate, 2,339 Mappillas were killed, 1,652 wounded, 5,955 captured and 39,348 surrendered to the military or to the police. The number of prisoners in jails in April 1923, excluding a very large number which had been transported to the island of Andamans, was 7, 900. In addition, fines worth over a million rupees were imposed which in majority of cases were beyond the powers of the Mappillas because of their abject poverty.<sup>19</sup>

Though the British authorities pursued a policy of patient restraint in the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement of 1920-22,<sup>20</sup> they could not hold their cautious policy for long. During the ‘civil disobedience movement’ of 1930 they did not hesitate to take repressive measures including arrests, and “violence, physical outrage, shooting and beating up, punitive expeditions, collective fines on villages and seizure of lands”.<sup>21</sup> With the issuance from time to time of special ordinances, the use of military and the local application of martial law orders, the British rule was nothing short of a

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Delhi, 1979); Rafique Afzal, “A Glimpse of the Life and Thoughts of Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi”, *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. XII, No.4 (1975), pp. 1-14; and O’ Dwyer, *India As I Knew It*, esp. pp. 185-88.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 307.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 308.

19 M. Naeem Qureshi, “Some Reflections on the Mappilla ‘Rebellion’ of 1921-22”, *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, Vol. XVIII, No.2 (1981), pp. 4-5.

20 D.A. Low, “The Government of India and the first Non-cooperation Movement, 1920-22”, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXV. No.2 (February 1966), pp. 241-59.

21 R.C. Dutt, *India Today and Tomorrow* (London, 1955), p. 51.

'civil martial law'.<sup>22</sup> So "devastating was the impact that the British could soon release prisoners with impunity", and even claim in a short while that India was "enjoying a sense of confidence".<sup>23</sup> The 'Quit India' movement of 1942 was suppressed even more severely. Though martial law was not declared, the actions taken by civilian officials were "no less severe than would have been taken under martial law..."<sup>24</sup> Not only the British Government allowed the officials to exercise their extraordinary authority, but indeed protected them, through special ordinances and indemnity Acts, when they exceeded that authority with abandon.<sup>25</sup>

It was this naked resort to arbitrary powers which led some politicians to describe the British conception of ruling India as "the police conception of the State".<sup>26</sup> These politicians did not approve of Indian violence, and were happy to know that, in the end, "the belief in terrorism was dying down".<sup>27</sup> But they could not help resent the stark contradiction between the political values of the British professed and promoted in Britain and practised in India.<sup>28</sup> This also explained why Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah condemned the imposition of the Rowlatt Act in firecest terms.<sup>29</sup> As he put it in his letter of resignation (in protest) from the membership of the Imperial Legislative Council,

The passage of the Rowlatt Bill by the Government of India, and the assent given to it by your Excellency as Governor General against the will of the people, has severely shaken the trust reposed by them in British justice... Neither the unanimous opinion of the non-official Indian members nor the entire public opinion and feeling outside has met with

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22 See D.A. Low, "Civilian 'Martial Law': The Government of India and the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-34," in *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47*, ed. D.A. Low (London, 1977), pp. 165-98.

23 R.J. Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 292.

24 Francis G. Hutchins, *Indian's Revolution: Gandhi and the Quit India Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), p. 177.

25 Numerous acts of violence were committed and various ordinances were promulgated to check violence, including the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-79.

26 Jawaharlal Nehru: *An Autobiography* (London, 1958), p. 435.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

28 Robert L. Hardgrave, *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation* (Harcourt, 1970), p. 24.

29 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, pp. 49-50.

the least respect. The Government of India and your Excellency, however, have thought it fit to place on the statute-book a measure admittedly obnoxious and decidedly coercive at a time of peace, thereby substituting the executive for the judicial... The fundamental principles of justice have been uprooted, and the constitutional right of the people have been violated at a time when there is no real danger to the State by an overfretful and incompetent bureaucracy which is neither responsible to the people nor in touch with real public opinion and their sole plea is that the powers when they are assumed will not be abused... In my opinion, a Government that passes or sanctions such a law in time of peace forfeits its claim to be called a civilized government...<sup>30</sup>

Ironically enough, the Rowlatt Bill was passed in an era characterized by Reginald Coupland as a 'new angle of vision' reflecting British appreciation of India's contribution to the war effort.<sup>31</sup> In the First World War, "a million and a half Indians" had "volunteered to fight alongside their colonial masters, with eight hundred thousand Indian troops eventually engaged on all fronts."<sup>32</sup> In addition, and equally importantly, this "support for the war also helped ensure that Indian security was never a serious British wartime concern."<sup>33</sup> Years later, during the Second World War when the Indian support was suspect, with the Indian National Congress not cooperating with the government, these "draconian measures" were given freer rein to make sure that India was not wrested from the hands of British rulers. The most important evidence of the British outrage was the enactment of the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance, which vested the Government of India with extraordinary, extra-judicial powers. In the wake of the failure of the Cripps Mission of 1942 extremely severe measures were adopted to 'crush' Indian challenge. Even though the British Government eventually pledged that, after the war, they would help India "devise the framework of the new constitution",<sup>34</sup> it was more to secure

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30 M. Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1976), pp. 112-13.

31 Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, p. 11.

32 Marc Jason Gilbert, "The Era of British rule", in *A History of Pakistan*, ed., Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2015), p. 303.

33 *Ibid.*

34 Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I (London, 1970), pp. 877-79.

Britain's continuing hold over India than to promote India's freedom. As Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour and National Service in the War Cabinet, told L.S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India:

I must confess that leaving the settlement of the Indian problem until after the war fills me with alarm... We made certain definite promises in the last war and practically a quarter of a century has gone, and though there has been an extension of self-government, we have not, in my view, 'delivered the goods' in a broad and generous way. It is quite understandable that neither Muslim nor Hindu places much confidence in our 'after war promises'. It seems to me that the time to take action to establish Dominion status is now – to develop or improvise the form of Government to carry us through the war but to remove from all doubts the question of Indian freedom at the end of war.<sup>35</sup>

The war, however, changed the whole situation. Though the British emerged victorious, they were exhausted and weakened. The international political system indeed saw a radical shift from the weakened British Empire to the emerging global powers of the Cold War era, the United States and the Soviet Union. The British economy, faced as it was, with unprecedented and numerous problems of post-war reconstruction also put severe strain on their dispensation in India. As noted economist, John Maynard Keynes, told the incoming Labour Government of Clement Attlee, the British debt had risen to 3,000 million pounds. The "expenditure" on "policing and administering the Empire" alone cost some 2000 million pounds.<sup>36</sup> The difficulty, in fact, was apparent even in the war years. As John Gallagher and Anil Seal put it at some length:

Nodding plumes and gleaning lances were no longer enough. Once the world-wide scale of British commitments in the face of international pressures had become plain then it would have to be the Indian army which provided much of the imperial mobile reserve. That meant that this army had to be dragged out of the Old Curiosity Shop, modernized and mechanized. This had political implications. The better the Indian army, the higher the cost. Who was going to pay for them? Even the obsolescent army was costing more than half the budget of the

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35 Cited in R.J. Moore, "The Problem of Freedom with Unity: London's India Policy, 1917-47", in Low, *Congress and the Raj*, p. 390.

36 Cited in Narendra Singh Sarila, *The Shadow of Great Game: The Untold Story of Indias' Partition* (New Delhi, 2005), p. 189.

Government of India. Now the Generals wanted more... So this is what it came to. In the interest of imperial defence and security the Indian army was to cost more. But in the interest of Indian political security, most of the additional cost was to fall on Britain... for the first time since the eighteenth century, it was the British taxpayer who would have to pay for it. Here, then, would be a way of testing his will for empire.<sup>37</sup>

But there was no need to test that will. The British, like any colonial power, were keen “to pull resources out of India, not to put them into it.” They could not agree to make India “a burden” on the British taxpayer.<sup>38</sup> Thus, while on the face of it, they “had no longer either the desire or the capacity to hold India against her will,”<sup>39</sup> the fact of the matter was that “driven by post-War economic decline at home and the consequent need to withdraw its military garrisons from abroad, Britain was growing desperate to extricate itself from its Indian Empire.”<sup>40</sup> To complicate the matters further, the British structure of administration in India began to disintegrate fast. The British found it increasingly difficult to run the day-to-day administrative machinery.<sup>41</sup> As Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of India, told Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre during his intimate interviews in 1971-73:

We had stopped recruiting for the Indian Civil Service in 1939. We'd stopped recruiting for the Indian Police. The people carrying on included a lot of people who were past retirement age. They were running it extremely competently — but supposing Churchill had come back, and given a decision that we were not going to discuss anything for 25

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37 John Gallagher and Anil Seal, “Britain and India Between the Wars”, in *Power, Profit and Politics*, eds., Christopher Baker, Gordon Johnson, and Anil Seal (Cambridge, 1981), p. 413.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 389.

39 Aga Khan, *The Memoirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time* (New York, 1954), p. 291.

40 Gilbert, “The Era of British Rule”, in Long, *A History of Pakistan*, p. 311.

41 See, in particular, K.P.S. Menon, *Many Worlds: An Autobiography* (London, 1965); Leonard Mosley, *The Last Days of the British Raj* (London, 1961); Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1964); Richard Symonds, *The Making of Pakistan* (London, 1950); and Francis Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers: The War and Post-War Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Earl Attlee* (London, 1961).

years, I don't know if we could have restored that machine that we had. It had run completely down.<sup>42</sup>

The extent to which British rule in India had come to suffer during the war years could also be gauged from the fact that the British were now willing to envisage a "National Government" in association with the Indians. This government would deal with all matters (except Defence), assured with a declaration of Dominion Status immediately after the war, carrying with it, if desired, the right to "secede".<sup>43</sup> This was, of course, Prime Minister Winston Churchill's response not only to the situation in India but also to the demands of the Allied Powers, particularly the United States of America.<sup>44</sup> Churchill certainly did not like this intervention in Indian affairs. He was always uncomfortable with it. In fact, he resented it. In one of the dinner meetings with President Franklin D. Roosevelt on 13 September 1944, reportedly: "The conversation...got on to India and stayed on India for about an hour. Churchill talked rather angrily at length about the difficulties the British were confronted with administering India and on the lack of understanding in the United States about the Indian problem. Churchill said, I will give [sic] the United States half of India to administer and we will take the other half and we will see who does better with each other's half."<sup>45</sup> By 1945, Britain was willing to terminate its rule in India. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, even proposed a "Breakdown Plan" to meet any

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42 Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Mountbatten and the Partition of India*, Vol. I (Delhi, 1982), p. 14. (Italics original). Besides, the British officials and the police in many parts of India were deeply affected with communalism and could no longer be relied upon for firm action against the faltering members of their own communities. Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII (London, 1979), p. 202; and Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IX (London, 1980), p. 128.

43 Churchill to Roosevelt, 4 March 1942 in Francis L. Loewenheim, Harlod D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas, eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret War Time Correspondence* (London, 1975), p. 183.

44 President Roosevelt, in his note to Churchill, dated 10 March 1942 did not hesitate to "suggest the setting up of what might be called a temporary government in India..." *Ibid.*, p. 191. Stalin, too was worried about India. The first meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin focused on India at great length. *Ibid.*, p. 396. Also see, Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, p. 410.

45 Loewenheim, *Roosevelt and Churchill*, p. 74.

“dangerous and disadvantageous situation out of the final act”.<sup>46</sup> The British indeed were left with little choice but to devise a scheme of calculated withdrawal. Military and Police, the ultimate guarantee of British presence in India, could no longer be trusted. In early 1946, there were several “mutinies in the armed forces”, including Royal Air Force mutiny at Dum Dum Airfield at Calcutta (now Kolkata) and the Royal Indian Navy mutiny in Bombay (now Mumbai), “with some three thousand Indian sailors” taking to streets carrying “Congress and League flags”, and ending up “with armed clashes between the mutineers and troops”.<sup>47</sup> The Bombay mutiny was followed by other mutinies in Calcutta, Madras (now Chennai), and Karachi, “where the army commander opened fire on the ships with artillery causing considerable casualties”.<sup>48</sup>

In 1929, Lord Birkenhead had claimed in British Parliament: “What man in this house can say that he can see in a generation, in two generations, in a hundred years, any prospect that the people of India will be in a position to assume control of the Army, the Navy, the Civil Service, and to have a Governor General who will be responsible to the Indian Government and not to any authority in this country?”<sup>49</sup> In November 1942, Churchill had publicly boasted: “We intend to remain the effective rulers of India for a long and indefinite period... I have not become the King’s First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire...”<sup>50</sup> The stark reality after the war, in 1946, was that the British could no longer hold India. The power and the will to perpetuate their rule through force was gone. As Stanley Wolpert succinctly put it: “The World War may have been won, but India was ‘lost’”.<sup>51</sup>

But the Second World War alone did not terminate the British rule in India. The increasing loss of legitimacy in the eyes of the Indians did as much damage. This was in spite of the fact that the British, from 1858 to 1935, had come up with a number of constitutional reforms to associate the

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46 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), pp. 699-701, and Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 455.

47 Michael Edwards, *Nehru: A Political Biography* (New York, 1971), p. 166.

48 *Ibid.*

49 Cited in H.N. Brailsford, *Subject India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 28.

50 Cited in Hutchins, *India’s Revolution*, p. 143.

51 Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York, 1984), p. 252.

Indians in their system of government in order to legitimize their rule. But by the war years these measures had been exhausted. Reforms had ceased too. The British were not willing to go beyond what they had given to the Indians in the Act of 1935. The result was that the Indians found the constitution hopelessly inadequate, lacking even a semblance of responsible self-government.

“Responsible self-government, as far as we can define it”, Jinnah explained, “was that the will of the legislature which is responsible to the electorates, must prevail over the Executive...”<sup>52</sup> The 1935 Act did not do that, not even remotely. On the contrary, the Act made the British Parliament supreme over Indian matters at least in three important respects. First, there was “dyarchy” at the centre. Foreign affairs and defence were to be the exclusive preserve of the Governor-General responsible to the Secretary of State. Secondly, all the “safeguards” in the constitution – and there were quite a few of them – were placed in the hands of the Governor-General. This was “a novel constitutional device”, devised to remind the Indians that “India would not attain Dominion Status by the Act of 1935”. And lastly, the federation, if it did come into being, would be subservient to British Parliament. It would be subject to a refusal of assent or to reservation by the Governor-General, acting under the control of the Secretary of the State, responsible only to the parliament.<sup>53</sup> Thus, under the 1935 Act, the ultimate goal of self-government by Indians was a far cry. The only thing laudable in the Act was the so-called ‘provincial autonomy’. But then, to the Indians, as H.N. Brailsford rightly observed, “the key to their problem lay at the centre and not in the provinces”.<sup>54</sup> Without responsibility at the centre, they knew fully well that India could never be self-governing. The Act thus had no appeal for the Indians. Jinnah, for instance, in a hard-hitting speech on the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms in February 1935, lambasted the absence of responsibility in these words:

Here there are 98 per cent safeguards and two per cent of responsibility!... Now next what we find about the safeguards? ...Reserve Bank. Currency, Exchange – nothing doing. Railway Board –

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52 Afzal, *Selected Speeches and Statements*, p. 116.

53 Coupland, *Indian Problem*, pp. 143-46.

54 Brailsford, *Subject India*, pp. 47-48.

nothing doing, mortgaged to the hilt... Defence, External Affairs – reserved; Finance – it is already mortgaged to the hilt... our Budget, and the little that may be here, what do we find? Special responsibility of the Governor General! His powers as to the Budget and the estimates, his powers as to the interference in legislation, his extraordinary powers, his special responsibility. Sir, what do they leave us? What will this Legislature do?... It is humiliating, it is intolerable.<sup>55</sup>

But the British could not compromise on their ultimate right to govern India. They could not let their 'prized possession' go. Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India during 1935-40, made it abundantly clear, when he retorted:

But there is also our own position in India to be taken into account. After all we framed the constitution as it stands in the Act of 1935, because we thought that was the best way – given the political position of both countries – of maintaining British influence in India. It is no part of our policy to expedite in India constitutional changes for their own sake, or gratuitously to hurry over the handing over of control to Indian hands at any pace faster than we regard at best, on a longer view, to hold India to the Empire.<sup>56</sup>

And yet, paradoxically enough, all constitutional reforms, including the final Act of 1935, proved to be a major step towards the devolution of British authority in India. With the introduction of these reforms, "a chink appeared in the armour of autocracy; for however restricted the franchise, electoral institutions offered to the opponents of the Imperial system an opportunity to secure by organization what they could not achieve by deputation and petition".<sup>57</sup> The Indians got to legislate, administer, even

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55 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13.

56 'Essayez', *The Memoirs of Lawrence, 2nd Marquess of Zetland* (London, 1956), p. 277. That the British were not reconciled to the loss of India as late as 20 September 1946, was clear from the following note from Pethick-Lawrence, the then Secretary of State, to Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister of England: "The loss of India would greatly weaken the general position and prestige of the British Commonwealth in the world. Our ability to support and assist Australia and New Zealand in time of need and to maintain our position in Burma, Malaya and the Far East generally would be substantially weakened". Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 551.

57 David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932* (Delhi, 1982), p. 263.

govern themselves in the end, at least in the provinces. They came to share 'responsibility' with their rulers. This responsibility, no matter how much limited in scope and extent, contributed to the process of devolution of authority.

In the end, of course, Britain was forced to reconcile to the idea that self-government must be accepted, not as some distant end game, but as a ready goal. The only question was how soon it could be reached and how best it could be transferred to Indian hands. But this was a difficult question, and had serious implications. The British knew it well. As Amery, the Secretary of State for India, explained in a Memo of 28 January 1942, "the political deadlock in India today is concerned ostensibly with the transfer of power from British to Indian hands. In reality, it is mainly concerned with the far more difficult issue of what Indian hands, what Indian Government or [sic] Governments, are capable of taking over without bringing about general anarchy or even civil war".<sup>58</sup>

The process of devolution of authority indeed brought two significant but inter-related issues to the fore: the timing of the transfer of power and the distribution of power among the Indians, particularly the Hindus and the Muslims, the two major communities beset with "communal difficulty".<sup>59</sup> There was no way one could have avoided or deflected these issues. They were the outcome of the very system of electoral representative government introduced by the British in India, as it evolved over the years. That was the irony of the situation. As David Page, very eloquently, put it:

The working of the electoral system forced the Raj to the wall. Imperialism and democracy were incompatible bedfellows... In the days of autocracy this was their strength. In the days of electoral politics, it became their undoing. With each stage of devolution, Indian was set against Indian, caste against caste, community against community.<sup>60</sup>

The devolution of British authority in India, thus, acted as a prop to Hindu-Muslim antagonism. "The fact is", wrote Valentine Chirol, "the more we delegate our authority in India to the natives of India on the principles which we associate with self-government, the more we must necessarily

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58 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, p. 81.

59 Waheed Ahmad, *Road to Indian Freedom: The Formation of the Government of India Act 1935* (Lahore, 1979), p. 286.

60 Page, *Prelude to Partition*, p. 264.

in practice delegate it to the Hindus, who form the majority, however much we may try to protect the rights and interests of the Mahomedan minority".<sup>61</sup> Thus more this process of delegation of authority or devolution proceeded and the prospects of British withdrawal became imminent, especially after the Second World War, the more the differences, disputes, and indeed conflicts of interests between the Muslims and the Hindus increased and intensified.

Unlike the case of the Act of 1909, when the absence of devolution of authority acted as a spur to Hindu-Muslim unity, as shown by the 1916 Lucknow Pact between the Muslim League and the Congress, the working of the Act of 1919 severely strained relations between the two communities. The Muslims increasingly found themselves pushed to the periphery of the system. There arose the issues of ministries, distribution of seats in the legislative councils and municipal bodies, and the proportion of representation in government jobs. Thus the decade of the 1920s saw not only a series of bloody Hindu-Muslim riots but a steady polarization and clash of their interests. The Muslims and the Hindus vied with each other for scarce 'loaves and fishes'. The Nehru Report of 1928 even refused to acknowledge, let alone retain the separate electorates and weightage for the Muslims, hailed in the Lucknow Pact as "a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity". As H.M. Seervai perceptively observed: "Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that the 'war of succession' to the British Raj had not begun in 1916, but had begun in 1928, because full provincial autonomy was the obvious line of political advance in India."<sup>62</sup>

Those who watched these developments could not fail to see that a struggle for power had indeed begun. "So long as authority was firmly established in British hands, and self-government was not thought of", noted the Indian Statutory Commission of 1930, "Hindu-Muslim rivalry was confined within a narrower field... But coming of the Reforms and the anticipation of what may follow them have given new point to Hindu-Muslim competition... The true cause... is the struggle for political power and for the opportunity which political power confers".<sup>63</sup>

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61 Valentine Chirol, *India: Old and New* (London, 1921), pp. 128, 293. Also see, Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, p. 75.

62 H.M. Seervai, *Partition of India: Legend and Reality* (Rawalpindi, 1991), p. 12.

63 *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol. I (London, 1930), pp. 29-30.

The point of devolution came closer under the Act of 1935, and as the prospects of Indian power at the centre of the political system increased, Hindu-Muslim struggle was further intensified. The anticipated freedom moved the Muslims to a greater realization of their particular interests and aspirations as a political community, a minority community. It also augmented their fear of Hindu domination. While desiring to throw off the British yoke, they were not willing to accept a Hindu-dominated polity. As Wayne Wilcox remarked: "Although the Muslims hated the British for offences past and present, they had little desire to trade British for Hindu rule. The implications of a unified democratic India included majority rule, dooming the Muslims, therefore, as a permanent three-to-one minority".<sup>64</sup>

The experience of the indifferent, authoritarian Congress rule in the provinces in 1937-39, in spite of the constitutional "safeguards" under the 1935 Act in place, such as the separate electorates and weightages, and the British still present, made it all the more difficult for the Muslims to evade the truth that they will be at the receiving end of the system in 'free' India. The Hindu rulers would exercise power, absolute power, given their dominant majority position, and they, as a minority, will be helpless. Indeed, for the Muslims, the Congress rule, clearly

...foreshadowed a permanent Hindu government ruling over the minorities and demonstrated the unworkability of parliamentary rule, the constitutional safeguards for minorities proving fragile. The Muslims felt that the remedy of minority troubles did not lie within a federal framework, because the advantages offered by provincial autonomy would be negated if the central government was placed, as it was bound to be, under Hindu domination.<sup>65</sup>

This was the herald of a crisis in which the Muslims having lost "power" to the British nearly a century ago, were now confronted with the possibility

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64 Wayne Wilcox, *Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation* (New York, 1963), p. 20.

65 Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India* (Lahore, 1967), p. 223. Also see Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 21; Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), p. 264; I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (Hague, 1962), p. 336; Coupland, *A Re-Statement*, pp. 174-76; Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 307; and Beni Prasad, *Hindu-Muslim Questions* (London, 1946), p. 74.

of losing it “permanently” to the Hindus.<sup>66</sup> Constitutional safeguards could neither protect nor promote their interests. Indeed, they saw no security in a system which, as they experienced it long enough, provided absolute political and constitutional power to a community which was “inspired by ideals, religious and political, diametrically opposed to its own”<sup>67</sup> and whose leadership, for all practical purposes, had turned the Congress into “an instrument for the revival of Hinduism” in the country.<sup>68</sup>

The major stress of Indian politics had been on Hindu-Muslim unity and freedom. But now that the devolution of British authority brought in sight the ultimate freedom of India, the fabric of Indian unity was torn asunder. The “dualities” of “advancing towards national freedom and unity”<sup>69</sup> were fully exposed. The two were found to be irreconcilable. In fact, they had become the antithesis of each other. The Muslims sought freedom, but they did not want to be ruled by the Hindus or the Congress, representing the Hindu-majority community. In Jinnah’s own words, the Muslims “stand unequivocally for the freedom of India. But it must be freedom for all India and not freedom of one section or, worse still, of the Congress caucus and slavery of Musalmans and other minorities”.<sup>70</sup> The threat of imminent Hindu rule denied them their freedom, their keenly contested and valued freedom. They could not accept it. They were distressed and completely lost. They saw no place under the Indian sun.

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66 See C.H. Philips, “Introduction” in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds., C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainright (London, 1970), p. 27.

67 Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Towards Pakistan* (Lahore, 1978), p. 210.

68 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writing*, Vol. I, p. 77.

69 Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity*, p. 313. Moore, in fact, talked of three dualities: “The first duality was between the Raj and its aspirant successor, the parallel government of the Indian National Congress. The Congress claimed to represent all India and sought parity of status with the Raj. The accommodation of this duality meant finding a constitution that conceded the essence of the Congress claim whilst the necessary degree of British authority remained. The second duality was between Hindu India and Muslim India... In this case the accommodation must preserve the separate interest and identity of the Muslim community within a nation that was bound to be predominantly Hindu. The third duality was between British India and the Indian states...” *Ibid.*

70 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 155.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Failure of Traditional Muslim Political Leadership in British India**

Scholarly studies of political leadership in the formerly British colonies such as, India, generally have concentrated upon the rise and the role of modernizing nationalist leaders for two very important reasons. First, these leaders were national heroes, fighting for independence from colonial rule. Secondly, they were the main actors in the politics of transition from tradition to modernity in their respective societies. In fact, given the conditions of uncertainty and unpredictability accompanying their emergence, they were engaged in the difficult task of ensuring that this transition would be easy and smooth. The traditional order already dead, the rational-legal institutions introduced by the colonial rulers were either weak or under-developed. The result of their critical contribution was that these nationalist leaders not only attracted the attention of the contemporary observers but also, significantly, of the succeeding generations of scholars working in the field of political leadership and political development.

The consequence of this preoccupation with the modernizing nationalist leadership was that the scholars ignored, or at least minimized, the role of 'traditional' political leaders. They ignored the fact that these leaders represented traditional symbols and values, still so dear to substantial sections of the population in those colonial societies. Some traditional leaders were of course smart enough to reinforce their entrenched sources of power with modern paraphernalia – such as political parties, membership of legislative assemblies, and ministries – to help them stake their claims to represent the people in the new dispensation too. In this sense, the political battles in the colonies were not simply conflicts between the colonial rulers and the opposing nationalist leaders but also, to a large extent, struggles between the nationalist and traditional leaders. It was only after the nationalist leaders succeeded in mobilizing their people over and above the heads of traditional leaders that the fight for independence could assume the form of a straight two-party contest between the rulers and the ruled. The traditional leadership had to yield before the nationalist leadership could take over the final battle.

The case of Muslims in India offered a typical example of this kind of struggle between the modernizing nationalist leaders and traditional leaders on the one hand, and the modernizing nationalist leaders and the colonial rulers, on the other. It was only after the traditional leaders failed to deliver, and indeed yielded their authority, that the nationalist leaders came into their own and took over the cause of the Muslims in their struggle for freedom not only from the British but also from the imminent Hindu-majority rule in India, after the British withdrawal. Very few studies have devoted attention to this interesting but crucial aspect of Muslim politics in India. Writers have generally concentrated upon the nationalist leaders and their struggle against the British for their own sake. They have not analyzed or assessed the very important role played by the traditional leaders in the process, especially during the final phase. Who they were? What were their sources of power? How did they act in Muslim politics in particular and Indian politics in general? How did they view the Muslim predicament? How did they respond? What were their strengths, weaknesses, or indeed their limitations? How did they come to yield power to the nationalist leaders? This chapter will attempt to answer some of these fundamental questions in some detail.

Traditional political leadership of the Indian Muslims was composed of 1) social elites such as, nobility, titled gentry, and landowners; 2) provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces; and 3) the ulama. The homogeneity of these groups was derived from the social and political ties used for politically significant purposes. Their objective was to influence political system to the extent possible through shared attitudes. However, some of these groups were sufficiently flexible to share values or goals with other groups, indeed with overlapping concerns. For instance, some of the provincial leaders were landowners, and thus could readily be included in the category of social elites. But since many of these provincial leaders, particularly in Bengal, could not be placed in that category (belonged to the middle class), and since these provincial leaders, for most part, enjoyed power and position independent of their social origins, it is useful to treat them at a separate level of analysis. In addition, most of these leaders had their influence and authority confined to provincial boundaries. They had their 'power base' in their respective provinces. It is, therefore, appropriate to consider them as provincial leaders. In the same vein, some ulama could be considered part of the social elites, since many pirs in India were landowners with large tracts of land gifted to them by

their followers. The purpose of this classification therefore is merely typological and is intended to bring out the essential characteristics of each type of leadership for the purpose of discussion.

### **Social Elites**

The social elites, represented chiefly by the nobility, titled gentry and landowners, were the first and foremost group to be recognized and promoted by the British rulers in India. The British policies over the years secured them “a legal position as landlords with a heritable and transferable estate”, and enabled them to “steadily realize revenue and enjoy a substantial profit”.<sup>1</sup> The tax squeeze was considerably less than it was under the Mughals and thus they could enjoy an increasing portion of the product.<sup>2</sup> Except for the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, which adversely effected the Muslim landowning classes in that presidency,<sup>3</sup> the Muslims generally not only attained a proprietary right in the land but were also allowed to accumulate wealth, influence and power. This was particularly true in the case of the Punjab. They were also given special representation in legislative councils under successive constitutional reforms. The idea was to secure a “class of very favoured collaborators,”<sup>4</sup> who could be expected to support the British rule in India like their British counterparts supported the political system of the eighteenth century Britain.<sup>5</sup>

In turn, the Muslim landowning classes did not disappoint the British, and for two very important reasons. First, being a traditional group keen on persistence than transformation of socio-political order, they, of their own accord, wanted to stay on the right side of the British rulers. Unlike the educated, urban middle class Muslims, they were not interested in

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1 Baden Powell, *A Short Account of the Land Revenue in British India* (Oxford, 1894), p. 154.

2 Angus Maddison, *India and Pakistan since the Moghuls* (New York, 1971), Ch. 3, esp., pp. 45-53.

3 See W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (Calcutta, 1945), for some of the details of the plight of Muslim landowning classes in Bengal, especially pp. 149, 181-83.

4 Rene Dumont, *Socialisms and Development* (New York, 1973), p. 223.

5 Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston, 1966), p. 30.

seeking an ever-increasing share of the constitutional-bureaucratic system or to change it for that matter. They were content, for the most part, to operate within the framework laid down by the rulers. Secondly, their instinctive fear of the commercial and Hindu bourgeois in particular forced them to look up to the British for support and patronage against these aspiring classes and social groups. As a result, they not only stayed away from the agitational politics of the Indian National Congress of the early twentieth century but also, more importantly, formulated a separate political platform in defence of particular Muslim interests and depended on the British Government all the more for political concessions and safeguards.

Indeed, leaders of the Indian Muslims sprang up from this group of the social elites. Syed Ahmad Khan, founder of the Muslim separatist political movement in India, was a descendant of a noble Muslim family of the United Provinces (UP). His closest associates in the administration of the Aligarh College included Nawabs, Khan Bahadurs, and Talukdars. Some of them joined the Simla Deputation of 1906 and presented a set of demands signed by "nobles, ministers of various states, great landowners" which urged the British Government that their representation in the assemblies "should be commensurate... [with] the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds".<sup>6</sup> As Farzana Shaikh pointed out, they found it "inconceivable that the bearers of an hitherto dominant tradition should be subject to those over whom they had once held sway".<sup>7</sup> Founded in 1906, the All-India Muslim League, as its manifesto clearly expressed, was led by the men of "prosperity and influence". Interestingly, thus, "the idea of a separate Muslim identity was built into the very rise of the new Muslim elite".<sup>8</sup> This is something that has not been fully understood or appreciated by historians, particularly Indian historians working on the freedom movement.

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6 Desika Char, ed., *Readings in the Constitutional History of India, 1757-1947* (Delhi, 1983), pp. 425-26.

7 Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947*, 2nd ed (Delhi, 2012), p. 140.

8 Masood Ashraf Raja, *Constructing Pakistan: Foundational Texts and the Rise of Muslim National Identity, 1857-1947* (Karachi, 2010), xvii.

Sultan Muhammad Shah, Aga Khan III, who in fact led the deputation to Simla was chosen to head the Muslim League. An ideal choice, he not only was one of the leading members of the traditional social classes, having inherited all the “titles, wealth, and responsibilities, spiritual and temporal”<sup>9</sup> of Ismailis in 1885, at the tender age of eight, but also was closely associated with Aligarh College and All-India Muslim (Anglo-Mohammadan) Educational Conference, also founded by Syed Ahmad Khan. In addition, he had abiding links with the British society. As a minor, he was looked after by the British representative in Bombay (now Mumbai). In 1902, the British Government nominated him a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. His two years’ (1902-4) stint in the council proved to be very instructive in his political career. On the one hand, it reinforced his faith in the British rule for India’s sake, for India’s good. On the other hand, viewing things from inside the power structure, it convinced him that:

...the Congress Party, the only active and responsible political organization in the country, would prove itself incapable – was already proving itself incapable – of representing India’s Muslims’ or of dealing adequately or justly with the needs and aspirations of the Muslim community.<sup>10</sup>

In a situation filled with uncertainties and awkward possibilities in the wake of the upcoming reforms of 1909, the Muslim social elites could not be less enthusiastic in welcoming one at the helm of affairs of the League who could strike a sympathetic chord with the British Government and who also was a firm believer in the separate Muslim cause. They, indeed, chose him “Permanent President” of the League.<sup>11</sup>

The Aga Khan, however, for a variety of reasons, could not provide a strong and stable leadership. With the growing strength of the Muslim educated, urban middle classes in the Muslim League in 1913, with the entry of Mohammad Ali Jinnah in particular, demanding “a system of self-government suitable to India,” the Aga Khan became anxious and indeed soon resigned the presidentship of the League and even stopped his

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9 Aga Khan, *The Memoirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time* (London, 1954), xi.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

11 At 1907 session of the League held at Karachi.

financial contributions. In principle, he insisted, he had nothing against constitutional advance, but if the League, he charged, stood for "a mere hasty impulse to jump at the apple when only the blossoming stage was over, then the day that witnessed the formulation of the ideal will be a very unfortunate one in the annals of their country".<sup>12</sup>

While the Lucknow Pact of 1916 showed the significant influence of the middle classes in the League, subsequent events leading to the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement swept aside both middle classes and the social elites. While the middle classes could not, by temperament and training, approve of the extra-constitutional, non-cooperation methods employed by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the new leader of the Congress, in the service of the Khilafat cause, the social elites could not reconcile to a movement that assumed more of the nature of an anti-British agitation. They could not contemplate, let alone physically challenge, the British authority in India. And, although the Aga Khan personally made some efforts to settle the Khilafat issue amicably, and, indeed, led a mission to the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, at the request of the Legislative Council, and also contributed generously to Turkey's war funds, the fact remained that he found himself completely at a loss.

The failure of the Khilafat movement to achieve its ostensible objectives and the helplessness of the Muslim middle class leadership of the revived Muslim League in 1924 under the presidentship of Jinnah to see through a revision of the Nehru Report of 1928, having rejected the main Muslim demands, however, brought back the social elites to the centre of the stage. The Aga Khan chaired the All-Parties Muslim Conference of 1929, attracting not only the big landowners, Nawabs and Knights but also the old Khilafatists such as, Maulana Mohamed Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Maulana Azad Sobhani, and Maulana Shafi Daudi. Even some middle class politicians, including Muhammad Yakub, Deputy Leader of Jinnah's Independent Party in the Legislative Assembly, joined the proceedings.<sup>13</sup> The Aga Khan called it a "vast gathering

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12 Cited in Mohammad Noman, *Muslim India* (Allahabad, 1942), p. 135.

13 See the complete list of office bearers and delegates in K.K. Aziz, ed., *The All-India Muslim Conference, 1928-1935: A Documentary Record* (Karachi, 1972), pp. 25-26, 29-30.

representative of all Muslim opinion".<sup>14</sup> After "long, full and frank discussion," the conference adopted a manifesto which, among other things, stressed:

The only form of government suitable to Indian conditions is a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent [sic] states. The right of Muslims to elect their representatives in the various Indian legislatures is now the law of the land, and Muslims cannot be deprived of that right without their consent. In the provinces in which Muslims constitute a majority they shall have a representation in no less than that enjoyed by them under the existing law (a principle known weightage). It is essential that Muslims shall have their due share in the central and provincial cabinets.<sup>15</sup>

These demands, according to the Aga Khan, were meant to serve as important "guiding lights" for the Muslims in their search for a safe and secure future in India. Constituting their "code-book", there was no way the Muslims could countenance any deviation from it.<sup>16</sup> In fact, the Aga Khan felt so strongly about the "unanimity" and the success of this conference that he went on to claim that it marked the "return – long delayed" of Jinnah to mainstream Muslim politics.<sup>17</sup>

While there can be no denying that Jinnah had called it 'the parting of the ways' after his disappointment at the 1928 Calcutta (now Kolkata) Convention, which rejected his proposed amendments to the Nehru report, it is difficult to say how much the conference influenced his return or his political career. Jinnah's 'Fourteen Points', of course, carried some of the substance of the conference proposals but, then, they also included the earlier Delhi Muslim Proposals of 1927, formulated under his own command. According to M.H. Saiyid, the idea of the Fourteen Points was "to accommodate all the schools of thought" and thus make sure "that complete harmony would once again prevail within the ranks of the League".<sup>18</sup> For a number of reasons, the conference, however, failed to

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14 *Memoirs of Aga Khan*, p. 209.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*, p. 210.

18 M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1980), pp. 137-40.

impress the Muslim masses in general and lost its role and relevance in politics eventually.

First, in the opinion of Azim Husain, son and biographer of Mian Fazl-i-Husain who was one of the leading architects of the conference and the founder of the Unionist Party in the Punjab, the conference failed "...for want of leadership..."<sup>19</sup> The Aga Khan could not devote attention to it, instill life into its activities, and thus make it a dynamic force. Secondly, the conference was "a very mixed bag",<sup>20</sup> purporting to carry the cause of the landed interests, provincial interests (both of Muslim-majority provinces and Muslim-minority provinces, with all their distinctions), ulama, and the middle classes without any higher synthesis of their particular needs. Thirdly, the conference suffered from acute financial problems. Though it had among its sponsors Haji Abdullah Haroon, the Nizam of Hyderabad, the nawabs of Bengal and Rampur, the Raja of Salempur, and, above all, the Aga Khan himself, no body contributed regularly and sufficiently. Partly as a result of these financial problems, the conference did not have a press to mobilize the Muslim public opinion.<sup>21</sup> Lastly, and most importantly, the conference could not free itself from "the provincial strategy" of Fazl-i-Husain who was mainly interested in the establishment of the Unionist hold in the Punjab<sup>22</sup>, even if it meant compromising the all-India policies and position of the conference. This was despite the fact that the Aga Khan and other important leaders of the conference kept stressing the need to project and promote an all-India agenda.<sup>23</sup>

Ironically, the conference received its final blow at the hands of the Aga Khan himself. With the termination of the work of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill in 1934, the Aga Khan ended

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19 Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography* (Bombay, 1946), p. 246.

20 David Page, *Prelude to Partition* (Delhi, 1982), p. 198. For an extensive discussion of the affairs of the Muslim Conference also see, Ch. 1, pp. 195-258.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 198.

23 Waheed Ahmad, ed., *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain* (Lahore, 1976), p. 285. For Fazl-i-Husain's response, see his letter of 28 June 1933 to Shafaat Ahmad Khan, a leader of the conference from the UP.

his “own connection with Indian politics”<sup>24</sup> to assume the ‘international’ role of leading India at the League of Nations Assembly. While his career at the League of Nations was an instant success as he rose to be the only Asian to be elected, in 1937, as President of the League of Nations Assembly, the cause of the conference suffered beyond redemption. As Shafaat Ahmad Khan, one of its active leaders, succinctly put it in November 1935: “The Muslim Conference programme has been exhausted. It is empty of contents. I have been scratching my forehead for the last two years in a vain search for a new programme for Muslim India, but am like blind man groping in the dark.”<sup>25</sup>

While the decline of the Muslim Conference marked the end of the dominant role of the Muslim social elites on the national scene, it did not kill their instinctive urge for political influence and authority. Some of them moved to concentrate more upon local/regional alliances to secure their political interests, and indeed to fight the coming elections for this purpose. They founded and promoted a number of provincial organizations. In the UP, for instance, Nawab of Chhitari organized the National Agriculturist Party. In Sind (now Sindh), Abdullah Haroon formed Sind United Party. In the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum promoted United Muslim Nationalist Party. The politics of the social elites now assumed a distinct provincial/regional character.

However, this tactical shift did not take them far. Although some of these parties could do better than others, the die was cast. The 1937 elections left them more than ever at the mercy of the Muslim League and the Congress – two main political forces that had fought elections on an all-India basis. While the League did not do well as such and could only manage to win 109 out of 482 seats reserved for the Muslims,<sup>26</sup> the ascendancy of the Congress and, in particular, its ability to penetrate and

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24 *Memoirs of Aga Khan*, p. 235. One important reason in severing his Indian connection may have been Aga Khan’s helplessness in understanding the then political situation in England. See his letter to Jinnah, dated 15 March 1931. *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/15, p. 106.

25 Waheed Ahmad, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 470.

26 Z.H. Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-47”, in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds., C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (London, 1970), p. 253.

influence the provincial politics forced them to come to terms with the League and take cover under its wings for their protection. Indeed, most of the provincial/regional leaders joined the League in October 1937 at its Lucknow session. The highly centralized, authoritarian policy of the Congress in its provincial rule of 1937-39, however, helped reinforce their association with the League in the subsequent years. In fact, according to Khalid bin Sayeed, in 1942, the landowners, the largest group among the social elites, represented the "largest single group" in the Muslim League Council. Out of a total membership of 503, there were as many as 163 landowners, almost one-third. In addition, there were several Knights, Khan Bahadurs, and Nawabs who were League members in the Central Legislative Assembly.<sup>27</sup>

Although, as discussed above, the cause of the Muslim social elites, particularly under the Muslim Conference, was compromised and eventually lost due to a host of factors, it could not be denied that the objective conditions of India in the late 1930s had made things difficult for them already. Their position had become untenable for several reasons. Some important ones are:

- 1) The process of expansion of electoral franchise began to shift more and more in favour of the educated, urban middle classes working in opposition to the status-quo-oriented policies of the social elites. Educated Muslim youth wanted a share of the pie. They found little comfort in politics for the sake of politics, and in defence of traditional authority.
- 2) The strongly 'national' character of the educated, urban middle classes, in contrast to the parochial, local territorial character of the social elites, came to appeal more and more to the Muslim masses caught up in the heightened Hindu-Muslim tensions of the 1920s and 1930s. The more the masses came to share their membership in the 'national community' the more the authority of the middle classes rose. This was, of course, not something unique to the Indian Muslim case. Most developing societies in

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27 These details have been worked out by Khalid bin Sayeed in his study of groups and factions in the League. See his, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1858-1917* (London, 1968), pp. 206-7.

their nationalist phase of liberation from the colonial yoke experienced similar shifts of authority.<sup>28</sup>

- 3) The increasingly centralized, unitary structure of the Indian politics since the promulgation of the Act of 1935 disturbed the traditional base of the social elites and rendered them largely irrelevant to the main concerns of politics. At stake was the control of the centre, and the social elites had hardly any idea or programme to offer. All they could suggest was 'a federal system', but the experience of the Congress rule (1937-39) in the provinces showed to the Muslims how deficient this system could be. They had come to realize that, no matter what kind of federation, the control of the centre would essentially remain in the hands of the majority community, that is, the Hindu community. They would be calling the shots. Provincial autonomy, even if guaranteed, will be of little help. Muslim mind had in fact moved beyond the federal objectives.
- 4) With the beginning of the Second World War, British authority in India was seriously eroded, reducing the influence of the social elites considerably. Pro-British stance or postures could no longer allay Muslim fears and apprehensions. The social elites could not play the role of mediators between the British Government and the Muslim community, especially as India moved closer to self-government and freedom.
- 5) Finally, the re-emergence of the Muslim League as a charged, all-India party of the Muslim masses in the late 1930s sealed the fate of the social elites in their exclusive concerns. "The Muslim League, as it emerged under Jinnah's leadership," the Aga Khan himself graciously conceded, "was an organization whose members were pledged to instant resistance – to the point of death – if Indian independence came about without full and

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28 See, in particular, Edward Shils, "Charisma, Order, and Status", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 30, No.2 (1965); David Apter, "Nkrumah, Charisma, and the Coup", *Daedalus*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (1968); and Ann Ruth and Dorothy Willners, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders", *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 358 (1965), for a theoretical study of the subject.

proper safeguards for Muslim individuality or unity, or without due regard for the differences between Islamic culture, society, faith and civilization and their Hindu counterparts.”<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, there was little role left for the social elites except in the service of the League and its cause of separate state of Pakistan, under the leadership of Jinnah. That is what most of them eventually did, and to good effect. They made a remarkable contribution.

### **Provincial Leaders**

The provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces, a product of the system of ‘dyarchy’, introduced by the British in India under the 1919 Act, were a formidable force from the start. Dyarchy gave these leaders “the actual handling of administrative powers and a measure of responsibility” in the government. The British had always, and understandably so, favoured devolution of authority at the provinces rather than at the centre. The idea was not only to attract “the most influential and practical-minded to the Provincial councils”, but also, in the process, encourage provincial leaders to challenge the “nationalist” leadership opposing them at the centre.<sup>30</sup> That alone is well enough reason to study the traditional political leadership in Muslim India.

The provincial leaders came both from landowning and the middle classes and tended to be generally inclined towards one of the three parties in the political arena, the British, the Congress, or the Muslim League, depending upon their needs and interests at a particular point in time. In the Punjab, Mian Fazl-i-Husain, Mian Muhammad Shafi, and Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan were landowners and favoured the British to the extent that they came to represent the so-called “Anglo-Mohammedan point of view” in politics.<sup>31</sup> By the late 1930s, Sikandar Hayat Khan was favourably disposed towards the League as well. Fazlul Haq represented the middle classes of Bengal and vacillated between pro-British and pro-League positions. Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, rival claimant to

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29 *Memoirs of Aga Khan*, p. 315.

30 J. Coatman, *Years of Destiny* (London, 1932), p. 205.

31 See Mian Mohammad Shafi’s letter to Dunlop Smith, dated 8 January 1909, in Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981), p. 389, fn. 4.

provincial leadership, also from the middle classes, was associated with the League. Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum Khan in the North-West Frontier Province was a pro-British leader, representing the landowning classes of the province. Dr. Khan Sahib (Abdul Jabbar Khan), his political adversary and more successful of the two, was a pro-Congress leader, drawing support from rural middle classes and peasantry. Under the patronage of his more influential brother, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Sahib was part of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement (aligned with the Congress after 1930).<sup>32</sup> In Sind, provincial leadership was largely divided between pro-British and pro-Congress camps. Abdullah Haroon and Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah took pro-British stance and represented the elite interests of the province. But they eventually came to support the League. Allah Bakhsh was allied with the Congress, and indeed managed to form coalition governments a couple of times.

As it is not possible to dwell upon all cases of provincial leadership in this chapter, it will be useful to concentrate upon provincial leadership in one province, the Punjab, "more advanced, prosperous and influential" than any other Muslim-majority province,<sup>33</sup> and with a more consistent and successful set of provincial leaders. Fazl-i-Husain, whom we have already discussed in the context of Muslim Conference politics earlier, will be an ideal choice. He was the most powerful provincial leader of the province. But since he died in the mid-1930s when the provincial autonomy granted to the provinces under the Act of 1935 was just beginning to unfold its scope, his case will be complemented with a discussion of the role played by his successor, Sikandar Hayat Khan. References will also be made to other leaders of the province, relevant to the analysis.

Fazl-i-Husain was the founder and the undisputed leader of the pro-British Punjab National Unionist Party from 1923 till his death in 1936. Though

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32 "The mission of Khudai Khidmatgars", declared Abdul Ghaffar Khan, "is to give comfort to all creatures of God. They are given training and take an oath to this effect. Their object is to rescue the oppressed from the tyrant. They would stand against a tyrant whether he is a Hindu, a Muslim or an Englishman. If today they are against Englishmen, it is because they are tyrants and we are the oppressed." D.G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle* (Bombay, 1967), pp. 118-120.

33 Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928* (Delhi, 1979), p. 16.

himself not a scion of the landed gentry,<sup>34</sup> Fazl-i-Husain founded the party to save the landed interests of the Punjab from the urban *baniyas* (money-lenders, primarily Hindus), who not only controlled trade and commerce in the province but also steadily became owners of the forfeited land pledged as securities for loans. The gravity of the situation could be gauged from the fact that Malcolm Darling's (1922-23) survey indicated that 83 per cent of the proprietors of the Punjab were in debt.<sup>35</sup> Chhotu Ram, an influential Hindu jat agriculturist from Rohtak, and a co-founder of the Unionist Party, writing a few years later, observed: "In fact, it may be safely presumed that not less than 90 per cent of the agricultural population of the Punjab is in debt at the present time."<sup>36</sup> Indeed there was a concern that if the *baniyas* were not checked, the agricultural economy of the province would "sink into the lowest depth of poverty without any hope of recovery except through a rebellion or revolution".<sup>37</sup> The situation was particularly critical for the Muslims because they were primarily agriculturists.

Fazl-i-Husain sought to face this threat through the Unionist Party by forging an alliance with a vigorous agricultural community of the Hindus, the Jats – represented by Chhotu Ram, and the Sikhs – represented by Sunder Singh Majithia. The idea was to bring together all the powerful landed interests of the Punjab. The Act of 1919 which tilted heavily in favour of the rural electorate<sup>38</sup> provided the Unionists the kind of opportunity they needed to transform this alliance into a strong coalition ministry. In the 1923 elections to the Provincial Legislative Assembly, the Unionist Party won 45 seats against 32 secured by the opposition. The 1919 Act strengthened the provinces, providing the Unionists the necessary power base to consolidate their gains. As a result, the Unionist Party not only came to dominate the provincial government but also influence the centre. Its leader, Fazl-i-Husain, used his position to secure for himself membership in the Viceroy's Executive Council, and served for

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34 But Fazl-i-Husain returned to the Legislative Assembly of the Punjab in 1923-24 by a landowner's constituency. See Madan Gopal, *Sir Chhotu Ram: A Political Biography* (Delhi, 1977), p. 60.

35 Malcolm Lyall Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (London, 1932).

36 Gopal, *Sir Chhotu Ram*, App. 2, 'Indebtedness in the Punjab', p. 166.

37 Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics* (Karachi, 1974), p. 320.

38 Ayesha Jalal and Anil Seal, "Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics between the Wars", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (1981), pp. 424-25.

five years, from 1930 to 1935. This membership enabled him to control and guide the Muslim Conference and to influence the selection and conduct of the Muslim delegation at the Round Table Conference in London, "mainly to undercut Jinnah."<sup>39</sup> Indeed, he was able to help draft the Government of India Bill in a way that would further strengthen the Unionists in provincial politics. He was particularly interested in preserving separate electorates and securing statutory majority in the Punjab. "As regards the Punjab", he wrote to Nawab of Chhitari on 5 September 1931, "Muslims very properly demand representation on population basis and are entitled to it..."<sup>40</sup>

In order to check Indian advance at the centre, Fazl-i-Husain did not approve of the presence of Jinnah in the Round Table Conference. Jinnah was the only well-known Muslim leader who did not attend Muslim Conference in 1929 and was still known for his all-India nationalist stance in politics. "Frankly", he wrote to Malcolm Hailey, Governor of the Punjab, "I do not like the idea of Jinnah doing all the talking and of there being no one strong-minded enough to make a protest in case Jinnah starts upon expressing his views when those views are not acceptable to Indian Muslims. I want someone who would frankly say that it is not the Indian Muslim view..."<sup>41</sup> Shafaat Ahmad Khan, from the UP, was duly nominated as a member of the Muslim delegation for the purpose. The inclusion of Fazl-i-Husain's key men such as, Shafaat Ahmad Khan, in the delegation and the presence of some Muslim leaders accompanying Gandhi at the Second Round Table Conference in London as his advisors on the "communal issue", in fact, prompted Jinnah to comment in subsequent years that the attitude of "toadies and flunkeys on the one hand and traitors in the Congress camp on the other" forced him to withdraw from Indian politics and indeed settle down in London.<sup>42</sup> For the moment, however, Fazl-i-Husain had his way, and through his meticulous exchange

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39 Mohammad Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan* (Lahore, 1989), p.70.

40 Waheed Ahmad, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 189.

41 Quoted in Azim Husain, *Sir Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 251.

42 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), pp. 41-42.

of 'Notes' and 'Points' conveyed through correspondence<sup>43</sup> with the Muslim members of delegation, particularly Aga Khan, Shafaat Ahmad Khan, and Zafrullah Khan, managed to secure the 'Communal Award'. Azim Husain not only described it as "very much Fazl-i-Husain's creation" but also went on to claim that, "it put the Muslim mind at rest, and it also concluded the labour of Fazl-i-Husain for five years in the Government of India".<sup>44</sup>

While Azim Husain was right in claiming that the Communal Award was primarily an achievement of Fazl-i-Husain and his men in London, the fact remained that it was far from a satisfactory solution of the Muslim problem. Azim Husain himself admitted that the Muslim demand that residuary powers should be vested in the provinces was not conceded. The fact that it was to be exercised by the Governor-General in his discretion was matter of little comfort in the face of increasing demands for self-government at the centre. Azim Husain also acknowledged that the demand for 33 per cent quota in the cabinets, central and provincial, was not met. He was certainly not correct in suggesting that the "Muslims in the Punjab were given a statutory majority".<sup>45</sup> To be precise, the Muslims were assigned 86 out of 175 seats.<sup>46</sup>

The Muslim position in the Muslim-minority provinces did not improve at all. The Aga Khan and Shafaat Ahmad Khan tried their utmost to attract the attention of Fazl-i-Husain to the fate of helpless Muslims in the minority provinces, but to no avail. Fazl-i-Husain could only counter-charge and ridicule. "Experience is a great thing but it plays hell with illusions."<sup>47</sup>

Of course, Fazl-i-Husain's real concern was not the development of Muslim policy on an all-India basis but to strengthen the hold of the

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43 Besides scores of letters given in *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain* see, Waheed Ahmad, ed., *Diary and Notes of Mian Fazl-i-Husain* (Lahore, 1977), especially Part II, pp. 211-349.

44 Azim Husain, *Sir Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 265.

45 *Ibid.*

46 The Sikhs received 32 seats whereas they formed only 13.2 per cent of the population. The "Communal Award", cited in Edward Thompson and G.T. Garratt, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (Allahabad, 1962), p. 663.

47 Waheed Ahmad, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 307.

Unionists in his own province. This was evident in his untiring efforts to make the Communal Award pay its dividend in the Punjab. He used it to enter into a communal pact with the Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab, no matter how harmful the whole idea might have been to the concept of Muslim solidarity which was pursued by his Muslim Conference and promoted by his allies in the Muslim-minority provinces. "In fact I do not see how Punjab Muslims", he told Shafaat Ahmad Khan bluntly in his letter of 19 June 1933, "can be deprived of the chance of improving their position..."<sup>48</sup> However, if the Punjab's Hindus and Sikhs "persist in not playing the game", he exclaimed in the privacy of his diary, "Punjab Muslims should not insist, but let the Reforms be the establishment of autocracy and make sure that this happens all over India – long-live John Bull!"<sup>49</sup>

The irony was that Fazl-i-Husain had earned "a reputation as a strong advocate of Muslim interests" and thus was "widely known among Hindus and Sikhs as a communalist,"<sup>50</sup> but he lacked the vision and commitment to lead Muslim India towards a national goal. He was first, and last, a provincial leader. His "Punjab Formula", was, in fact, a plan to secure provincial interests of the Punjab in the new constitution and to leave the centre to the British. Things were made easier for Fazl-i-Husain by the reluctance of the princes of the princely states to join the new Indian centre, the all-India Federation. Fazl-i-Husain could establish provincial rule "unfettered by responsible central control".<sup>51</sup> However, as ill luck would have it, Fazl-i-Husain died on 9 July 1936, after a severe attack of bronchitis, long before his ambition of strong provincial rule could be realized.

While it is difficult to suggest what Fazl-i-Husain would have done "if he had lived to witness the operation of the provincial autonomy,"<sup>52</sup> his successor in the Unionist Party and the provincial government, Sikandar Hayat Khan had little to gain from provincial myopia of the early years. He

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48 *Ibid.*, p. 305.

49 Waheed Ahmad, *Diary and Notes of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 342.

50 David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London, 1988), pp. 111-12.

51 Page, *Prelude to Partition*, p. 229.

52 Waheed Ahmad, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, xxxix.

had to contend with new realities, particularly the ascendancy of the Congress after the 1937 elections. Its indifferent, indeed hostile treatment of the Muslims in the Hindu-majority provinces it won and ruled not only agitated the Muslims all over India but also, significantly, alarmed the Unionists. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a member of the Congress Parliamentary Board (created for the purpose of supervising the work of Congress members in various provincial legislatures of India), much to their chagrin, had launched an active campaign to promote and popularize the Congress in the Punjab (and other Muslim-majority provinces).<sup>53</sup> The Unionists were really under threat in their stronghold, for the first time. The result was that an apprehensive Sikandar Hayat Khan (along with the provincial leaders of other Muslim-majority provinces such as, Fazlul Haq and Saadullah Khan, Chief Ministers of Bengal and Assam, respectively) was left with no choice but to join the Muslim League at its historic Lucknow session in October 1937. The League was meant to fend against the Congress.

But then, this move also meant that Sikandar Hayat Khan had now to reconcile with the League's demand for Pakistan, made in 1940, demanding a separate homeland in Muslim-majority areas, including the Punjab. This was indeed a tough call, requiring strong and imaginative leadership to take charge of the new situation. But Sikandar Hayat Khan fell for the obvious. He chose "to sail in two boats. He often spoke in two voices, saying one thing on the League platform and another inside his own province."<sup>54</sup>

This proved to be a much more difficult exercise than Sikandar Hayat Khan might have originally imagined. Old Leaguers in the Punjab, especially Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Malik Barkat Ali monitored his activities and reported to Jinnah on a regular basis. In fact, they were convinced that he was out to ruin the League from within. In his letter of 10 November 1937, Iqbal thus wrote to Jinnah: "After having several talks with Sir Sikandar and his friends, I am now definitely of the opinion that Sir Sikandar wants nothing less than the complete control of the League and Provincial Parliamentary Board... I personally see no harm in giving him the majority he wants but he goes beyond the [Jinnah-Sikandar] Pact

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53 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 22.

54 M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah: As I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1966), p. 51.

when he wants a complete change in the office-holders of the League, especially the Secretary who has done so much for the League. He also wishes that the finances of the League should be controlled by his men. All this to my mind amounts to capturing of the League and then killing it..."<sup>55</sup> However, Jinnah, carefully working on his strategy of re-organizing the Muslims under the banner of the League, badly needed the support of the Punjab, "the cornerstone of Pakistan",<sup>56</sup> as he called it. He, therefore, recommended "patience". In a letter to Barkat Ali on 20 November 1937, he exhorted: "...I assure you that if you people have a little patience these small matters of detail will be adjusted fairly and justly and mainly in the interest of the cause for which we stand".<sup>57</sup>

The main source of anxiety among the old Leaguers in the Punjab, as Iqbal's letter of 10 November 1937 indicated, pertained to the so-called Jinnah-Sikandar Pact of 1937. Its terms and conditions were not quite known. While Jinnah chose to be discreet, and even did not press for its full and fair implementation, Sikandar Hayat Khan made the most of it in his own interest. However, Jinnah was constrained to come out openly with the details of the pact in the League Council meeting in Delhi on 22 February 1942. He explained that Sikandar Hayat Khan, along with his followers in the Punjab Assembly, had joined the League without any reservations. On his part, he had allowed the League to "continue their coalition which is now called the Unionist Party or to form any other coalition with any other party which from time to time they may decide upon". Outside the assembly, he insisted, the League was free to organize itself in any way it thought fit. There was nothing binding on it.<sup>58</sup>

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55 *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (Lahore, 1968), p. 29, also see *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/215.

56 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 494. Conversely, the British were convinced that: "If the Punjab fell to Jinnah...it would be hard to avoid Pakistan". Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. V (London, 1974), p. 187.

57 G. Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 167-68.

58 For details, see his letter to a leader of the League, dated 17 March. *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/785, pp. 95-96.

Jinnah reiterated his stand more forcefully in a public speech on 30 April 1944: "It was clearly laid down in the so-called Pact – if they insist on calling it a Pact – that it was open to the League Party to carry on the present coalition or enter into any other new coalition".<sup>59</sup> Not surprisingly, when Sikandar Hayat Khan's successor in the Unionist government, Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, under pressure from his non-Muslim coalition partners, tried to relegate the League to the status of a junior partner of the Unionist Party, Jinnah was furious. He denounced the pact saying: "How could there be a Pact between a leader and a follower?..."<sup>60</sup>

Jinnah had made this point abundantly clear to Sikandar Hayat Khan in the Defence Council episode of September 1941. Jinnah not only took the Viceroy to task for including the League premiers of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam in the council without his prior approval but also forced Sikandar Hayat Khan (and Fazlul Haq and Saadullah Khan) to resign. Sikandar Hayat Khan not only resigned his seat but also assured Jinnah that: "I am willing to abide by the orders of our President [of the Muslim League], whom I have acknowledged as my Quaid-i-Azam, and follow his instructions whatever he decides, right or wrong".<sup>61</sup> This assurance of 'loyalty' had incidentally come after Sikandar Hayat Khan's much publicized and oft-quoted defiant speech on the subject of Pakistan in the Punjab Legislative Assembly in March 1941: "We do not ask for freedom, that there may be Muslim Raj here and Hindu Raj elsewhere. If that is what Pakistan means I will have nothing to do with it...if you want real freedom for the Punjab, that is to say, a Punjab in which every community will have its due share in the economic and administrative fields as partners in a common concern, then Punjab will not be Pakistan, but just Punjab, land of the five rivers..."<sup>62</sup>

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59 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 45.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 46, Khizar Hayat Khan, in fact, addressed Jinnah as "Quaid-i-Azam." See, for instance, *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/334.

61 *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/353, p. 38.

62 See *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, 11 March 1941 (25 February to 11 March 1941)*, Vol. XVI. Official Report (Lahore, 1942), pp. 329-62. Cited in V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1954), App. I, esp. pp. 454-55.

The difficulty with Sikandar Hayat Khan was that not only he desperately wanted to secure his standing as a member of the Muslim League but also his position as the premier of the Unionist government in the Punjab, which included Muslims as well as non-Muslims – Hindus and the Sikhs. Chhotu Ram and others were not happy with Sikandar Hayat Khan's association with the League. Chhotu Ram in fact told Sikandar Hayat Khan point blank that the League's demand of Pakistan was not acceptable to them. They will have to re-evaluate their alliance with the Unionists if he remained associated with it. In the Punjab, he claimed, out of 29 districts, as many as 13 districts had Hindu or Sikh majority. The Hindus will not hesitate to make a similar claim on the Punjab. During a meeting of Hindu leaders of the Punjab convened in Lahore on 3 November 1942, Chhotu Ram went even further, and in an emotion-charged speech declared: "In the matter of loyalty to Hinduism, I yield to none. If anyone were to devour the Hindus, I would not allow him to devour so before I am devoured first".<sup>63</sup> Such challenges and threats from colleagues in the Unionist government left Sikandar Hayat Khan in a very difficult situation. He could neither serve the cause of the League with enthusiasm nor could he bear the break up of that mighty coalition which had ruled the Punjab since the early 1920s.

However, Sikandar Hayat Khan had moved away, steadily but surely, from the kind of provincial strategy pursued by Fazl-i-Husain in 1936. "I have asked Ahmad Yar [Daultana, then General Secretary of the Punjab Unionist Party] to convey to Jinnah... to strongly press on him the advisability of keeping his fingers out of the Punjab pie. If he meddles he would only be encouraging fissiparous tendencies already painfully discernable in a section of Punjab Muslims, and might burn his fingers; and in any case we cannot possibly allow 'provincial autonomy' to be tampered with in any sphere and by anybody be he a nominee of the powers who have given us this autonomy or a President of the Muslim League or any other association or body".<sup>64</sup> In 1942, when he died, Sikandar Hayat Khan was not only a member of the Muslim League Working Committee but also a self-proclaimed follower of the 'Quaid-i-Azam'. In his own words, uttered publicly a few weeks before his death, he proclaimed: "People exaggerate petty differences. Although at times I

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63 Gopal, *Sir Chhotu Ram*, p. 123.

64 Waheed Ahmad, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, p. 528.

may differ from the [sic] Quaid-i-Azam on an issue, yet I shall never fail to carry out his orders".<sup>65</sup> This was by no means a small measure of change in the attitude and status of provincial leadership of the Punjab.

However, this change did not clearly reflect in the conduct of Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana. But then, Khizar Hayat Khan was not an undisputed leader of the Punjab Unionists like Sikandar Hayat Khan before him or indeed Fazl-i-Husain. Several scions of the Muslim landlords who occupied the highest echelons of the Unionist Party were potential contenders for power against Khizar Hayat Khan. Among them were the Hayats of Wah, Noons of Sargodha, and Daultanas of Multan district. The most prominent among them were Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, the eldest son of Sikandar Hayat Khan, and Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana, son of Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana, referred to earlier. Khizar Hayat Khan was thus more of a recalcitrant follower of Jinnah and the League. In May 1944, he was expelled from the League, and was publicly denounced as 'traitor'. To add to his woes, his Unionist government had become quite unpopular "because of overzealous army recruitment and the rationing and requisitioning of grain" during the war years.<sup>66</sup> Within a short span of time, the League was able to wipe out the Unionist ministry through the 1945-46 elections, followed by a well-organized 'civil disobedience movement' which was launched in January 1947. The Unionists' defeat paved the way for the complete ascendancy of the League in the province of Punjab.

The fate of the provincial leaders in other Muslim-majority provinces turned out to be no different. Though political leaders in Bengal, Sind, North-West Frontier Province, and Baluchistan (now Balochistan) were equally determined in the end to maintain their provincial strongholds, they also had to give way to national leadership and national legitimacy. The provincial leaders, as already discussed, had drawn their strength from the British system of government devolving powers to the provinces, starting with the 1919 Act through the 1935 Act. After the Second World War, the British Government was forced to enter into critical negotiations

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65 Ikram Ali Malik, ed., *A Book of Readings on the History of the Punjab, 1799-1947* (Lahore, 1970), p. 495.

66 Ian Talbot, "Jinnah: Role Model for Future Generations of Pakistanis", *South Asian History Academic Paper 1*, University of Leicester, 2001, p. 5.

with the Muslim League and the Congress, the two all-India organizations, over the issue of the centre, and indeed the transfer of power, pushing the provincial governments and their leaders into the background. In fact, the more the chances of the British being replaced by the Congress and the League leadership brightened up the more the provincial leaders came to be deprived of their power and authority.

In the end, the provincial leaders could not play major roles in their own provincial spheres, let alone in all-India matters. For instance, decisions for the division of the Punjab and Bengal (and referendums in the North-West Frontier Province and Sylhet) were made by the British authorities in consultation with the leaders of the League and the Congress, not the provincial leaders. Indeed, "the inept, short-sighted and above all the faction-ridden and divided Muslim politicians of the Punjab and Bengal lost the chance of keeping their domains undivided."<sup>67</sup> In fact, the provincial leaderships themselves contributed to the whittling down of their own authority by aligning themselves with the League and the Congress in the first place, and by seeking their support against each other and against the British Government. The provincial leaders also dragged these central organizations, more often than not, into their internal petty disputes in the provinces. Leaders in Bengal and Sind, in particular, helped the League to expand its power base in the provinces at the expense of their own leadership.<sup>68</sup> This is not to deny that many provincial leaders in the Muslim-majority provinces became genuinely convinced of the need to establish Pakistan for the good of all the Muslims. They did not hesitate to sacrifice willingly their provincial interests at the altar of grand national goal. But the fact remained that the provincial leaders could not hold for long under the changed circumstances, and were forced to yield to the central, nationalist leadership no matter how happily or hesitatingly. Their end was indeed never in doubt in the post-World War phase. Only the timing and manner of their exit remained to be seen.

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67 Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 263.

68 See, for instance, Leonard Gordon, *Bengal* (New York, 1974), pp. 190-92; and *Shamsul Hasan Collection*, Vol.IV. Also see Ispahani's letters to Jinnah. *Ibid.*, Vol.III, Bengal, F/33.

## Ulama

In general, the ulama were the product of Muslim traditional system which was replaced by the British. They were the custodians of traditional learning and values among the Muslims. The new socio-political order which curtailed that status and authority made them resentful of the British. The substitution of English for Persian as the official language in matters of government and professions and the introduction of Western education made it all the more difficult for them to adapt or reconcile with the new order. To complicate the matters further, they represented the resentment of the Muslim masses, thus earning the wrath of the British. "It would, I believe", asserted Alfred Lyall in 1884, "be much nearer the truth to say the inconsiderate and uneducated mass of them are against us".<sup>69</sup>

The major bulk of the ulama remained anti-British throughout the British rule. This was in fact an essential part of their ethos and training at the Dar-al-Ulum of Deoband, an Islamic seminary founded in 1867.<sup>70</sup> Relentless opposition to the British rule, however, eventually, pushed a majority of the ulama towards the Congress camp. Alliance with the Congress prompted them to develop all sorts of arguments to foster the concept of 'Indian nation', in partnership with other religio-political communities, particularly the Hindus. This also explained their rejection of the demand for a separate state of Pakistan. Some, of course, broke company, and joined the movement for Pakistan and worked for it wholeheartedly, as we shall see towards the end of this discussion.

The ulama entered politics formally in 1888, when Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (a close associate of Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi and a prominent leader of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband), along with Maulana Mahmudul Hasan and about one hundred ulama from all over India issued a *fatwa* (religious edict) that, in worldly matters, particularly political, associating with the Hindus was permissible, provided it did not violate any basic tenet of Islam. This view was based on the premise that India had become *Dar al-Harb* (Abode of War) after its occupation by the British, and that any effort made by any quarter to rid India of British rule

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69 Alfred Lyal, *Asiatic Studies: Religious and Social* (London, 1884), p. 246.

70 For a detailed discussion of the founding principles of Dar al-Ulum, see Zia-al-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay, 1963), pp. 25-26.

was welcome and desirable.<sup>71</sup> The attitude towards the British indeed proved to be the main source of tension and conflict between the traditionalist Dar al-Ulum Deoband and the modern Aligarh College (and University), founded by Syed Ahmad Khan. While Deoband declared an ideological war against the British, the Aligarh opted for close cooperation with the British to secure and promote Muslim interests in the evolving political system. It was not surprising, therefore, that when the Congress was founded in 1885 and began to determine and direct politics, Syed Ahmad Khan opposed it strongly, but the Deoband ulama did not voice any concern. In 1905, when Maulana Mahmudul Hasan took over the leadership of the Deoband, the institution became more radical, and even encouraged Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi to launch a revolutionary movement during the First World War to liberate India from its British rule. The attempt was aborted of course.<sup>72</sup> Maulana Mahmudul Hasan and other leaders of the movement were interned before they could proceed any further with their plans.

The ulama of Deoband, however, got their opportunity to participate in the political life and processes of India principally through the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, a political party established on 22 November, 1919,<sup>73</sup> under the guidance of its two most authoritative leaders, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani. Maulana Madani was President of the Jamiat for a number of years, including the crucial years of 1940, 1942 and 1945. Maulana Azad was a founder member of the Jamiat, its active leader during the Khilafat campaign, and was president of the Jamiat twice in 1921 and 1931 on the eve of the two non-cooperation movements launched by the Congress. He formally joined the Congress in the late 1930s, was elected a member of the Congress Working Committee in 1937, and remained its president from 1940 to 1946. Since Maulana Azad's views on politics came to represent the dominant views of the ulama of Deoband and the Jamiat, close attention needs to be paid to his political role and career for our purpose here. His

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71 Hussain Ahmad Madani, *Naqsh-i-Hayat*, Vol. II (Deoband, 1954), p. 71; and Muhammad Miyan, *Ulama-i-Haq aur unke Mujahidana karnamy*, Vol. I (Delhi, n.d., 1946?), pp. 191-92.

72 For an analysis of this attempt, see Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, pp. 245-56, 310-18.

73 Muhammad Miyan, *Jamiat-ul-Ulama Kiya Hay?*, Vol. II (Delhi, 1946), pp. 16-44.

account would be supplemented with a brief discussion of Maulana Madani's views before summing up in general the role of ulama in Indian Muslim politics at that point in time.<sup>74</sup>

A product of "the traditional system of education" in India,<sup>75</sup> Maulana Azad rose to prominence at the young age of twenty-four as the editor of his weekly, *Al-Hilal*, founded on 1 June 1912. *Al-Hilal* focused on religious and political issues and promoted alliance with the Hindus and other non-Muslims in the cause of Indian freedom. "The tenets of Islam", Maulana Azad observed, "under no circumstances, make it permissible for Muslims to enjoy life at the expense of liberty. A true Muslim has either to immolate himself or retain his liberty; no other course is open for him under his religion. Today, the Muslims have come to a firm decision that in freeing their country from its slavery they will take their fullest share along with Hindu, Sikh, Parsi and Christian brethren".<sup>76</sup> *Al-Hilal* was so well received that within a period of six months, its circulation was 11,000 – a substantial figure considering the fact that it was an Urdu weekly, published from Bengali-speaking Calcutta, and that the bulk of its readers were Muslims.

During the First World War, *Al-Hilal* achieved a circulation of 25,000 and was read all over India. However, the government moved to check its publication on the charge of spreading "pro-Germanism in Calcutta",<sup>77</sup> a damning charge during the war years. Maulana Azad himself was prohibited from entering into the provinces of Punjab, United Provinces, and Madras (now Chennai). Finally, he was forced out of Bengal on 7 April 1915. He was taken to Ranchi, where the government of India interned him till early 1920. During this internment period, Maulana Azad wrote

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74 The ulama from Deoband, and particularly those associated with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, were the most active group in Indian politics, and hence the present emphasis on their role in Indian Muslim politics. Ulama from other seminaries like Firangi Mahal and Nadvat al-Ulama of Lucknow were active in the Khilafat movement, but subsequently chose to withdraw from active politics. In the 1940s, however, a section of these ulama were active again and went on to support Jinnah and the demand for Pakistan.

75 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 6.

76 Mahadeo Desai, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* (Agra, 1946), pp. 54-55. The book is essentially a biographical memoir dictated by the Maulana himself.

77 *Ibid.*, pp. 35-38.

*Tadhkira*, a volume of personal memoirs, and two of the three parts of his monumental commentary on the Holy Quran, *Tarjuman-ul-Quran*. He finally completed it in 1930. As he himself highlighted this monumental effort: "I devoted about 23 years of my life in studying the Qur'an. I have deliberated on every chapter, every verse, every phrase and every word. I can claim to have studied the larger part of all the commentaries."<sup>78</sup> There was no denying that, "This work alone made Abul Kalam's name and fame spread over the entire Islamic world. This work alone was quite enough to make him immortal."<sup>79</sup> But his over-all religious views, particularly the kind of 'universalist' ideas he propounded to promote his political association with the Congress, were to put Maulana Azad's standing with the Indian Muslims to severe test and trial.

Maulana Azad observed that "the roots – rather the root –" of all religions is one. No matter what the country and age, he maintained, "all the prophets sent by God taught the same universal truth for the welfare of mankind, viz., faith and good works, i.e., worship of one God and right conduct".<sup>80</sup> People, however, he lamented,

...forgot this teaching and cut up religion into numerous bits and made several religions out of it, and each group cut itself adrift from another. Diversity instead of unity, separation instead of union became their battlecry. But in the end every one has to return to Him. There everything will be shown up and every group will see where its forgetfulness of the right thing had led to.<sup>81</sup>

These views did not find much favour with the Indian Muslims, his main constituency, who saw in them a challenge to their traditional beliefs. They could not reconcile with the idea that all the religions of the world were different from one another only in form and not in principle. They also failed to appreciate that the outward practice of a religious community was not important, for all the religions of the world had one and the same "root". Indeed, in the final analysis, one religion was not different from

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78 Cited in Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu Muslim Encounter* (Albany, 1986), p. 233.

79 A.B. Rajput, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* (Lahore, 1946).

80 Desai, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 69.

81 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

another, only the followers were different.<sup>82</sup> This proved to be all the more an anathema to the Muslims because he, a leader of the Congress (its President in the early 1940s), wanted the Muslims to unite with their non-Muslim compatriots, particularly the Hindus, under all circumstances. He was keen to apply the logic of his religious views to the benefit of his political associates. He supported the much maligned Nehru Report in 1928, claiming that the “safeguards” promised to the Muslim minority were enough to warrant their unreserved support to the Congress.<sup>83</sup> Again, when the Muslims were one in condemning Congress excesses during its 1937-39 rule in the provinces, he insisted: “Every incident which involved communal issue came up before me. From personal knowledge and with a full sense of responsibility, I can therefore say that the charges leveled by Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League with regard to injustice to Muslims and other minorities were absolutely false”.<sup>84</sup>

Maulana Azad had little regard for the consensus of the community. He did not believe in *ijma*, for he claimed, it “does not always mean the majority”.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, he suggested to the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind that a distinguished Muslim individual should be appointed *Imam* (leader, guide) to conduct the affairs of the Muslims.<sup>86</sup> In fact, he “saw himself as the Imam.”<sup>87</sup> Though he could not succeed in securing this exalted title despite several attempts, he did manage to convince the Jamiat that Muslim political interests would be better served by supporting the Congress. He assured them that the Muslims in an independent India

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82 Mushirul Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947* (Meerut, 1970), pp. 73-76. Also see for a more detailed and critical evaluation of Azad’s religious views, Choudhary Habib Ahmad, *Tehrik-e-Pakistan aur Nationalist Ulama* (Lahore, 1966), pp. 232-37.

83 See Maulana Azad’s presidential address to the Karachi session of the Jamiat, 31 March-1 April 1931, in *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind*, Vol. II, ed., Perveen Rozina (Islamabad, 1981), p. 605.

84 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 22.

85 Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India*, p. 94.

86 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *Tehrik Nazm-e-Jamaat* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 21-22. Also see Ghulam Rasul Mehr, ed., *Naqsh-e-Azad* (Lahore, 1959), pp. 343-45; Rozina, *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind*, Vol. II, pp. 701-72. The text of proposed duties and obligations assigned by the Jamiat to the *Imam* makes an interesting reading. *Ibid.*, Appendix B, pp. 467-79.

87 Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives*, p. 226.

would constitute an internally autonomous community, and that he would get the Congress to concede the transfer of administration of the Muslim personal law to the ulama.<sup>88</sup> The Muslims, he suggested, should demand only such safeguards as they may require for the protection of their personal law and religion. He saw no differences or distinction between Hindu and Muslim people in other aspects of life, especially political. He exhorted the Indian Muslims: "The ancestors of most of us were common, and I for one, do not accept the theory of a superior or inferior race or of different races. Mankind is one race, and we have to live in harmony with one another. Providence brought us together over a thousand years. We have fought, but so do blood brothers fight".<sup>89</sup>

Maulana Azad, therefore, could not agree to the aspirations of the Indian Muslims for a separate homeland. First, he refused to accept the very idea that the Muslims were a distressed minority in India. They were, no doubt, less in numbers but had, he argued, the capacity to protect and promote their particular interests in spite of these numbers.<sup>90</sup> They could deal with "the much larger group that surrounds it..."<sup>91</sup> Secondly, he believed that the communal problem will disappear with the dawn of freedom. "I am one of those", he emphasized, "who consider the present chapter of communal bitterness and differences as a transient phase in Indian life. I firmly hold that they will disappear when India assumes the responsibility of her own destiny."<sup>92</sup> And finally, he suggested that the solution of the constitutional problem in his so-called "formula" was far more practical than the "Pakistan scheme" offered by Jinnah and the Muslim League. In his own words:

The formula which I have succeeded in making the Congress accept secures whatever merit the Pakistan scheme contains while all its defects and drawbacks are avoided. The basis of Pakistan is the fear of interference by the Centre in Muslim majority areas as Hindus will be in

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88 Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom and True Muslims: The Political Thought of Some Muslim Scholars in India, 1912-1947* (Lund, 1971), p. 32; and Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, pp. 328-29.

89 Desai, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 123.

90 *Ibid.*, p. 115.

91 B.R. Nanda, *Road to Pakistan: The Life and Times of Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Delhi, 2010), p. 115.

92 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 145.

a majority in the Centre. The Congress meets this fear by granting full autonomy to the provincial units and vesting all residuary powers in the provinces. It has also provided for two lists of Central subjects. One compulsory and one optional, so that if any provincial unit so wants, it can administer all subjects itself except a minimum delegated to the Centre. The Congress scheme therefore ensures that Muslim majority provinces are internally free to develop as they will, but can at the same time influence the Centre on all issues which affect India as a whole.<sup>93</sup>

This flimsy and unsubstantiated claim was interpreted by the Muslims in general and Jinnah in particular as “the height of defeatist mentality” – to be thrown at “the mercy and goodwill of others”.<sup>94</sup> Maulana Azad himself was not very sure of his formulation either. In fact, he went on to concede that, “if a more practical proposal is made, there can be no objection to it”.<sup>95</sup> In the end, hard pressed to put an alternative to Pakistan demand, he had no more to offer to the Muslims than mere good luck! He advised them to shun “fears and doubts” and face the future with “courage and confidence in ourselves...”<sup>96</sup>

Maulana Azad was preoccupied with the presence of the British, and had little time and consideration for the future of India minus the British: “This third power is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing, and if we follow this path of fear, we must need look forward for its continuance”.<sup>97</sup> He could not visualize the Muslim predicament in an independent India, once the British were gone, and the Muslims had to deal with the Hindus in a Hindu-dominated political system. Or, may be he could, but was too afraid to acknowledge or deal with it? For a starter, he could have lost the status and stature due to the Congress. He had made it to the top, after all. Whatever the case may be, not only did his association with the Congress (especially during 1937-39 years) destroy all prospects of his leadership of the Muslim masses but also made his position suspect in the eyes of the Muslim League leaders. In July 1940, for instance, when, as Congress President, he sent a telegram to Jinnah to discuss his “two-nation scheme” with him, an outraged Jinnah retorted:

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93 *Ibid.*, p. 146.

94 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 33.

95 Desai, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 117.

96 *Ibid.*, pp. 115-16.

97 *Ibid.*, pp. 116.

“Can't you realize you are made a Muslim 'show-boy' Congress President to give it colour that it is national and deceive foreign countries. You represent neither Muslims nor Hindus. The Congress is a Hindu body. If you have self-respect resign at once”.<sup>98</sup>

There is no denying that, for long, the Congress was completely subordinated to the will of one man, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who was openly and “constantly talking about establishment of ‘*Ram-rajya*’ in India”.<sup>99</sup> In fact, a contemporary writer, based on this evidence, tried to absolve Maulana Azad from the acts of omission and commission of the Congress by arguing that it was “bound to follow the commands of the ‘permanent super-President’ Gandhi who, though not even a [fee paying] four-anna [coin of low denomination] member of the party, was the most powerful guiding force behind the Congress machinery”.<sup>100</sup> Maulana Azad could not afford to challenge Gandhi’s “commands” and policies, knowing fully well the fate of dissenters such as, G.K. Nariman from Bombay and C.R. Das and Subhas Chandra Bose from Bengal, to name a few,<sup>101</sup> who were punished for their indiscretion. Maulana Azad had a much weaker and fragile political base, a Muslim head of a Hindu-majority political party.

The Cripps Mission of 1942 revealed Maulana Azad’s true standing in the Congress. Not only the Congress Working Committee resolution passed in July 1942, popularly known as the ‘open rebellion resolution’, was emphatic in asserting “the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi” but, when Maulana Azad tried to explain that this resolution was not meant to be an ultimatum to the British Government, Gandhi was furious. “There is no question of ‘one more chance’. After all, this is open rebellion”.<sup>102</sup> In 1943, when Maulana Azad suggested that the Congress “should tone down a little towards” the government “to help it resolve the communal problem”, Jawaharlal Nehru was aghast: “This took my breath away.”<sup>103</sup> In early 1945, when the Maulana opined that Gandhi had “erred in sponsoring the

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98 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence* (Karachi, 1977), p. 33.

99 S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their Role in India's Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), p. 169.

100 Rajput, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 152.

101 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, pp. 15-16.

102 Rajput, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, p. 178.

103 Cited in Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny* (Karachi, 1996), p. 333.

'Quit India' resolution" of 1942, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was indignant and insisted "that 'steps taken by Bapu [Gandhi] had been correct and inevitable.'"<sup>104</sup> In 1946, Maulana Azad was rebuffed again. Though he insisted that the interpretation given by the Cabinet Mission to 16 May proposals was correct,<sup>105</sup> the Congress claimed that it was "free to change or modify the Cabinet Mission Plan as it thought best". Indeed, Nehru, with the blessings of Gandhi, went on to declare in a press conference on 10 July 1946 that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise".<sup>106</sup> In July 1946, Maulana Azad was relieved of the presidency. As Gandhi confided and signalled to Nehru: "I do not understand him nor does he understand me. We are drifting apart on the Hindu-Muslim question as well as other questions... We have to face facts. Therefore I suggest [sic] that the Maulana should relinquish Presidentship..."<sup>107</sup> Nehru himself, of course, took over as the next President of the Congress.

Maulana Azad may have thought of Muslim welfare by asking the Indian Muslims to merge their separate political identity with the Hindus. He may have reckoned that "the community would prosper by losing itself. If it did not make conscious efforts to preserve itself, it would invite no hostility and no attack. It had only to let the majority forget that it existed to ensure a continued and unchallenged existence for itself".<sup>108</sup> The Muslims, however, were not convinced. They were really upset with him. They saw his association with the Hindus in general and the Congress in particular as an act of "betrayal of the Muslim cause". In a lengthy newspaper article, one writer, for instance, charged:

He wants us to join the Congress and believe that Congress will safeguard the Muslim interests. We trust him for that, but he will have to concede that Congress is out and out a Hindu body pledged to *Purna Swaraj* and *Akhand Hindustan*. It is a pity that the Maulana Saheb, himself being such a big scholar of Urdu literature, could not find one single word to replace the title of "*Rashtrapati*", which is so endeared to him. '*Rashtrapati*', '*Purna Swaraj*', '*Bande Mataram*', and '*Akhand*

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104 *Ibid.*, p. 341.

105 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 155.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

107 Cited in Stanley Wolpert, *Gandhi's Passion* (New York, 2002), p. 203.

108 Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, p. 308.

*Hindustan*' are terms which were chosen by the 'National Congress'. Is there anything national about them? I see everything Hindu about them. Ask the Congress to change one single term, '*Purna Swaraj*' into '*Hukoomat-i-Ilahiah*' and see how many Hindus support it! This shows that the Maulana Saheb wishes us to embrace a diehard Hindu under the unoffending name of Congressman. We are prepared even to do this, but what are we to do when even in the ordinary routine of life we are hated, betrayed and wronged in every possible manner by the Hindus?... We can make a sacrifice in one thing, two things, three things. But here we have no limit to sacrifices. The Hindus can never be satisfied unless and until we forsake our True Dear Lord, our Beloved Prophet and our Cherished Quran. And this shall never be. If the Maulana Saheb finds comfort in Hindu arms, let him. Islam is not a religion of custodians. We can sacrifice, and very easily too, Maulana Saheb and their type. We can ignore the difference in the political views of the Maulana, but we cannot forgive betrayal of the Muslim cause.<sup>109</sup>

Maulana Azad sealed his fate with the Muslims through his espousal of 'one nation' in India. In the process, he also caused a severe setback to the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind whose most prominent leader, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, promoted precisely the same ideas. Maulana Madani followed Maulana Azad in stating formally that the Hindus and Muslims were members of one Indian nation. He published a treatise entitled, '*Muttahida Qaumiat aur Islam*' (United Nation and Islam), highlighting the idea of 'composite' Indian nationalism. He referred to the Charter of Medina between the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) and the inhabitants of Medina, Muslims and Jews, concluded in 622, and argued that it was tantamount to a charter of singular community (*umma wahida*). He insisted that the charter was a valid precedent for other situations and in other lands too, and was especially relevant to the present case of India.<sup>110</sup> He claimed that the Muslims belonged to '*Hindustani*' nation, regardless of their religious and cultural differences with other communities of India.<sup>111</sup> Eventually, he even went further, and

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109 Quoted in Rajput, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, pp. 201-3.

110 *Muttahida Qaumiat aur Islam* (Delhi, n.d.). The relevant passage is discussed in Habib Ahmad, *Tehrik-e-Pakistan*, pp. 274-344. Also see, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), esp., pp. 189-93.

111 See Maulana Madani's Presidential address at Jaunpur session of the Jamiat held on 7-9 June 1940 and at the Suharanpur session of the Jamiat on 4-6 May 1945. Parveen Rozina, ed. *Jamiat-ul-ulama-i-Hind: Dastawezat Markazi*

declared that, in present times, nations are products of “territory and not race or religion”.<sup>112</sup> Allama Iqbal, of course, challenged him on that point and stressed that Muslims, as a nation, could not be anything other than what they were as *millat*. In fact, he advised the Maulana to seek “evidence from the Quran” as to the true meaning of the terms, *qaum* and *millat*.<sup>113</sup>

Ulama such as, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani, both luminaries of Deoband,<sup>114</sup> too, were critical of Maulana Madani’s position. For instance, taking the case of Charter of Medina, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani pointed out that the Maulana did not tell us about a stipulation in the charter to the effect that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWW) himself was to be final arbiter between the Muslims and Jews in case of any dispute or disagreement between the two communities. Could the Jamiat, he asked, guarantee such a position to the Muslims in India?<sup>115</sup> Thus, the Maulana could not make a sound case for composite nationalism. Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani was even more critical of the idea. He charged that a “nation” in which non-Muslims would constitute the majority would “signify the destruction of Islam, its laws, and its rituals, and it is therefore forbidden from the view point of the *sharia*”.<sup>116</sup>

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*Ijlasha-i-Aam, 1919-1945*, Vol. II (Islamabad, 1981), pp. 693, 790-1. (Italics added).

112 *Muktubat-e-Sheikh-ul-Islam* (Deoband, 1956), letter No.42. Also see, Azad’s presidential address at Jaunpur session of the Jamiat held on 7-9 June 1940. Rozina, *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind*, Vol. II. p. 639; and Maulana’s presidential address at Suharanpur session of the Jamiat held on 4-6 May 1945. *Ibid.*, p. 803.

113 Latif Ahmad Sherwani, ed., *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1977), pp. 257-59.

114 Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani was a strong votary of Muslim separatism and had always preferred Muslim League over the Congress even in the days when he was formally associated with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind.

115 Muhammad Anwar al-Hasan Sherkoti, comp., *Khutbat-i-Usmeni* (Lahore, 1972), p. 75. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani indeed insisted that the very idea of single community or ‘composite’ nationalism was against *sharia*. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

116 Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton, 2002), p 43.

Finally, the past history of the Jamiat did not lend much support to Maulana Madani's stand now. The Jamiat had not opposed the Muslim League and its point of view till as late as 1937. Indeed, it had given its full support to Jinnah on his amendments to the Nehru Report and had even claimed that "Jinnah's only crime was that he is a Muslim and that he tried to represent the Muslim case" to the Hindus. A few months later, the Jamiat supported Jinnah's "Fourteen Points", and went so far as to suggest that "Indian politics would undergo 'a great revolution' should the Indians accept Jinnah's leadership and carry out his programme". In the 1937 elections, the Jamiat not only issued "a *fatwa* in favour of the League; its leaders also barnstormed the countryside in support of League candidates".<sup>117</sup>

Indeed, one writer claimed that the Jamiat moved along a course parallel, if not just about the same, to that of the nationalist Muslim political leadership all these years. The only difference was that the Jamiat was more concerned about "safeguards against interference with the *sharia* and a guarantee for its propagation and implementation..."<sup>118</sup> than political rights and demands. It is difficult to understand, however, how did the Jamiat expect "to realize their religious ideas in an independent secular India". How could the Muslims be expected to live "a dual life", one part of it to be controlled by *sharia*, and the other part governed by a secular state which was certainly not to be run on the basis of *sharia*?<sup>119</sup> There was, of course, no guarantee to the effect that the *sharia* would operate in an independent India. All that Maulana Azad could secure, in the end, was a letter from Nehru saying that the Congress was not particularly opposed to the idea as far as the Muslims were concerned. When Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, the Jamiat representative in the Central Legislative Assembly, eventually took up the matter in the assembly, it got only five votes, and the bill was roundly rejected. This was the last time that the matter was raised in the assembly.<sup>120</sup>

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117 This aspect of the Jamiat-League-Jinnah relationship has been systematically argued in Mujahid's *Studies in Interpretation*, App. I, esp., pp. 430-32.

118 Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, p. 35.

119 Haq, *Muslim Politics in India*, p. 155.

120 Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, pp. 329-30.

The difficulty with the Jamiat was that its leaders could not fully comprehend the freedom struggle in India, and particularly the Muslim aspirations to be free both from the British yoke and imminent Hindu rule. They could not understand 'nation' and 'nationalism' as a political phenomenon either. They remained preoccupied with the British presence in India, and concentrated their efforts on opposing the British no matter how. They did not realize that the departure of the British, especially after the Second World War, was "imminent", and that "the basic obstacle in the way of Islam's resurgence",<sup>121</sup> as they saw it, would soon be out, leaving the Muslims at the mercy of the Hindu majority community. Thus, they committed themselves to the so-called composite nationalism without really understanding the implications of such a concept for the Muslims in the long run in post-independence India.<sup>122</sup> Maulana Madani, for instance, recognized that the new order would not be based upon "an Islamic measure or standard (*Islami m'yar*)", except that, perhaps, he hoped, education of the Muslims could be according to Islamic standard.<sup>123</sup> But that was not to be much consolation to the Muslims as a political community in the event of their loss of freedom. However, that stance was understandable at one level. The Jamiat considered "Muslims' religious freedom to keep their own distinctive culture to be more important than Muslims' political freedom".<sup>124</sup> That proved to be their major failing as a political party which made them lose ground to the Muslim League in the end.

But, of course, there were several prominent ulama who understood and valued political freedom and indeed struggled for it. They supported the League in its efforts to secure Muslim rights and interests in a separate homeland. They parted ways with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind. Prominent among these ulama were stalwarts such as, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani, and Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi. Maulana Shafi indeed issued an

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121 Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (Karachi, 1977), p. 336.

122 Haq, *Muslim Politics in India*, p. 116.

123 Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, p. 38. Also see, *Maktubat-e-Sheikhul Islam*, Vol. II, pp. 116-17.

124 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 244. Also see, Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 399, fn., for a more detailed comment.

exhaustive *fatwa* in favour of Pakistan. In 1945, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and his associates organized a separate political platform under the auspices of Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam. They campaigned for the League and the Pakistan demand in the 1945-46 elections and in the subsequent two referendums in the North-West Frontier Province and Sylhet. In fact, they made an immense contribution to the victory of the League and the ultimate achievement of Pakistan in 1947. Maulana Madani and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind went on to oppose Pakistan all the way. They refused to accept the 'two-nation' theory and the overwhelming support of it by the Muslim masses. They failed to mend matters.

To conclude, then. The traditional Muslim political leadership, as a whole, failed to offer much to the Indian Muslims in their hour of distress, as the Hindu majority community, led by the Congress in particular, advanced towards self-government and freedom in the late 1930s. The traditional leaders could not go beyond their own narrow sectional interests. The social elites failed to see that the British, even if they were willing to oblige, could not always protect Muslim interests for them. The British reciprocated their "overtures" only to the extent that suited their own "purposes and interests" in India. Their "protection and patronage" could not go beyond that point.<sup>125</sup> Besides, the British were not going to stay in India for ever. The provincial leaders were always concerned with their precious provincial rule, indifferent to the larger all-India Muslim demands and interests. They failed to recognize that the British departure was only a matter of time, especially after the Second World War, and that provincial autonomy, no matter how strong, would not be able to safeguard their rule when the centre, inevitably, will be dominated by the Hindus. Even Sikandar Hayat Khan, a pragmatic politician, could not realize the inherent limitations of provincial autonomy scheme. The ulama, associated with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, of course, remained pre-occupied with the present and could not foresee what freedom would mean to the Muslims in independent India, as a political community, let alone suggest any positive and practicable way out for them. It was precisely this lack of understanding of the Muslim predicament, and thus their failure, that pushed the traditional political leaders out of the main stage by the end of 1930s and brought Jinnah, the *Quaid-i-Azam*, to the

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125 Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*, p. 124.

fore of Muslim politics as the charismatic leader of Muslim India. The mantle of leadership passed on to the modernizing nationalist leaders. It was their call now to seek and secure a viable solution of the distressful situation confronting the Muslims of British India, which they successfully did, in the creation of Pakistan.

## Chapter 6

### The Lahore Resolution and its Implications

A feeling of “despondency and helplessness” prevailed among the Indian Muslims in the late 1930s.<sup>1</sup> The Congress rule of provinces in 1937-39 showed to them that “the Musalmans cannot expect any justice or fairplay at their hands”.<sup>2</sup> The British parliamentary system of government in India, operating on the ‘majority’ principle, further convinced them that they, a ‘minority’, and a permanent one,<sup>3</sup> could never wield power under the given circumstances.<sup>4</sup> The outbreak of the war, and the possible end of the British rule in India after the Second World War, added to “the vacuum of authority and very ambiguous expectations.”<sup>5</sup> The ‘traditional’ Muslim political leadership, preoccupied with the preservation and promotion of their own narrow sectional interests could not take a glimpse of what freedom would mean to the Muslims, as a political community, in Hindu-dominated India, let alone suggest any way out of their difficulties.<sup>6</sup> The Muslims, in short, were in a distressful situation.

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- 1 Syed Shamsul Hassan, *Plain Mr. Jinnah* (Karachi, 1976), p. 54. Almost all contemporary Muslim writers vouch for the desperate situation confronting the Muslims then.
  - 2 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmd, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 29.
  - 3 Religious census in 1931 showed 67 million Muslims against 177.7 million Hindus in British India. Situation in princely states was even more daunting. There were only 10.7 million Muslims against 61.5 million Hindus. See Edward Thompson and G.T. Garratt, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (Allahabad, 1962), App. E., p. 663.
  - 4 “A national government responsible to the elected members of the legislature at the centre,” Jinnah asserted, “could only be formed at the dictate of the permanent Hindu majority, and Muslims and other small minorities would entirely be at the mercy of Hindu raj.” Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I. p. 227.
  - 5 Wayne Wilcox, “Wellsprings of Pakistan”, in *Pakistan: The Long View*, eds. Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti and Howard Wriggins (Durham, 1977), p. 34.
  - 6 On their role in Muslim politics at this juncture see, in particular, Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981), pp. 25-29, 400; Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India* (Lahore, 1967), p. 223; Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York, 1984), pp. 141-42; S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1970), p. 226;

Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah responded to the situation, and offered the Muslims on 22 March 1940 a 'formula' that was to secure them power, security, and freedom in a separate state, comprising Muslim-majority areas of India. A vast majority of the Muslims were readily moved. The idea of a separate state showed to them the only way in which freedom will have any meaning or purpose. It soon became the symbol of their nationalism and their ultimate goal.

But while the idea of a separate state brought to the majority of the Muslims a sense of identity and purpose, it caused consternation to the Hindus and the British both. The Hindus could not countenance the 'vivisection' of India. They considered the territorial unity of India, with its mountain peaks, jungles, coast lines and rivers, etc., integral to their very system of beliefs. Hence, they could not conceive of the "religious sacrilege" of their "sacred soil, the vivisection of Mother India".<sup>7</sup> The British could not agree to the undoing of their most trumpeted achievement, the so-called 'political unity' of India. In this sense, British feelings were not different from those of the Hindus: "Liking the Muslims or not, they could not swallow their desire for vivisection".<sup>8</sup> To complicate the matters further, there were the so-called "nationalist" Muslims who insisted that, "history would never forgive us if we agreed to partition".<sup>9</sup>

This intense polarization of interests and viewpoints on the subject has led historians from time to time to examine and explore Jinnah's demand for a separate state in the light of new evidence becoming available. There are, of course, many arguments among writers on other subjects of Indian

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Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India: 1916-1928* (Delhi, 1979), pp. 79-80, 227-28; W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), pp. 231-51; Zia-al-Hassan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay, 1963); Mushirul Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947* (Meerut, 1970), pp. 94-95; Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967), p. 93; Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics* (Karachi, 1977), p. 343; and Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom — True Muslims: The Political Thought of Some Muslim Scholars in British India, 1912-47* (Lund, 1971), pp. 35-37.

7 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, *Jinnah and the Making of a Nation* (Karachi, 1969), p. 18.

8 Leonard Mosely, *The Last Days of the British Raj* (London, 1961), p. 17.

9 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 186.

political history as well. But none of these arguments is so intense and engaging as the one which relates to the demand for a separate state for the Muslims, eventually called Pakistan.

The most discussed in the series of arguments on the subject is of course a study by Ayesha Jalal,<sup>10</sup> wherein she has raised a number of issues relating to the Muslim demand, focusing both on the text and the context of the Lahore Resolution adopted on 24 March 1940. Her main contention is that the demand was 'inspired' by the British authorities. This argument revolves around a number of propositions. First, "the timing of the Lahore resolution had been dictated by British needs, which in their turn had been made more urgent by Congress's demands [for independence and a constituent assembly]". Secondly, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, "pressed Jinnah to state the League's 'constructive policy' as a counterweight to the Congress's demand for independence and a constituent assembly". Finally, Jinnah, "this ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity now served the best guarantee the British could find in India against a united political demand".<sup>11</sup>

Ayesha Jalal, strangely enough, has based her case on British needs and interests alone. She does not view the Lahore resolution in line with Muslim interests (after all, the Muslims made the demand for Pakistan), or indeed in a larger, historical perspective, keeping in view the clearly discernable separatist political movement which developed steadily at the hands of Syed Ahmed Khan through Maulana Mohamed Ali and Allama Muhammed Iqbal.<sup>12</sup> She does not even take into account the more recent

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10 Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985).

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 49, 50, 60.

12 For a detailed discussion on the this perspective see Sikandar Hayat, "Syed Ahmad Khan and the Foundation of Muslim Separatist Political Movement in India", *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. VIII, No. 1 and 2 (January-July-December 1982), pp. 33-47; "Maulana Mohamed Ali and the Growth of Muslim Separatism in India", *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (January-June 1985), pp. 19-40; and "Allama Muhammad Iqbal and the Idea of a Separate Muslim State in India", *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. IX, No. 1 & 2 (January-July-December 1983), pp. 37-53. Also see Sikandar Hayat's most recent work, "Muslim Revival and the Freedom Movement", in *A History of Pakistan*, ed. Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2015), Ch. 7, pp. 314-83.

developments of the 1937-39 period, that is, the Congress rule of the provinces as it affected and distressed the Muslims, especially in the UP (United Provinces), a Hindu-majority province where the Muslim League had done well in the 1937 elections. The Congress refused to share power – a clear signal to the Muslims of their frightful fate in a Hindu-majority dominated system of government. Yet, Jalal's argument needs analysis, not dismissal.

The need for analysis is augmented further by a persistent charge of attributing the Pakistan demand, indeed the creation of Pakistan to the 'British rulers', especially in the accounts of Indian historians. Tara Chand, the official historian of the 'freedom movement' in India, for instance, claimed: "Whatever other factors might have contributed to the emergence of the demand for Pakistan, the substantive cause which made it effective was the will of the British rulers".<sup>13</sup>

In fact, this insinuation has remained a common refrain among Indian writers for a long time now. Ramji Lal asserted that one important factor "responsible" for the adoption of the Lahore resolution was "the role played by the British government..., following the policy of the division of India by encouraging disruptive forces, especially the Muslim League and Jinnah."<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Anita Inder Singh insisted that the British promoted the resolution as "the answer to Patna and Ramgarh" sessions of the Congress that had called for independence, to show "how deep is the gulf and how little the prospect of these two parties getting together in the present circumstances."<sup>15</sup> In a similar vein, Uma Kaura claimed that the Viceory, "Linlithgow was jubilant at the adoption of the Partition Resolution. Obviously, he thought that he could use it as a handy tool against the Congress demand for independence."<sup>16</sup> Even a present-day writer, Jaswant Singh, writing more than seven decades after the adoption of the Lahore resolution and with so much verifiable evidence available now, could not help but assert, like those before him, that Pakistan came

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13 Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV (Lahore, n.d.), p. 334.

14 Ramji Lal, *Political India, 1935-42: Anatomy of Indian Politics* (Delhi, 1986), pp. 92-94.

15 Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India, 1936-47* (Delhi, 1987), p. 57.

16 Uma Kaura, *Muslims and Indian Nationalism* (Lahore, n.d.), p. 169.

into being, “with the British acting as ever helpful midwife.”<sup>17</sup> This preoccupation with the British, though a colonial legacy, made it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for Indian historians (some very competent and capable ones of course) to understand, let alone interpret independently and objectively, developments leading ultimately to the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. The result is that there is hardly any meaningful discussion on this crucial phase of India’s modern history. But, given the record so far, it is highly unlikely that Indian historiography will change its course, and will see things for their own sake. British ‘divide and rule’ will remain mantra of Indian historians of all persuasions. They will be repeating it.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and explain the Lahore resolution for its own sake, but also to address, in the process, all major criticisms and ‘ambiguities’ pointed out by scholars and writers over the years. The major emphasis will of course be on Jalal’s criticisms. After all, she has dwelt upon them the most, raising indeed, in the end, the spectre of a so-called ‘revisionist’ thesis, suggesting in particular that Jinnah never really wanted a separate state of Pakistan. The Lahore resolution was a ‘bargaining counter.’ We will discuss that at some length later. But, first, let us take her criticisms listed above, one by one, starting with the ‘timing’ of the resolution.

There is no denying that the British had their “needs” at that point in time which “in their turn had been made more urgent by Congress’s demands” for independence. But the question is, should that disqualify or stop the Muslims from expressing their own interests at that critical juncture? After all, given the history of Hindu-Muslim relations in India, no community or political group could have been more affected by the Congress’s demand for independence than the Muslims. The Congress had not consulted with Muslim League, the largest representative body of Muslim public opinion in India (in spite of its poor showing in the 1937 elections), or taken its leaders, particularly Jinnah, into confidence. The Muslims were naturally alarmed and anxious. Thus, there was a pressing Muslim need. The Congress, in its Ramgarh session of 19 March 1940, had not only demanded immediate ‘independence’ for India but also had indicated in

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17 Jaswant Singh, *Jinnah: India – Partition – Independence* (Karachi, 2010), p. 436.

clear terms that the solution of the communal problem shall wait the verdict of the Constituent Assembly *after* independence.<sup>18</sup> This was certainly not a matter of comfort for the Muslims who had always insisted that the solution of the communal problem must come *before* and *not after* independence. Jinnah's numerous pronouncements to this effect proved that. To quote, for instance, from his presidential address at the Lahore session of the Muslim League in May 1924: "...the domination by the bureaucracy will continue as long as the Hindus and the Muhammadans do not come to a settlement. I am almost inclined to say that India will get Dominion Responsible Government the day the Hindus and the Muhammadans are united. *Swaraj* is almost interchangeable term with Hindu-Muslim unity".<sup>19</sup> Two decades later, in 1944, after the Lahore resolution was adopted and the movement for Pakistan was in full swing, Jinnah was still insisting, as he told Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on 11 September 1944,

You say 'the first condition of the right of exercise of self determination is achieving independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible then too I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together'. This, in my opinion is, as I have repeatedly said, putting the cart before the horse, and is generally opposed to the policy and declarations of the All India Muslim League... *In order to achieve the freedom and independence of the people of India, it is essential, in the first instance, that there should be Hindu-Muslim settlement.*<sup>20</sup>

Given his experience of Indian politics, especially after 1937, Jinnah simply could not accept the Congress demand for a Constituent Assembly without a prior settlement. This, he warned, "means three to one, about

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18 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 32.

19 Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-1948* (Lahore, 1976), p. 132.

20 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence* (Karachi, 1977), p. 104. (Italics added). "Why are your Hindu friends", Jinnah told Kanji Dwarkadas in a private interview the same year, "attributing motives to me and calling me a traitor? Why were they forgetting my past record of work? Why were they thinking that I was such a fool as to play into the hands of British Government and be their tool to keep freedom away from this subcontinent"? Kanji Dwarkadas, *Ten Years To Freedom* (Bombay, 1968), p. 86.

which the Musalmans say that they will never be able, in that way by the counting of heads, to come to any agreement which will be real agreement from the hearts, which will enable us to work as friends and, therefore, this idea of a Constituent Assembly is objectionable..."<sup>21</sup> The formulation of a viable alternative to the Congress demands for complete independence and a Constituent Assembly was thus essentially the Muslim need of the time. It was as simple as that.

To compound the Muslim difficulties was the Congress threat of 'civil disobedience' in case the British did not concede their demands. In fact, on 8 February 1940, the Congress Working Committee at its Patna session had already passed a resolution declaring the will and intent of the party to launch civil disobedience movement as soon as arrangements could be made for the purpose. Ramgarh session of the Congress not only approved the Patna resolution with a large majority but had, in the process, encouraged Gandhi to initiate the campaign of 'individual civil disobedience.' This was a matter of great anxiety for the Muslims. "Why all these machinations", Jinnah wondered, and went on to ask, "Why all these methods to coerce the British to overthrow the Musalmans? Why this declaration of non-cooperation? Why this threat of civil disobedience? And why fight for a Constituent Assembly for the sake of ascertaining whether the Musalmans agree or they do not agree?"<sup>22</sup>

What complicated the matters further was the Muslim concern that the British, bowing to the Congress pressure or of their own volition, for their own reasons, to gain critical support during the war years, might invite the Congress to form governments in the provinces once again. Linlithgow, in spite of his apparently unsuccessful meetings with the Congress leaders in early February 1940, in the estimate of a knowledgeable person like V.P. Menon, "never appeared to break with Gandhiji, always leaving the impression that he was going to see him again before long and that negotiations would be resumed. That naturally produced in the minds of the Muslims the fear that Congress government might return to office at any moment".<sup>23</sup> This was also corroborated by the evidence of Maulana

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21 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 160.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 161.

23 V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957), p. 78. Jinnah himself gave vent to the Muslim feelings in his interview with the Viceroy in

Abul Kalam Azad, and Kanji Dwarkadas, a close associate of the Congress leadership. Maulana Azad admitted that “many Congressman” wanted to deal with the British after “the participation of Congress in the Government”.<sup>24</sup> Dwarkadas went further and named Rajagopalacharia and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to be more than willing to settle matters with the British. Writing of his meeting with Patel on 11 August 1940, he recalled: “Sardar Patel then took me aside and told me that it should be brought to the notice of the Viceroy that the Congress, and with it, the whole country would help the British Government to win the war if the British Government satisfied Congress demands”. He even added: “Our going back to office does not mean peaceful times for us. It would only mean our getting more abuse from some of our own left-wingers and we shall have a difficult job dealing with problems of internal security as well as the war effort”. But then, he was convinced, “there was a possibility of such a settlement if the August proposals were amended to a certain extent”.<sup>25</sup> The August proposals of course conceded the Congress their demand for a Constituent Assembly to frame the Indian constitution, but it was to meet after the war was over. Dwarkadas, in fact, arranged for Patel’s meeting with Linlithgow. However, the meeting was called off at the last moment by Linlithgow only after learning that Maulana Azad, as Congress President, had insisted that, in this whole process of reconciliation, the Congress should not be seen to be the suppliant. The Congress should not lose its face with the public. Linlithgow obviously did not like it. He refused to meet. Patel was “disappointed” with the turn of events. Dwarkadas himself was upset. “What a great opportunity”, he

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early February 1940. “If the Congress ministries returned to office under existing conditions, there would be, said Jinnah, a civil war in India”. *Ibid.*, p. 78. Choudhary Zafrullah Khan, a member of the Viceroy’s Executive Council was so sure of the Congress returning to office that he advised Choudhary Khaliqzaman, a Muslim League leader from U.P., to bring the League “to some sort of settlement with the Congress, otherwise you may miss the bus”. Choudhary Khaliqzaman, *Pathway To Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p. 323. It should be remembered here that the Congress ministries had resigned between October and November 1939 in protest against the British decision to involve India in the Second World War without consulting the central legislature or its political leaders.

24 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 36.

25 Dwarkadas, *Ten Years To Freedom*, p. 54.

lamented, “was thus lost for a settlement which foundered on the rocks of pride, prestige and suspicion!”<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, the possibility of the British and the Congress striking a deal was not only alive in the comparatively calm year of 1940, but was also possible in the tense, hostile phase in the British-Congress relations, following the ‘Quit India’ resolution of 8 August 1942, ironically enough, at the hands of Gandhi, the chief architect and guide of the civil disobedience movement itself. Gandhi, in fact, wrote Dwarkadas, “was to meet and negotiate with the Viceroy after the passing of the 8 August resolution!”<sup>27</sup> It was only the British strategy of a pre-emptive attack to shock the Congress into acquiescence that rendered this meeting futile.<sup>28</sup> Jinnah’s call on 22 March 1940 for a separate state was thus a move dictated by the Muslim needs in a situation where the Congress had deemed it fit to bypass them in their demand for complete independence.

As to the charge that “Linlithgow pressed Jinnah to state the League’s ‘constructive policy’ as a counterweight to the Congress’s demand for independence and a constituent assembly”, two things need to be understood at the very outset. First, the Congress was far from a serious threat to the British rule in March 1940, when the Lahore resolution was adopted by the League. Although the young radicals in the Congress, spearheaded by Subhas Chandra Bose, were ready for a confrontation with the British Government even before the declaration of the war, majority of the Congressmen were certainly not interested in a showdown with the government, and for good reasons. The Congress was in a state of disarray, caused by internal dissensions. Not only Bose, the Congress President in 1938, had stood for re-election, but had even managed to win the presidential election against a candidate (B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya) officially endorsed by the Working Committee and personally promoted by Gandhi. The result was a factional infighting in the Congress camp, between the ‘Old Guard’ and the radicals. Though, by 1940, the ‘Old Guard’ had managed to re-establish their dominance in the party, “the goal of putting pressure on the British position in India had been somewhat lost

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26 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 78.

28 Francis Hutchins, *India’s Revolution: Gandhi and Quit India Movement* (Cambridge: Mass, 1973) pp.168-69.

to view". Between 1937 and 1939, thus wrote Tomlinson, "the all-India Congress leaders had been fully occupied with the internal problems and had neither the opportunity nor the power to further the struggle against the British for freedom and independence directly".<sup>29</sup> Although the war announced by Linlithgow on 3 September 1939 had the general effect of unity in internal Congress politics against the British, it was still far from helpful in preparing the Congress for a threatened or actual confrontation with the British Government by the beginning of 1940. The position of the Congress was not secure enough to allow it to mobilize its forces against the British. Gandhi, thus understandably appeared averse to the idea of confrontation at that time. "There is no desire on the part of responsible Congressmen", he wrote to Carl Heath in London on 13 March 1940, "to pick a quarrel with the British Government. On the contrary there is keen desire to explore every means of conciliation."<sup>30</sup>

Even after he had taken steps to organize individual civil disobedience, Gandhi went on to assure the British Government that he did not mean to do any harm to their interests during the war years. "I protest with all the strength at my command", he wrote in the *Harijan* of 27 April, "that so far as I am concerned I have no desire to embarrass the British especially at a time when it is [a] question of life and death with them. All I want Congress to do through civil disobedience is to deny the British Government the moral influence which Congress cooperation would give".<sup>31</sup> It was only when the "phony war in Europe", as an analyst of the Congress policy during the war years, put it, "turned into a hot one and when Britain was pushed into a precarious strategic position" that the Congress and the British took a turn away from the "quietude" into confrontation and clash.<sup>32</sup> But then that was well beyond 23 March 1940, the day the Lahore resolution was moved.

Secondly, and more importantly, the Indian Muslims themselves, and for a number of years, both under the force of circumstances and because of

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29 B.R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-1942* (London, 1976), p. 137.

30 Quoted in Johannes H. Voight, "Cooperation or Confrontation: War and Congress Politics, 1939-42", in *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-47*, ed. D.A. Low (London, 1977), p. 355.

31 Cited in Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay* (London, 1971), p. 169.

32 Voight, "Cooperation or Confrontation?", in Low, *Congress and the Raj*, p. 356.

their particular interests developed into a separatist political movement, had been increasingly moving towards a separate destiny and goal. The name of Pakistan or rather 'Pakstan', comprising the Punjab, Afghana (the North-West Frontier Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Kashmir, Sind (now Sindh), and Baluchistan (now Balochistan), for the proposed state was suggested as early as 1930 by Chaudhri Rahmat Ali and his colleagues in Britain. In 1933, they had published a pamphlet, *Now or Never*, in which they had explained at length their idea of Pakistan. "It symbolizes", they wrote, "the religious beliefs and the ethnical stocks of our people; and it... has no other origin and no other meaning; and it does not admit of any other interpretation".<sup>33</sup> In addition, there were a host of other schemes with the same intent or purpose. Some of the more important ones were prepared by Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, Premier of the Punjab, Dr. Abdul Latif of Hyderabad, Professors Syed Zafarul Hassan and Dr. Muhammad Afzal Qadri of the Aligarh University, Nawab Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot, Haji Abdullah Haroon and Choudhary Khaliqzaman.<sup>34</sup> All these schemes provided for a minimal center, with regional autonomy. Allama Iqbal's idea of a separate Muslim state, expressed in his presidential address at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in December 1930, and reinforced and reformulated in his letters to Jinnah in 1936-37, however, was the most developed and most influential of them all, based on both 'national' identity and Islam as the driving force of nationalism. The goal was to "save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims."<sup>35</sup> It was only after the harrowing experience of the Congress rule in the provinces that the Muslims came to

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33 Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation* (London, 1947), p. 225.

34 For details on these schemes see, the *Indian Annual Register* (Calcutta, 1939); Maurice Gwyer and A. Appadorai, eds., *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1942-1947*, Vol. II (Bombay, 1957), pp. 455-62; Reginald Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India, Part I: The Indian Problem, 1833-1935* (London, 1968), pp. 203-4; Mian Ahmad Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon; A Biography* (Karachi, n.d.), pp. 138-40; Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1963); Y.B. Mathur, *Growth of Muslim Politics in India* (Lahore, 1980), App. 11 "Plans for Partition of India", pp. 293-329; and Khaliqzaman, *Pathway To Pakistan*, p. 2.

35 Muhammad Iqbal, "Presidential Address, Allahabad Session, December 1930", Delhi, 1945, and *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (Lahore, 1942), p. 24.

understand and acclaim the meaning of Iqbal's message. The experience had also produced the man who could translate this message into action.<sup>36</sup> In the words of M.H. Saiyid, "Iqbal and his followers had tried to place before the Muslims their rightful goal but they could not do it effectively. It required a Jinnah to fulfill the aspirations of a nation and that too at the most psychological moment".<sup>37</sup>

Turning to Linlithgow's comment itself and the insinuation that the Lahore resolution was thus inspired by the British, it must be noted that this was more out of haughtiness than any genuine desire to appease the Muslims or indeed to promote their particular interests and demands. Linlithgow's comment was made in the particular context of Jinnah's scathing criticism of the British 'democratic' system of government in India. Jinnah had pointedly told him in early 1939 that he saw no solution of the Indian problem and he was now convinced that India was not competent to run representative institutions successfully. He lamented that he and many others who had worked for this system of representative government all along had, in the light of their practical experience, reached the conclusion "that the present system would not work and that a mistake had been made in going so far". Thereupon, Linlithgow haughtily asked Jinnah to make "positive suggestion for carrying on the government of the country if the present scheme broke down".<sup>38</sup> It was not that he was promoting the idea of partition of India and a separate state for the Muslims. He was simply being derisive. For when Jinnah, in response to his insistent query that if "he no longer believed in the democratic government for India, how was India to obtain self-government if not by democracy", argued that "the escape from this impasse lay in partition", Linlithgow was not amused. He retorted that this was "not an answer to the question".<sup>39</sup> But Jinnah held his ground. He was convinced that there was no alternative to partition if

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36 In proposing an interesting typology of political leadership which comprised the 'man of words', 'the man of faith', and the 'man of action', Hoffer suggested that only when the "disaster" shook the people "to its foundation" that the "man of action" emerges to save the situation. See Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York, 1966), p. 104.

37 M.H. Saiyid, *Muhammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970), p. 230.

38 Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay*, p. 124.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

the British Government could not offer an acceptable solution of the constitutional problem.

Jinnah's position on the subject is fully vindicated by V.P. Menon, no personal friend of Jinnah or sympathizer of his cause at any stage. Narrating at length the details of Jinnah's interview with Linlithgow, he wrote:

Jinnah also wished to make it clear that if His Majesty's Government could not improve on its present solution for the problem of India's constitutional development, he and his friends would have no option but to fall back on some form of partition of the country; that as a result of their discussion they had decided first of all, that the Muslims were not a minority but rather a nation; and secondly, that democracy for all-India was impossible. They did not want His Majesty's Government to get itself into the position of deliberately and progressively withdrawing and handing over the control of country to a Hindu Raj, and in the intermediate state of being forced into the position of helping it to hold the Muslims down with British bayonets. That was an intolerable prospect.<sup>40</sup>

Linlithgow, of course, tried his best to talk Jinnah out of his partition idea. He suggested a number of alternatives which included, among others, that "there might be some tripartite arrangement by which the presence of His Majesty's Government, in a manner as little out of tune with Indian aspirations as possible, would be needed in India, longer even than some imagined". But Jinnah was not interested. In a polite but firm reply he explained to him at length that, "even here difficulties would arise. He was in favour of a Muslim area run by Muslims. He was fully aware that this [sic] would mean poverty, that the lion's share of the wealth would go to the others, but the Muslims would retain their self-respect and their culture and would be able to live their lives in their own way". He admitted that it might "be out of tune with the British conception of the future, but it provided the only means of making Muslim existence happy within a particular area..." Jinnah went on "to impress upon the Viceroy that the attitude which he represented was the expression of deep and sincere feelings and that there was no serious division within the Muslim fold with regard to it". Throughout the interview, thus concluded Menon, "the

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40 V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 81.

Viceroy remained non-committal, but he could not dispel the conviction from his mind that the Muslim attitude was undoubtedly hardening".<sup>41</sup> This particular content and context of Jinnah's talks with Linlithgow has been deliberately suppressed by Jinnah's critics to decry his demand for the partition of India and the creation of a separate state of Pakistan.

How unfounded this charge of Jinnah's demand being inspired by the British was further evident from the letter Viceroy Linlithgow wrote to the Secretary of State, Lord Zetland, on 24 March 1940, the day the Lahore resolution was adopted. "I do not attach", he wrote, "too much importance to Jinnah's demand for the carving out of India into an indefinite number of so-called 'Dominions'". This "extreme" and "preposterous" demand, he explained to Zetland, was an attempt on the part of Jinnah and the League to free themselves from "the damaging charge levelled against them that they have no constructive ideas of their own".<sup>42</sup> In his reply a few days later, Zetland readily agreed, and stressed: "I shall be bound to express my dissent from the proposals which have been recently put forward by the All-India Muslim League..." He even went on to argue that, "to create a number of Ulsters in India" would mean "the wrecking of all that we have been working for a number of years past..."<sup>43</sup> In his speech in the House of Lords on 18 April 1940, Zetland publicly announced that the Lahore resolution's "acceptance would be equivalent to admitting the failure of the devoted efforts of Englishmen and Indians alike over a long period of concentrated striving, for these efforts have been based upon the assumption that even in the admitted diversity of India, a measure of political unity could be achieved sufficiently to enable India as a whole to take its place as an integral unit in the British Commonwealth of Nations".<sup>44</sup>

Zetland was convinced that the Muslim demand was detrimental to Britain's long and short-term interests both. In his 18 April letter to

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41 *Ibid.*

42 Cited in Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Myth and Reality* (Islamabad, 1976), p. 59.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

44 Zetland, Marquess of "Essayez", *The Memoirs of Lawrence, 2nd Marquess of Zetland* (London, 1956), p. 256.

Linlithgow, he elaborated the British perspective of “the probable destiny of Muslim India” in these words:

I hope that the terms of the reply to Jinnah which I telegraphed to you a few days ago will be sufficient to keep him quiet, though I do not feel by any means sure that this will be so. Indeed the present attitude of the All-India Muslim League seems to me to justify the fear which I expressed last summer, with what I am afraid you must have found somewhat wearisome reiteration, that [sic] we should find the Muslims the most formidable obstacle in the way of the Federation which we were then hoping to achieve. I am bound to say that if their present mood persists, I see little chance of our being able to bring them in at any rate on any terms approaching those contemplated by the Act. The diehards over here are secretly delighted at the widening of the gulf between the Muslims and the Hindus; but taking a long view, I should myself doubt very much if a cleavage between the Muslims and the Hindus as fundamental as that contemplated by the present leaders of the All-India Muslim League would prove to be to our advantage. The Hindus have no particular affiliations outside India, whereas the call of Islam transcends the bounds of country. It may have lost some of its force as a result of the abolition of the Caliphate by Mustapha Kamal Pasha, but it still has a very considerable appeal, as witness for example, Jinnah's insistence on our giving undertaking that Indian troops should never be employed against any Muslim state, and the solicitude which he has constantly expressed for the Arabs of Palestine...

I cannot help thinking, indeed, if separate Muslim States did come into existence in India, as now contemplated by the All-India Muslim League, the day would come when they might find the temptation to join an Islamic Commonwealth of Nations well-nigh irresistible. More particularly would this be the case with the north-west of India which would, in these circumstances be a Muslim State coterminous with the vast block of territory dominated by Islam, which runs from North Africa and Turkey in the west to Afghanistan in the east. You may think that this is looking unnecessarily far ahead and that we can but devote our energies to endeavouring to solve our more immediate problems. I dare say that you would be right; yet I feel that one has to keep one's eye on the possible developments of a somewhat distant future if we are to

come to right decisions in connection with the problems immediately confronting us.<sup>45</sup>

L.S. Amery, who succeeded Zetland as the Secretary of State (May 1940-July 1945), was more critical of the Muslim demand. In a letter to Linlithgow on 25 January 1941, he not only claimed that “Jinnah and his Pakistanis are beginning to be almost more of a menace [than the Congress] and to have lost all sense of realities...”, but looking at the problems in a larger, though strictly Indian framework, he wondered, “if there is to be a Pakistan, Kashmir will obviously have to belong to it and Hyderabad will obviously have to belong to Hindu India and the Nizam would probably have to clear out bag and baggage. The whole future of his state and dynasty, as in the complementary case of Kashmir, depends on India remaining united and on a basis of compromise between Hindus and Muslims”.<sup>46</sup> Linlithgow himself was weary of the Muslim demand. He criticized the Hindus for treating Jinnah and his demand seriously. “The Hindus” he charged, “have made the mistake of taking Jinnah seriously about Pakistan, and as a result they have given substance to a shadow”.<sup>47</sup> What more proof was required to show how much the British disapproved the Pakistan idea, and so contemptuously.

The very idea of Pakistan, indeed, wrote one British writer, “stirred distaste in British governing circles”.<sup>48</sup> All British authorities were opposed to the demand for Pakistan. There was no difference between Linlithgow, Zetland, Wavell, Amery, Attlee or Mountbatten for that matter as far as this demand was concerned. They did not approve of it. There was no special place for Jinnah either in their scheme of things, the so-called “best guarantee the British could find in India against a united political demand”, as Jalal put it. Though some of these leaders were sympathetic to Muslim leadership or to those Muslim demands which did not clash with their own colonial interests, at no stage they appeared to like or support Jinnah. Linlithgow was favourably inclined towards Sikandar Hayat Khan than

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45 *Ibid.*, pp. 291-92.

46 Cited in Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay*, pp. 198-99.

47 Nicholas Mansergh, and E.W.R. Lumby, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II (London, 1971), p. 257.

48 Ian Stephens, *Pakistan: Old Country, New Nation* (London, 1967), p. 15.

Jinnah.<sup>49</sup> So was the case with Zetland.<sup>50</sup> Wavell was sympathetic to the Muslim cause, but he was by no means pro-Jinnah or pro-Pakistan. In the crucial years of his viceroyalty, he felt “sorry for the Muslims”, and even suggested that they had “more honesty, courage and dignity” than their Hindu counterparts, but he “never liked Jinnah” who, he thought, was “unyielding” on his demand for Pakistan. On the contrary, he claimed that Khizar Hayat Khan, the then Unionist premier of the Punjab, was “the best leader” Muslim India had, and maintained that, “if all Indian politicians were as sensible and attractive as he is, life would be much easier”. He lauded the leadership of Khizar Hayat Khan particularly for the reason that he believed that “Pakistan was nonsense” and that how could the British ever “leave” India.<sup>51</sup> Not surprisingly, as late as August 1945, Wavell was planning to the effect that “crudity of Jinnah’s ideas ought to be exposed”.<sup>52</sup>

Wavell was of course a conservative politician. But the opposition of the liberal politicians was no less pronounced. Speaking of Stafford Cripps’s partisan role in the Cabinet Mission Plan discussions of 1946, Wavell remarked that, “I should be never surprised to learn that he had already promised Congress some satisfaction” as “he did in the 1942 negotiations”.<sup>53</sup> Attlee, even before he became the Prime Minister in the post-war period, “made clear that he was not at all attracted by the theory of Pakistan and that he thought Sikandar a more responsible leader than Jinnah”.<sup>54</sup> Mountbatten’s views on Jinnah and Pakistan are too well-known to be discussed here. They have been documented in many narratives.<sup>55</sup>

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49 See, for instance, Linlithgow’s attitude towards both men vis-à-vis the Lahore resolution and the war effort. Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay*, pp. 184, 198.

50 Comparing him with Jinnah, Zetland described Sikandar Hayat Khan as “a man of such broad-minded views and so tolerant an outlook...” ‘Essayez’ p. 292.

51 Penderel Moon, ed., Wavell: *The Viceroy’s Journal* (Karachi, 1974), pp. 368, 379, 442.

52 Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV (London, 1973), pp. 29, 37.

53 Moon, *The Viceroy’s Journal*, p. 248.

54 Quoted in Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay*, p. 196.

55 See, in particular, Alan Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten* (London, 1951); and Larry Collins and Lapierre Dominique, *Freedom at Midnight* (New York, 1975). Mountbatten’s appointment as Viceroy itself, according to Collins and Lapierre, was manoeuvred by the Congress leadership. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

As Philip Ziegler, his biographer noted, Mountbatten “was never to gain any pleasure from his meetings with Mr. Jinnah”, for he refused to listen to him when he “argued endlessly the case for a unified India.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the British “top priority”, even when Mountbatten arrived as the last Viceroy of India, was still “a unity of the subcontinent”. They wanted to secure “a united India” at all costs.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the British, whether they were conservative ‘pro-Muslim’ leaders or liberal ‘pro-Congress’ leaders, they were one on Jinnah and his demand for Pakistan. For, in the words of Leonard Mosley, “that their work should end in the division of the country into separate nations was not something which sincere British officials in India could contemplate without abhorrence. Liking the Muslims or not, they could not swallow their desire for vivisection...”<sup>58</sup>

The demand for Pakistan clearly was the work of the Muslim mind and Muslim leadership of India, dictated in a Muslim situation of ‘despair and hope’. It represented the Muslims’ fear of a permanent Hindu-majority government in India, with the Muslims never in power. The course of events from the Nehru Report of 1928 to the Congress rule of 1937-39 had left no doubt in their mind as to their fate in a polity dominated by the Hindu majority community. On the other hand, the demand for Pakistan not only saved them from this predicament but also ensured them freedom as an independent political community that will have power and will be able to shape its destiny in its own way. The short and long term interests indeed reinforced each other. Jinnah explained this connection in a speech delivered at the Muslim University Union Aligarh on 6 March 1940, some two weeks before the passing of the Lahore resolution, in this manner:

Two years ago at Simla I said that the democratic Parliamentary system of government was unsuited to India. I was condemned everywhere in the Congress press. I was told that I was guilty of disservice to Islam because Islam believes in democracy. So far as I have understood Islam, it does not advocate a democracy which would allow the majority of non-Muslims to decide the fate of the Muslims. We cannot accept a

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56 Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten, including his Years as the Last Viceroy of India* (New York, 1986), p. 368.

57 John Terraine, *The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten* (London, 1970), p. 192.

58 Mosely, *The Last Days of the British Raj*, p. 17.

system of government in which the non-Muslims merely by numerical majority would rule and dominate us.<sup>59</sup>

This determination was not only the basis for the Muslim demand in March 1940 but remained to be the rationale of the Pakistan movement in the subsequent years. Even after the creation of Pakistan, in August 1947, Jinnah went on to assert in his major address to government officials on 11 October 1947 that, “the creation of state of our own was a means to an end and not the end in itself. The idea was that we should have a state in which we could live and breathe as free men which we could develop according to our own lights and culture and where principles of Islamic social justice could find freeplay”.<sup>60</sup>

The Lahore session of the Muslim League on 22-24 March 1940, thus, was the harbinger of a new Muslim destiny. After exhausting all options to secure Muslim interests and demands, from the Lucknow Pact of 1916 to the Delhi Muslim Proposals of 1927 to his ‘Fourteen Points’ of 1929, Jinnah had reached the conclusion that the only way the Muslims could rid themselves of the stranglehold of a Hindu-majority government and could also ensure their future life in line with their own ideals, “spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political” was to have their own “homelands, their territory and their state”.<sup>61</sup> This was the main burden of his presidential address on 22 March, to which we must now turn our attention for a better understanding of his viewpoint and the subsequent adoption and indeed implications of the Lahore resolution.

Jinnah opened his presidential address with a survey of troubling developments which had taken place since the Lucknow session of the League in 1937. Although he felt happy about the progress the League had made in these few years, he was distressed over the Act of 1935 and the Congress demand for immediate declaration of independence and a Constituent Assembly. He rejected the Act, insisting that, “... we could never accept the dangerous scheme of the Central Federal Government embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935”. He reiterated his recent

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59 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 147.

60 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed. *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 415.

61 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 171. All the subsequent quotations of Jinnah’s presidential address are from this source. *Ibid.*, pp.153-71.

claim that the British had made a “serious blunder” in imposing their system of representative government on India. He criticized the *London Times* report on the 1935 Act which had argued that the Muslims’ fear of the Act was largely exaggerated and that in spite of the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims in the realm of religion, law and culture, “in the course of time, the superstition will die out and India will be moulded into a single nation”. He stressed that not only the “spiritual, economic, social and political” differences between the Hindus and the Muslims were “fundamental and deep-rooted”, the *Times* viewpoint was “a flagrant disregard of the past history of the subcontinent of India as well as the fundamental Islamic conception of society vis-a-vis that of Hinduism to characterize them as mere ‘superstitions’”. Muslims and Hindus, notwithstanding “a thousand years of close contact”, he insisted, were “nationalities, which are as divergent today as ever”, and “cannot at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation merely by means of subjecting them to a democratic constitution and holding them forcibly together by unnatural and artificial methods of British Parliamentary Statute”. As the experience of “the unitary government of India” for the last 150 years showed, he went on to argue, it was “inconceivable that the fiat or the writ of a government so constituted can ever command a willing and loyal obedience throughout the subcontinent by various nationalities except by means of armed force behind it”.

Turning to the Congress demand for independence and a Constituent Assembly, Jinnah denounced the Congress rule of 1937-39, and highlighted the Muslim concerns as to their future in a Hindu-dominated India. “Situating in India as we are”, he noted, “we naturally have our past experiences and particularly by experience of the past [two and a half] years of provincial constitution in the Congress-governed provinces we have learnt many lessons. We are now, therefore, very apprehensive and can trust nobody... we never thought that the Congress High Command would have acted in the manner which they actually did in the Congress-governed provinces. I never dreamt that they would ever come down so low as that”. This, he pointed out, was in spite of the fact the British were still present in India and they cried “hoarse, week in and out”, reminding the British of “their special responsibilities to us and to other minorities...”<sup>62</sup>

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62 *Ibid.*, pp. 153, 155, 167-68.

Given this bitter experience, he wondered, how could they accept the Congress claim that the Constituent Assembly will “satisfy the minorities’ legitimate interests”, indeed through a tribunal, if need be. Jinnah went on to challenge the very premise by pointing out:

Now, apart from the impracticable character of this proposal and quite apart from the fact that it is historically and constitutionally absurd to ask the ruling power to abdicate in favour of a Constituent Assembly – apart from all that, suppose we do not agree as to the franchise according to which the Central Assembly is to be elected, or suppose, we the solid body of Muslim representatives do not agree with the non-Muslim majority in the Constituent Assembly, what will happen?... In the event of there being a disagreement between the majority of the Constituent Assembly and the Musalmans, in the first instance, who will appoint the tribunal? And suppose an agreed tribunal is possible and the award is made and the decision given, who will, may I know, be there to see that this award is implemented or carried out in accordance with the terms of that award? And who will see that it is honoured in practice... Besides... can you imagine that a question of this character, of social contract upon which the future constitution of India would be based affecting 90 millions of Musalmans, can be decided by means of a judicial tribunal? Still that is the proposal of the Congress.<sup>63</sup>

Jinnah declared that he, too, stood “unequivocally for the freedom of India”. But this freedom, he observed, “must be freedom for all India and not freedom of one section, or worse still, of the Congress caucus and slavery of Musalmans and other minorities”. This was all the more necessary to bear in mind, he maintained, because the problem in India “is not of an inter-communal character but manifestly an international one, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realized any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove destructive and harmful not only to the Musalmans but to the British and Hindus also”. He, therefore, demanded that “the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into ‘autonomous national states’.”

In support of this demand for the division of India and a separate homeland for the Muslims, Jinnah not only argued that “Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu

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63 *Ibid.*, pp. 156-158.

majority government” but also claimed that it was fallacious to assume any more that the Muslims were a “minority”. They were “a nation according to any definition of a nation”, and they, like all other nations, had the right to develop to the fullest their “spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideal and according to the genius of our people”. The problem with “our Hindu friends”, he lamented, was that they failed to understand “the real nature of Islam and Hinduism”.<sup>64</sup> As he explained it:

They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of [our] troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together, and indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.<sup>65</sup>

Jinnah, therefore, called for the division of India in the best interest of the two nations, Muslims and Hindus (‘two-nation’ theory). History, he pointed out, provided many examples of “geographical tracts, much smaller than the subcontinent of India, which otherwise might have been called one country, but which have been divided into as many states as there are nations inhabiting them”.<sup>66</sup> India was inhabited by two nations, and thus must be divided between these two nations. He was convinced that this was the only way to settle the constitutional problem of India.<sup>67</sup> The Muslims must have their own separate homeland. The Muslim League

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64 *Ibid.*, pp. 155, 168-71.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

66 *Ibid.*

67 See the full text of Jinnah’s speech. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-72.

endorsed his position on 23 March, and in a resolution adopted on 24 March, resolved:

...that it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.<sup>68</sup>

The resolution further stated that:

...in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.<sup>69</sup>

This resolution, taking apart 'the old world' and putting together the new bold one, had an irresistible appeal for the Muslims. Facing agony and frustration at the hands of the Hindu majority community, especially now as the Congress, its most representative political party (there was Hindu Mahasabha too), demanded independence unilaterally and without any settlement with them as to their future in India, it provided the Muslims not only freedom, but also political power and security to shape their own destiny. Indeed, in the words of a contemporary observer, this was the making of a "positive doctrine",<sup>70</sup> a doctrine that possessed its own intrinsic value. A separate homeland was needed to enable the Muslims to lead their lives in their own way, 'spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political', indeed in all respects.

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68 Liaquat Ali Khan, comp., *Resolutions of the All-India Muslim League from December 1938 to March 1940* (Delhi, n.d.), pp. 47-48.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 48.

70 Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-Statement* (London, 1945), p. 88.

While the Muslims in general responded enthusiastically to the demand for a separate homeland,<sup>71</sup> called 'Pakistan' by the Hindu press straightaway (and readily accepted by Jinnah and the League), the Hindu leaders and masses voiced their disapproval, indeed hostility to the idea. They condemned it. This was in spite of the fact that one section of the Hindu community, especially those belonging to the Hindu Mahasabha, had always considered Hindus and Muslims to be two separate nations. Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the founders of Hindu Mahasabha, for instance, in a private letter to C.R. Das in the early 1920s, wrote: "There is one point more which has been troubling me very much of late and one which I want you to think carefully, and that is the question of Hindu-Mohammadan unity. I have devoted most of time to the study of Muslim history and Muslim law and I am inclined to think it is neither *possible* nor *practicable*. Assuming and admitting the sincerity of Mohammadan leaders in the non-cooperation movement, I think their religion provides an effective bar to any understanding of the kind... Can any Muslim leader override the Koran [Quran]?"<sup>72</sup>

Similarly, V.D. Savarkar, a leading figure of the Mahasabha, declared publically in 1937 that there were "two nations" in India. "Several infantile politicians", he charged, "commit the serious mistake in supporting that India is already welded into a harmonious nation, or that it could be welded thus for the mere wish to do so. These our well-meaning but unthinking friends take their dreams for realities. That is why they are impatient of communal tangles and attribute them to communal organizations. But the solid fact is that the so-called communal questions are but a legacy handed down to us by centuries of a cultural, religious and national antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims... India cannot be assumed today to be an Unitarian and homogenous nation; but, on the contrary, there are two nations in the main, the Hindus and the Muslims in India". Even after the Lahore resolution was adopted, Savarkar maintained that he had "no quarrel with Jinnah's two nations theory", and that the Muslims were indeed a "nation" by themselves. What was not

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71 The educated, urban middle classes, merchant-industrialists, traders, bankers, and professionals in particular saw great opportunities in securing a state where they would be in great majority and where bureaucracy, army, industry, commerce, banks and professions would all belong to them.

72 Cited in Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 165-66.

acceptable to him and other Mahasabites was Jinnah's "right and claim to a separate homeland on the Indian territory". The Muslims must "emigrate to some other place to found their Muslim state".<sup>73</sup>

The Hindus, whether they belonged to the Hindu Mahasabha or the Congress for that matter, had always considered the territorial integrity of India as the very essence of Hinduism. According to Rajendra Prasad, a prominent Congress leader and first President of India, "it cannot be denied that irrespective of who rules and what were the administrative or political divisions of the country, Hindus have never conceived of India as comprising anything less than what we regard as India today".<sup>74</sup> This also explained why Gandhi could not approve of the 'vivisection' of India<sup>75</sup> in spite of the fact that he claimed that he had nothing against the Muslim right of self-determination. "I know", he wrote in the *Harijan* in April 1940, "of no non-violent method compelling the obedience of eight crores of Muslims to the will of the rest of India however powerful the majority the rest may represent. The Muslims must have the same right of self-determination that [sic] the rest of India has".<sup>76</sup> Obviously, this meant that the right had to be exercised within the bounds of India, within the Indian Union. So much for their "right of self-determination".

To complicate their response to the Lahore resolution, the Hindus, strangely enough, failed to appreciate the essentials of the Muslim case. Gandhi, for instance, in his first reaction to the Lahore resolution not only insisted that the Muslims were Hindus at one time and that change of their religion does not change their nationality but even went on to argue that, "Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue as a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusement as his Hindu neighbor. They dress alike. His [Jinnah's] name could be that of any Hindu. When I first met him, I did not know he was a Muslim". (With Mohammad Ali as a name?). But even if there were religious and cultural differences between the two communities, he suggested, there could be no clash of interest on

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73 F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1946); and Saleem M.M. Qureshi, *Jinnah and the Making of a Nation*, pp. 60-62.

74 Rajendra Parsad, *India Divided* (Bombay, 1977), p. 67.

75 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 180. Also see B.R. Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi* (London, 1965), p. 213.

76 Quoted in *Ibid.*

such matters as revenue, industry, sanitation or justice. The differences could only be in religious practices, with which "a secular state" should have no concern.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Jawaharlal Nehru in his response to the Muslim demand, after conceding religious differences between the two communities, asserted: "...Religious barriers are obviously not permanent, as conversions take place from one religion to another, and a person changing his religion does not thereby lose his social background or his cultural and linguistic heritage".<sup>78</sup> Rajagopalacharia, another Congress stalwart and the first Indian Governor-General of India, went one step further to remind the Muslims that past Muslim rulers of India, in spite of their religio-cultural and political differences with their subjects, had never promoted the idea of division of India. "Indeed", he wrote, "not even Tippu Sultan or Hyder Ali or Aurangzeb or Akbar, all of whom lived during days when differences seemed more deep-rooted than now, imagined that India was anything but one and indivisible. These great men might have differed from one another in many respects, but they agreed in looking upon this precious land and this great [sic] nation as one and essentially indivisible".<sup>79</sup>

These statements not only reflected a self-serving, superficial view of the past, and especially the Hindu-Muslim relations in an imperial age, without any consideration of that process of 'nationality formation' among the Muslims since the early twentieth century and clearly developed by now, leading to this demand for a separate state itself, but also betrayed a lack of understanding of the fundamental principles of Islam. As Allama Iqbal explained, Islam did "not bifurcate the unity of man into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter",<sup>80</sup> and indeed the "state", a separate state for the Muslims, as Jinnah demanded, was "only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization."<sup>81</sup> Islam does not approve of any distinction between the 'church' and the state. Religion is not a personal affair which could conveniently be separated from public life. The Indian Muslims, as a political community, as their recent experience showed,

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77 *Ibid.*, pp. 212-13.

78 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (London, 1956), p. 334.

79 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 177-78.

80 Muhammad Iqbal, *the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore, 1965), p. 56.

81 *Ibid.*, p.136.

were not prepared to accept a polity based upon the will of the Hindu majority which could not only endanger its own integrity but could also hurt the larger cause of Islam. As to the charge that the Muslims were Hindus once, and that the change of their religion did not change their 'national' status, Jinnah was astounded. He asked Gandhi:

But can't you see that a Muslim, when he was converted, granted that he was converted more than a thousand years ago, bulk of them, according to your Hindu religion and philosophy, he becomes an outcaste and he becomes a *malecha* [untouchable] and the Hindus cease to have anything to do with him socially, religiously and culturally or in any other way? He, therefore, belongs to a different order, not only religious but social, and he has lived in that distinctly separate and antagonistic social order, religiously, socially and culturally. It is now more than a thousand years that the bulk of the Muslims have lived in a different world, in a different society, in a different philosophy and a different faith. Can you possibly compare this with that nonsensical talk that mere change of faith is no ground for a demand for Pakistan? Can't you see the fundamental difference?... I do not think really that any honest man can possibly dispute the fact that the Muslims are a nation by themselves, distinctly separate from the Hindus.<sup>82</sup>

This issue of Muslims being a separate nation was not simply problematic with Gandhi and his generation of Hindu politicians. It prevailed in the accounts of later politicians and indeed writers of India, both Hindus and Muslims. A.G. Noorani, an Indian Muslim lawyer and writer, for instance, criticized the Lahore resolution for "it was sought strenuously to be justified on the basis of the [sic] spurious Two-Nation Theory..."<sup>83</sup> Thus, he refused to accept that the Muslims were a separate nation. In a similar vein, Jaswant Singh, a former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and senior minister in its two previous governments and a prolific writer asked, like so many of his compatriots before him, "how are 'Muslims a separate nation?'"<sup>84</sup>

Clearly, these writers, like Gandhi, failed to recognize the religio-cultural basis of Muslim nationalism, as articulated by Jinnah, and discussed

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82 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 239-40.

83 A.G. Noorani, *Jinnah and Tilak: Comrades in the Freedom Struggle* (Karachi, 2010), p. 153.

84 Singh, *India-Partition-Independence*, p. 414.

above. In this context, they also failed to realize, as one academic writer argued, based on his detailed study of Muslim literary texts in India that “the idea of Muslim separateness and exceptionalism took shape in the work of poets, scholars, and political leaders, [sic] long before party politics became a popular phenomenon.”<sup>85</sup> In this sense, he even claimed that “Indian Muslim nationalism precedes the party politics of both the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League.”<sup>86</sup>

Indeed, the origins of Muslim nationalism and the eventual development of a separate Muslim nation neatly fit the theoretical framework formulated by Ernest Gellner who emphasized that nationalism is not simply “the awakening of nations to self-consciousness.” Rather, it “invents nations where they do not exist—but it does need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work on, even if... they are purely negative.”<sup>87</sup> In the case of Muslim India, the “differentiating marks”, as Jinnah highlighted in his response to Gandhi, cited above, and in so many of his speeches and statements elsewhere, were of course bold and positive. These marks had encouraged the Muslim leadership from Syed Ahmad Khan to Allama Iqbal to Jinnah to direct and determine “an ethnic variety of nationalism based on Islam.”<sup>88</sup>

But Gandhi, or for that matter, the Congress leadership was not willing to accept that kind of nationalism, Muslim nationalism, and its logical corollary, the demand for a separate state of Pakistan, primarily because it led to the partition of India. They bitterly opposed the partition, claiming, again and again, that this amounted to ‘vivisection’ of India. Jinnah was indeed taken aback. He found it

...amazing that men like Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Rajagopalacharya should talk about the Lahore resolution in such terms as ‘vivisection of India’, and ‘cutting the baby into two halves’...Where is the country which is being divided? Where is the nation which is [being] denationalized? India is composed of nationalities, to say nothing about the castes and

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85 Masood Ashraf Raja, *Constructing Pakistan: Foundational Texts and the Rise of Muslim National Identity, 1857-1947* (Karachi, 2010), p. 140.

86 *Ibid.*

87 Cited in Christophe Jaffrelot, ed., *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation* (London, 2000), p. 10.

88 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

sub-castes. Where is 'the Central National Government', whose authority is being violated? India is held by the British power and that is the hand that holds and gives the impression of united India and the unitary Government... [We] propose that the Hindus and Musalmans should be provided with their homelands which will enable them to live side by side as two honourable nations, and as good neighbours; and not Hindus as superior and Musalmans as inferior nations, tied artificially together with a Hindu religious majority to dominate and rule over the Muslim India... Our ideal and our fight is not to harm or injure any other community or interest or block the progress but to defend ourselves. We want to live in this country an honourable life as free men, and we stand for free Islam and free India.<sup>89</sup>

While his espousal of the Muslim cause failed to impress the Congress leadership, and the Hindu masses, and indeed earned him in the end, their wrath,<sup>90</sup> it reinforced the Muslim faith in Jinnah and his demand for Pakistan. "The mere fact", wrote one of his devoted followers, "that Jinnah is the worst man alive in the eyes of Hindus is reason enough for me to look upon him as the Man of Musalmans. Why he has gone so steeply in the estimate of Hindu India? Not very long ago he was 'an angel of peace' and 'an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity'. Why this fall? Because Jinnah says Muslims have a right to live in India as Musalmans and not as bond slaves of Hindus. This is Jinnah's crime. This crime has earned for Jinnah the deep gratitude of Musalmans that they never owed to anyone ever before. Every Musalman whose heart burns with the desire of seeing the rebirth of Islam in India looks to Jinnah".<sup>91</sup> In fact, the more the Hindus expressed hostility and opposition to the Pakistan demand, the more Jinnah saw its worth and insisted upon it as the only way out of the Muslim predicament in India. Or else, he warned, "the Muslims will be absolutely wiped out of existence".<sup>92</sup>

Jinnah's demand for Pakistan was based on the fundamental premise that the Muslims faced an existential threat. They were doomed in Hindu India. The only way that they could be saved and indeed be free, empowered,

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89 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 180-83.

90 See, for instance, some of the appellations used to vilify and defame him in Z.A. Suleri, *My Leader* (Lahore, 1973), p. 1.

91 *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

92 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 259.

and secure was to demand their own separate state of Pakistan. In this sense, the Pakistan demand or, for that matter, the Lahore resolution itself was a simple, straightforward case of Muslim right of self-determination, as the right of self-determination of any nation. But then, a few scholars and researchers saw some 'ambiguities' in the resolution. They interpreted them in many ways. It will be in the fitness of things to examine and clarify these ambiguities in the light of available evidence, preferably through Jinnah's own pronouncements on the subject and the Muslim League's record, before we conclude our discussion.

In the main, three ambiguities have been identified. First, it was not clear from the resolution whether "the goal it contemplated was 'one sovereign state'— federal or unitary, for all Indian Muslims, or more than one"?<sup>93</sup> Secondly, the resolution did not suggest "a connecting link between the two zones",<sup>94</sup> raising speculations to the effect that it was a "bargaining counter". As Ayesha Jalal put it: "By apparently repudiating the need for any centre, and keeping quiet about its shape, Jinnah calculated that when eventually the time came to discuss an all-India federation, British and Congress alike would be forced to negotiate with organized Muslim opinion, and would be ready to make substantial concessions, to create or retain that centre. The Lahore resolution should therefore be seen as a bargaining counter."<sup>95</sup> Lastly, the resolution failed to define "areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority", particularly in the sense "whether 'area' connoted provinces or part of a province".<sup>96</sup>

As to the first ambiguity about "'one sovereign state'... or more than one", it was true that the resolution itself was not much help. The key phrase in the resolution was that, "the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States'..." But while it was at the League Legislators' Convention in Delhi on 7-9 April 1946<sup>97</sup> that Jinnah

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93 Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, p. 321.

94 *Ibid.*

95 Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p. 57.

96 Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, p. 332. Also see, Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1858-1948* (London, 1968), pp. 117-18.

97 See the proceedings of the Convention in A.M. Zaidi, ed., *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought*, Vol. VI (Delhi, 1979).

declared in clear, categorical terms that “our formula is based on the territory of this subcontinent being carved into two sovereign states of Hindustan and Pakistan”,<sup>98</sup> there were indications all along that what the League really demanded in the resolution was one sovereign state and not two. Jinnah himself, in his presidential address at the Lahore session, had stated that the “Musalmans... must have their homelands, their territory and their *state*”.<sup>99</sup> The delegates gathered at the session also felt that what was aimed at was “a single state”. Abdus Salam Khurshid, one of the delegates, for instance, opined that although none of us delved into the wording of the resolution, we all kind of felt that “a single state was aimed at.”<sup>100</sup> This impression was also conveyed through some of the speeches made by prominent League leaders who spoke on the occasion. “We want”, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan emphatically stated, “a home for the Muslim nation, and our home is as indicated in the resolution”.<sup>101</sup>

Significantly, the League at its Madras (now Chennai) session held in April 1941, while adopting the Lahore resolution as one of its fundamental aims and objectives, added the word “together” after the word “grouped”. The phrase now used was: “the North-Western and Eastern zones of India shall be grouped together...”<sup>102</sup> This not only implied a link, a pronounced link, between the two zones but also radically compromised the so-called spirit of two ‘Independent States’, as stated in the original resolution. The doubt as to one or two states was certainly laid to rest in 1944 when Jinnah, in his critical talks with Gandhi in Bombay (now Mumbai) clarified that, what the League really demanded in its Lahore resolution, was the establishment of a single state comprising the two zones. The two zones “will form units of Pakistan.”<sup>103</sup> Explaining the whole issue in the light of

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98 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

99 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 171. (Italics added).

100 Abdus Salam Khurshid, *History of the Idea of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1977), p. 131. Also see, Waheed Qureshi, *Pakistan ki Nazaryati Bunyadain* (Lahore, 1973), p. 162.

101 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. II (Karachi, 1970), pp. 341-44, esp., p. 343.

102 Liaquat Ali Khan, comp., *Resolutions of the All-India Muslim League from March 1940 to 1941* (Delhi, n.d.), p. 35.

103 Pirzada, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence*, pp. 101, 110, 113.

“the right of self-determination”, Jinnah indeed went on to ask in exasperation:

...can you not appreciate our point of view that we claim the right of self-determination [sic] as a nation and not as a territorial unit, and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation, which is our birth-right? Whereas you are laboring under the wrong idea that ‘self-determination’ means only that of ‘a territorial unit’, which, by the way, is neither demarcated nor defined yet, and there is no union or federal constitution of India in being, functioning as a sovereign Central government. *Ours is a case of division and carrying out two independent sovereign States by way of settlement between two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, and not of severance or secession from any existing union, which is non-set in India. The right of self-determination, which we claim, postulates that we are a nation, and as such it would be the self-determination of the Muslims, and they alone are entitled to exercise that right.*<sup>104</sup>

As no resolution, document, or statement of the League leaders ever mentioned the word “states” in reference to Pakistan after 1944, the Muslim masses increasingly came to own the idea of one state of Pakistan. The polls in 1945-46, which the League swept by securing 460 out of the 533 Muslim seats, was a clear manifestation of this trend. In an election speech, Jinnah declared: “...Our demand of Pakistan is clear. *The areas in which Muslims are numerically in majority should be grouped to constitute an independent State...*”<sup>105</sup> The League Legislators’ Convention merely went on to acknowledge the public sentiment on the issue: “That the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the North-East and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan in the North-West of India, namely Pakistan zones where the Muslims are in a dominant majority be constituted into a sovereign independent State...”<sup>106</sup>

Apparently, the reason the Lahore resolution did not clearly mention ‘one sovereign state’ was tactical. Given the relatively weak position of the League with regard to the provincial leaders of Muslim-majority provinces then, who were freshly empowered by the provincial autonomy granted by the 1935 Act, Jinnah thought it best not to offend them at this stage,

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104 *Ibid.*, p. 117. (Italics added).

105 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 219. (Italics added).

106 A.M. Zaidi, *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought*, Vol. VI, p. 176.

particularly the powerful leaders of the Punjab and Bengal. He decided to be patient and tactful till he could re-organize the League in the two provinces on a sure footing and thus challenge their dominance. But as he advanced and the League increasingly gained strength over the years, Jinnah began to assert more and more on the issue. The overwhelming victory of the League in 1945-46 elections in the Muslim-majority provinces settled the matter for good. The League Legislators' Convention resolution of April 1946 sealed it.

Let us now turn to the second ambiguity about the absence of "a connecting link between the two zones" and the inference that the Lahore resolution should therefore "be seen as a bargaining counter". Nothing could be farther from the truth. The two zones, as has been pointed out earlier, were certainly "grouped together" in the Madras session of the Muslim League in 1941. Agreed that it did not suggest a union of two zones under a common centre, but it still did not mean that the idea was to use the resolution as a bargaining counter as alleged. On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the absence of a clear-cut centre in the resolution and in subsequent declarations of the League was due to its apprehensions and fear that any talk about the centre, whether in the sense of Indian federation or all-India confederation, would ultimately hurt its cause. In his presidential address delivered extempore at Delhi session of the League in April 1943, Jinnah thus vented out this fear:

There are people who talk of some sort of a loose federation. There are people who talk of giving the widest freedom to the federating units and residuary powers resting with the units. But they forget the entire constitutional history of the various parts of the world. Federation however described and in whatever terms it is put, must ultimately deprive the federating units of the authority in all vital matters. The units, despite themselves, would be compelled to grant more and more power to the central authority, until in the end a strong central government will have been established by the units themselves and they will be driven to do so by absolute necessity, if the basis of a federal government is accepted.<sup>107</sup>

Therefore, Jinnah went on to assert that the Muslims cannot,

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107 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 529-30.

agree to any proposal, which has for its basis any conception or idea of a central government – federal or confederal – for it is bound to lead in the long run to the emasculation of the entire Muslim nation, economically, socially, educationally, culturally, or politically and to the establishment of the Hindu majority raj in this subcontinent.<sup>108</sup>

The fact that the League consciously and deliberately avoided discussion of the centre is also supported by the evidence of Sikandar Hayat Khan who was a party to drafting of the resolution. “I have no hesitation in admitting”, he declared in 1941 in the Punjab Assembly, “that I was responsible for drafting the original resolution. But let me make it clear that the resolution which I drafted was radically amended by the Working Committee, and there is a wide divergence in the resolution I drafted and the one that was finally passed. *The main difference between the two resolutions is that the latter part of my resolution which related to the centre and coordination of the activities of the various units, was eliminated*”.<sup>109</sup>

Ironically, Jinnah himself was aware of the bargaining counter thesis which was given currency by the forces out to harm the Pakistan idea even in those days. But he could not be more upset about it. As he reiterated his position at the Pakistan Session of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation on 2 March 1941:

It is quite obvious that no federal constitution was ever framed or enacted without the agreement and consent of the units entering into the federal scheme of their own free will and accord. The only solution for the Muslims of India, which will stand the test of trial and time, is that

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108 *Ibid.*, p. 530.

109 Sikandar Hayat Khan’s speech in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 11 March 1941, in V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 444. (Italics added). Ashiq Hussain Batalvi, however, in his account of the proceedings strongly contests the truth of his assertion. He insists that not only Sikandar Hayat Khan was present on the night of 22 March, when the Lahore resolution was finally worded by the Muslim League Subject Committee but was also very keen to see to it that it was correctly translated into Urdu. He, in fact, rose from the back seats to come and sit with Maulana Zafar Ali Khan who was doing the translation work, to make sure that the translation was exact. Batalvi thus claims that Sikandar Hayat Khan had an active hand in the final drafting of the resolution. Ashiq Husain Batalvi, *Chand Yadain, Chand Tassurat*, pp. 246-47. Cited in Waheed Qureshi, *Pakistan ki Nazaryati Bunyadain*, pp. 149-50.

India should be partitioned so that both the communities can be developed freely and fully according to their own genius, economically, socially, culturally and politically. The struggle is for the fullest opportunities and of the expression of the Muslim national will. The vital contest in which we are engaged is not only for the material gain but also the very existence of the soul of a Muslim nation. Hence I have said often that *it is matter of life and death to the Musalmans and is not a counter for bargaining*.<sup>110</sup>

The argument of Jinnah's use of the Lahore resolution as a bargaining counter is further weakened by the fact that both British and Congress leaders accused him of intransigence on the issue of Pakistan. Wavell and Mountbatten's views are a common knowledge and hardly need any emphasis. Wavell's *Journal* and Collins and Lapierre's *Mountbatten and the Partition of India* (not to speak of the voluminous *Transfer of Power* volumes) are full of such references. Similarly, the Congress leaders such as, Gandhi, Nehru, and Patel were not sparing in their criticism of Jinnah on that account. Indian writers who based their accounts on the Congress records offer typical comments. V.P. Menon, for instance, writing of the partition of India, lamented: "...But sadder still is the thought that Jinnah, the hero of my generation, a great nationalist in his time and one who fought many a battle for the freedom of his country, should later have fought so successfully against its freedom, and should eventually, almost single-handed, have brought about its division".<sup>111</sup> In a similar vein, B.R. Nanda charged: "That communal antagonism should have reached a new peak in the closing years of British rule was perhaps natural: it was, in political terms, a war of succession. However, it is doubtful if the

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110 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 246-47. (Italics added). Also note Jinnah's answer at a press conference at Delhi on 13 September 1942. "Asked if there was any chance of the modification of the Muslim demands, the Quaid-i-Azam declared: If you start asking for sixteen annas in a rupee [Indian currency then] there is room for bargaining. The Muslim League has never put forward any demand which can, by any reasonable man, be characterized as unreasonable. The Muslim League stands for independence both of the Hindus and of the Musalmans. Hindu India had got three-fourths of India in its pocket according to our proposals, and it is the Hindu India which is bargaining to see if it can get remaining one-fourth also for itself and rid us out of it". *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 431.

111 Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 437.

communal problem would have dominated Indian politics in the way it did without Jinnah's impact on it."<sup>112</sup> And, most importantly, Tara Chand recorded wryly: "The success was mainly due to the dedication and the single-minded and skilful pertinacity of one man, viz. Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He had made up his mind in 1937 that the solution of the communal problems lay in the separation of the Muslims in the majority areas from India, hence he played his cards with consummate ability. He persuaded the Muslims of all parts of India – those who would profit by the establishment of Pakistan, as well as those who were bound to suffer from the consequences of partition – to believe that all of them would gain by an independent Muslim State. This speaks volumes for his powers of deluding men to see in a mirage fountains of real water".<sup>113</sup>

Ayesha Jalal who promotes the idea of bargaining counter more intensely than anybody else, suggests in the context of her discussion of Jinnah's feelings about a common Governor-General for India and Pakistan that: "To share a common Governor-General with Hindustan would have given Congress an excuse to use this joint office to make terms separately with the Muslim areas in the event that the Pakistan constituent assembly fell to pieces. It was to avoid this disaster that Jinnah had to exercise the powers of a Governor-General himself and in the process consolidate the League's authority over the Muslim areas".<sup>114</sup> This hardly makes the case for bargaining counter look plausible now, unless rules of the game are: 'Heads I win, tails you lose.'

In her later book, *Self and Sovereignty*, however, Jalal reformulated her emphasis on the bargaining counter, and qualified it by arguing that: "While the insistence on national status for Indian Muslims was absolute, the demand for a separate and sovereign state with no relationship to a Hindustan containing almost as many Muslims remained open to negotiations until the late summer of 1946."<sup>115</sup> Apparently, she is referring to the Cabinet Mission's visit to India and Jinnah's acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. But that acceptance, as has been argued

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112 Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 208.

113 Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, p. 541.

114 Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p. 292.

115 Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (Lahore, 2001), p. 400.

elsewhere,<sup>116</sup> was tactical in nature, leading to the goal of a separate, sovereign state of Pakistan in due course of time. In her most recent study on the subject, Jalal toned down her emphasis still further, and indeed blamed “some historians and publicists on both sides of the 1947 divide [to] have interpreted [her argument] as implying that the demand for Pakistan was a mere ‘bargaining counter’”. In so far as politics is the art of the possible, bargaining is an intrinsic part of that art.”<sup>117</sup> Fine, but that should be true of any political statement or declaration. Why insist on the Lahore resolution as a ‘bargaining counter’ in particular and again and again? For, as Saleena Karim has pointed out, she “used the term ‘bargaining counter’ for the Pakistan demand, and then no fewer than three times.”<sup>118</sup> Clearly, Jalal has modified her position radically, virtually giving up on her much vaunted bargaining counter, and of course, the associated ‘revisionist’ thesis. It is time those historians and writers, and there are quite a few of them in Pakistan and abroad, who have faithfully followed Jalal over the years, without doing much inquiry themselves, should re-consider their stance too.

As to the third ambiguity about the failure of the Lahore resolution to define areas in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, and particularly in the sense “whether ‘area’ connoted provinces or part of a province”, it must be emphasized that the Muslim League had deliberately left this matter ‘ambiguous’ to help include as many Muslim-majority areas as possible, including some in the Hindu-majority provinces. Ashiq Husain Batalvi who was present in the meetings of Subject Committee of the League which met on the night of 22 March, and the morning of 23 March 1940, has revealed in his reminiscences that he personally was of the opinion that the Muslim demand should clearly restrict itself to Muslim-majority provinces and had, in fact, suggested an amendment to the effect that the word “provinces” should replace the word “Muslim majority areas”, but the committee did not approve. Liaquat Ali Khan explained to me that

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116 See Ch. 8 of this book. Also see, Sikandar Hayat, *The Charismatic Leader: Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan*, 2nd ed (Karachi, 2014), Ch. 7, esp. pp. 372-90.

117 Ayesha Jalal, “Between Myth and History”, in *M.A. Jinnah: Views and Reviews*, ed., M.R. Kazimi (Karachi, 2005), p. 120.

118 Saleena Karim, *Secular Jinnah and Pakistan: What the Nation Doesn't Know* (Karachi, 2010), p. 178.

this “ambiguity” was “deliberate”, the idea being not to concede any area of Muslim-majority provinces but to include areas like Delhi and Aligarh in the proposed Muslim state.<sup>119</sup> In this sense, the ambiguity about the areas to be included in Pakistan was tactical again. It was not to maintain “an immaculate silence on the inner meaning of the Pakistan demand.”<sup>120</sup>

In the end, the Lahore resolution was primarily concerned with the Muslim-majority provinces of British India. It could offer no more than a promise of “adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards” to the Muslims in other parts of India. These safeguards were to be arranged on reciprocal basis. The same safeguards were to be provided to the Hindus in Pakistan. And there were undoubtedly many Muslims who believed that this kind of reciprocity would work. They were convinced that they would not be “weakened by the separation of Muslims into Pakistan and Hindustan”.<sup>121</sup> Expressing their optimism, I.I. Chundrigar, a League leader in the Bombay Assembly, argued “that a balance of power between Hindustan and Pakistan was the best safeguard for the Muslim minorities. When there was Hindu rule in the Deccan, he recalled from the past history of India, the Muslims were oppressed, and similarly when there was Muslim rule there, the Hindus did not always feel happy. But when in the Deccan there was, side by side, a Muslim Nizam and Marhatta power, neither oppressed its minorities. That is what would happen, he believed, when Pakistan and Hindustan existed side by side as sovereign states, neither would oppress its minorities”.<sup>122</sup>

Jinnah realized that there was no escape from the minority problem. The Muslims, he knew, “wherever they are in a minority cannot improve their position under a united India or under one central government. Whatever happens, they would remain a minority”. But he also reckoned that, by

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119 Cited in Waheed Qureshi, *Pakistan ki Nazaryati Bunadain*, pp. 248-49. This account of Batalvi is also corroborated by Mohamed Raza Khan. See his, *What Price Freedom?* (Karachi, 1977), p. 76.

120 Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p. 186.

121 Quoted in B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India* (Bombay, 1946), pp. 48-49.

122 A.M. Zaidi, *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought*, Vol. VI, p. 183.

“coming in the way of the division of India they do not and cannot improve their own position.”<sup>123</sup> Thus, the only choice was:

[W]hether the entire Muslim India of 90,000,000 should be subjected to a Hindu majority raj or whether at least 60,000,000 of Musalmans residing in the areas where they form a majority should have their own homeland and thereby have an opportunity to develop their spiritual, cultural, economic and political life in accordance with their own genius and shape their own future destiny...<sup>124</sup>

Indeed, Jinnah was convinced that a separate homeland was “not only a practicable goal but the only goal” for the Muslims.<sup>125</sup> He saw no other way out of their present predicament. The peculiar demographic and geographic pattern of distribution of their population, with majority of the Muslims grouped together in two clusters, one in north-west and the other in east, allowed for a separate state only in the Muslim-majority provinces of India. That was the territory the Muslims could demand for their new nation-state of Pakistan. They could not ask for more. They had to settle for what was possible, practical and, above all, achievable.

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123 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writing*, Vol. I, p. 174.

124 *Ibid.*, p. 175.

125 *Ibid.*, p. 253.

**Chapter 7**  
**Jinnah, Muslim League, and Political Strategy**  
**for the Achievement of Pakistan**

“Several volumes have appeared on Jinnah’s life, and year after year, Pakistani newspapers and journals publish articles on his achievements. The author is still unaware of any book or article which has analyzed carefully and convincingly the political strategy that Jinnah followed in building almost from the scratch the Muslim League movement which helped him in achieving the state of Pakistan”.<sup>1</sup> Thus wrote Khalid bin Sayeed in the 1960s. But we have not learnt much about the “political strategy” in this long, intervening period which has otherwise been one of active interest in the study of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah both in Pakistan and abroad. In spite of Sayeed’s own efforts<sup>2</sup> and of those other interested scholars such as, Saleem M.M. Qureshi,<sup>3</sup> Z.H. Zaidi,<sup>4</sup> Abdul Hamid,<sup>5</sup> Waheed-uz-Zaman,<sup>6</sup> Sharif al Mujahid,<sup>7</sup> R.J. Moore,<sup>8</sup> Stanley

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- 1 Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative, Phase, 1857-1947* (London, 1968), p. 294.
  - 2 Khalid bin Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah and his Political Strategy”, in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds., C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (London, 1970) and “Political leadership and Institution Building under Jinnah, Ayub and Bhutto”, in *Pakistan: The Long View*, eds., Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti and Howard Wriggins (Durham, 1977).
  - 3 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, *Jinnah and the Making of A Nation* (Karachi, 1969) and “The Consolidation of Leadership in the Last Phase of the Politics of the All-India Muslim League”, *Asian Profile*, Vol. 1, No.2 (October 1973).
  - 4 Z.H. Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-47”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*.
  - 5 Abdul Hamid, *On Understanding the Quaid-i-Azam* (Islamabad, 1976) and “Quaid-i-Azam and the Pakistan Demand”, *Journal of Pakistan Studies*, Vol. II (1980).
  - 6 Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Myth and Reality* (Islamabad, 1976).
  - 7 Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981) and “Jinnah’s Rise to Muslim Leadership”, in *World Scholars on Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., A.H. Dani (Islamabad, 1979).
  - 8 R.J. Moore, “Jinnah and the Pakistan Demand”, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1983).

Wolpert,<sup>9</sup> Ayesha Jalal,<sup>10</sup> and, of late, M. Rafique Afzal,<sup>11</sup> a number of pertinent questions still remain unanswered.

One needs to understand, for instance, how did Jinnah manage to inspire and lead the Muslim masses when, according to some of his unrelenting critics: “A more improbable leader of Indian Muslim masses could hardly be imagined”?<sup>12</sup> How was it possible to obtain support in Muslim-majority provinces of India where the Muslim League advance clashed with the interests of the powerful provincial leaders? How did Jinnah succeed in transforming the League into a well-knit, disciplined organization of the Muslims, indeed their only representative political party? How did Jinnah appeal to the Muslim masses? How did Jinnah inspire the students, ulama, pir and sajjadanashin, and women in particular to play a critical role in mobilizing support for the League and Pakistan? How did Jinnah influence the political behavior of social groups and classes such as, industrial and commercial classes, labourers and farmers, and of course the general mass of the Muslim youth in favour of Pakistan? How did Jinnah take advantage of the War situation (Second World War) to build the League and push the case of Pakistan with the British authorities? How did he eventually achieve Pakistan? In this chapter, an attempt will be made to find answers to these and other related questions to highlight Jinnah’s political strategy for building the League and, with its help, “achieving the state of Pakistan”.

Jinnah had of course started the task of organizing the League after he returned to India in 1935 (from London) to save the Muslims from what he called ‘the greatest danger’ posed to them in the wake of India’s advance towards self-government and freedom. His efforts did make a considerable impression on the political scene right away as was evident

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9 Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York, 1984).

10 Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985).

11 M. Rafique Afzal, *A History of the All-India Muslim League, 1906-1947* (Karachi, 2013). For an exclusive and detailed account of the re-organization of the Muslim League in the NWFP see, Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism: Muslim Politics in the North-West Frontier Province, 1937-47* (Karachi, 1992).

12 Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (London, 1975), p. 102.

from the proceeding of the historic Lucknow session of the League in 1937. But it was only after the adoption of Lahore Resolution in 1940 that he was confronted with the most difficult and demanding task of his political career. He had to gain and secure support of all the Muslims from all over India for the League and the demand for Pakistan now.

In the estimate of the present author, Jinnah developed a political strategy based on several tactical moves. In the first instance, he 'expanded' the League to make room for the new social groups and classes who were moved by the Pakistan idea, and thus were keen to join the League. So far, the League, was "a dispersed weakly articulated and organized feudalistic traditional system"<sup>13</sup> with little capacity for new entrants. Jinnah made structural changes to ensure that the League would be able to welcome and accommodate them. After going through the 'expansion' phase, he brought the newly mobilized and the traditional groups into the League under a single, national authority. He 'concentrated' power in the hands of the President of the League. He was already holding this apex office. If the League were to become "the sole representative body of Muslim India", <sup>14</sup> it was imperative that it must also have "sole representative" leader who could speak on its behalf. To ensure mass support, Jinnah also launched a mass mobilization campaign to give the people a 'cause' to identify with, and thus help create their stakes in the success of the League and its campaign for Pakistan. Finally, he exploited fully all opportunities of the on-going war, particularly those provided by the British and the Congress (by default) to strengthen the League and enhance the appeal of the Pakistan demand. These tactical moves of course did not come in succession. Rather, they operated simultaneously, reinforcing one another in the process. Let us examine each one of these

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13 As Huntington would have described it. See, Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, 1968), p. 146. Discussing the role of political leaders in the politics of modernization in the 'new nations' of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Huntington stressed: "Depending upon one's perspective, one can thus define political modernization to mean either the concentration of power, the expansion of power, or the dispersion of power... At one point or another in a country's history each does constitute 'modernization.'" *Ibid.*, p. 145.

14 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 217.

moves in some detail. To begin with, 'expansion' of the League and its help with the mobilization of the Muslims in the country.

Jinnah initiated the task of expansion of the League by giving it a new organizational set-up. Under the Constitution of 1940,<sup>15</sup> Primary Leagues were established at the grassroots level, each representing a ward or a *mohalla* within a city. Representatives of the Primary Leagues were constituted into District/Tehsil Muslim Leagues and were entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the affairs of the League within their own areas. Several District League representatives were grouped into a Provincial Muslim League, representing a particular province. Provincial Muslim Leagues were given representation at the centre in the League Working Committee. The Working Committee, in turn, was placed at the ultimate and effective control of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, stipulating clearly in the constitution that all resolutions passed by the Working Committee would be subject to the approval and ratification of the Council. The Council was to be elected by Provincial Leagues from amongst its members. The President of the League was to be elected every year by the Council from amongst the nominees of different branches of the Muslim League. Jinnah had refused to become 'life President' of the Muslim League. "Let me come to you at the end of every year," he told the Leaguers, "and seek your vote and confidence. Let your President be on his good behaviour."<sup>16</sup>

The result of this carefully coordinated expansion of the League structure was to open new avenues of association and participation within the League, attracting a host of Muslim classes and groups. The most

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15 *The Constitution and Rules of the All-India Muslim League*, published by Liaquat Ali Khan, Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League (Delhi, April 1940).

16 A.A. Ravoof, *Meet Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1955), p. 167. For an excellent and detailed study on the re-organization of the Muslim League during 1937-47 years see, Afzal, *A History of the All-India Muslim League*, pp. 287-494. Afzal, in fact, pointed out that the League not only established its own "organizational structure" but "also encouraged different sections of the Muslim society like women, students, *ulama* and *mashaikh*, professionals, workers and businessmen to organize their own separate pro-League platforms and then mobilized them to achieve its goal of the separate Muslim state of Pakistan." *Ibid.*, p. 287.

enthusiastic response, of course, came from the educated, urban middle classes, merchant-industrialists, traders, bankers, professionals, and other newly mobilized groups who rushed to join the League in order to avail the opportunity they had been looking for and which they found realizable in view of the promise held out by the Pakistan idea. They had perceived early and clearly that the so-called 'Indian nationalism', promoted by the Indian National Congress, was essentially 'Hindu nationalism', and their chances of sharing power with the Hindus were minimal at best. They also did not fail to notice that economic life in India was almost a monopoly of the Hindus (Parsis and Sikhs as well). Trade, industry, professions, government jobs, all were dominated by others. Indeed, they were convinced that the only way they could secure their particular interests was to join the League and work for Pakistan, where they will have freedom and opportunities they hoped to realize. Their support to the League not only assured "a greater dispersion" of power within the organization but also provided Jinnah the much needed strength to keep the traditional groups in check under "reciprocal checks and controls" between the old and new groups.<sup>17</sup> The result was that not only heterogeneous groups like the educated, urban middle classes and the landowning classes could exist side by side in the League but even some of the groups which did not have much liking for other groups saw it in their best interest to support the League. Some ulama, for instance, came to support the League claiming that, "whatever might be alleged about the landlords, the Nawabs and other titled gentry in the League, there was not a shadow of doubt that Jinnah's integrity was irreproachable".<sup>18</sup> The support of the ulama in fact proved to be the most critical factor in League victories in the 1945-46 elections, especially in the Punjab and NWFP (North-West Frontier Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), the two Muslim-majority provinces, dominated by non-League governments. They also contributed much to the success of the League in the two critical referendums of the N-W.F.P and Sylhet over the issue of Pakistan.

In fairness to the 'landlords, the Nawabs and other titled gentry' who stayed with the League, however, it must be said that they not only stood firm in their support to the party under all circumstances, but also did their

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17 For a detailed discussion of this aspect of political leadership see, Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 146.

18 Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, *Khutbat-i-Usmani* (Lahore, 1972), p. 11.

utmost to serve its cause, and its leader, Jinnah. Nawab Ismail Khan, Choudhary Khaliqzaman, Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, Ayub Khuhro, Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, and Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, to name a few more important ones, extended their whole-hearted support to Jinnah and the Pakistan demand. Indeed, in the end, they did not hesitate to sacrifice their own sectional interests for the sake of the larger cause. Highlighting this aspect, Nawab of Mamdot, himself a big landowner from the Punjab, in the course of a speech in 1946 proudly proclaimed: "Whenever the Punjab Muslims showed signs of awakening from their slumber, they were given sleeping doses. This time Sir Bertrand Glancy [Governor Punjab] also gave sleeping doses to the Muslims in the form of *murabbas* [tracts of land] and *jagris* [estates]. He sometimes gave as many as 20 *murabbas* doses to some Muslims, but he failed".<sup>19</sup>

Jinnah recognized the role of landed interests as 'political maximizers', and thus encouraged them to play their part in the cause of the League and Pakistan, as was evident from the large number of the members of the landowning classes serving on the League Working Committee and the Council of the League during this period. Although he did not approve their system of "exploitation" which, he felt, was "vicious" and "wicked" and which had made them "so selfish" that it had become "difficult to reason with them",<sup>20</sup> he was at pains to assure them that the League had nothing against them as a group as long as the demand for Pakistan remained unrealized.<sup>21</sup> "We shall have time", he acknowledged, "to quarrel among ourselves, and we shall have time when these difference will have to be settled, when wrongs and injuries will have to be remedied. We shall have time for domestic programme and policies, but first get the Government. This is a nation without any territory".<sup>22</sup>

The result of the coming together of the newly mobilized and politically participant groups in the League was that it no longer remained a 'reactionary' organization, under the influence of the landlords, the

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19 A.M. Zaidi, ed., *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought*, Vol. VI (Delhi, 1979), pp. 182-83. Nawab of Mamdot renounced eventually both his title and *Jagir* in 1946.

20 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 526.

21 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 46.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 199.

Nawabs and the titled gentry, a few traditional social groups, as has been often claimed in the past both by its bitter critics and ardent supporters.<sup>23</sup> The League had now come to represent the modern, educated, urban middle classes, merchant-industrialists, traders, bankers, professionals, the 'progressive' sections of the Muslim community.<sup>24</sup> It had indeed come to transform itself into a Muslim nationalist organization bringing all social groups and classes together, traditional and modern. It gave them "new life, and a consciousness of themselves as a separate people, with a powerful determination and programme of their own".<sup>25</sup>

But while this "new life" showed "complete harmony"<sup>26</sup> on the face of it, there was no denying that it could lead to internal struggles, unless some mechanism was devised to regulate their interests. Although the demand for Pakistan was a rallying point for all of them, the fact of the matter was that each group saw the demand in the light of its own particular interests. An instrument was needed to provide channels for interest aggregation and articulation within the party. The office of the President of the League, as head of the party, seemed ideal for the purpose. Jinnah, therefore, made the office of the President increasingly strong to enforce discipline and unity in the organization. Successive constitutions of the League in 1941, 1942, and 1944 provided for a steady and sure increase of powers of the President. The 1944 Constitution, for instance, stipulated: "The President shall be the principal head of the whole organization, shall exercise all the powers inherent in his office and be responsible to see that all the authorities work in accordance with the constitution and rules of the All-India Muslim League".<sup>27</sup> The enhanced authority of the office of

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23 Even an ardent supporter such as, Allama Muhammad Iqbal was critical. Commenting upon the moribund state of the League in the late 1930s, Iqbal advised Jinnah to decide finally whether it will remain "a body representing the upper classes of Indian Muslims or masses who have so far, with good reason, shown no interest in it". *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (Lahore, 1942), p. 17. For Nehru's views on the League then see, Ram Gopal, *The Indian Muslims: A Political History* (Bombay, 1959), p. 251.

24 Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 267.

25 W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London, 1946), p. 269.

26 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 260.

27 *The Constitution and Rules of the All-India Muslim League*, published by Liaquat Ali Khan, Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League (Delhi, 1944),

the President in fact went on to provide Jinnah the moral and legal sanction he needed to launch his next move, that is, 'concentration' of power in his own hands, to control and direct the diverse social groups and classes, and thus make the League a well-knit, disciplined organization of the Muslims.

But this was quite a challenge, especially in the case of provincial leaders, as was so evident in the case of Sind (now Sindh), for example.<sup>28</sup> But Jinnah also found it hard to discipline the powerful independent-minded

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p. 17. This increase in the authority of the President was further augmented by the steady increase in the power of the Working Committee, a creation of the President himself, vis-a-vis the League Council. Whereas in 1940, the League Council was invested with powers "to control, direct and regulate the activities" of the party, in the 1944 Constitution the scales were heavily tilted in favour of the Working Committee. The Working Committee was all-powerful, required only to place its decisions before the League Council for "information". The say of the Working Committee in the affairs of the League was further enhanced by the powers given to it not only to frame the rule and regulations of the Central Parliamentary Board but also to help the President to appoint its members. This was clearly the case on the eve of 1945-46 elections. A part of the explanation lay in the fact that, unlike the Working Committee, which had no more than 21 members, as late as 1945-47, the Council was a huge body. Besides hundreds of nominees from various provinces, it also included the ex-officio members of the Indian Legislative Assembly, the Council of the States, the presidents and secretaries of the various provincial Muslim Leagues and some nominees of the President.

28 Sind presented Jinnah the difficult task in the form of a bitter struggle and feud between G.M. Syed, President of the Provincial Muslim League and Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, leader of the League Parliamentary Party in the provincial assembly. Jinnah did his utmost, through public appeals, correspondence, and even personal visits to Sind, to settle the differences between the two. But having discovered that Syed was not willing to cooperate, Jinnah, in the end, in the larger interest of the party, did not hesitate to get rid of him on the eve of the crucial 1945-46 elections. Syed, of course, went on to contest elections on his own but managed to secure only 4 seats as against 28 won by the League. For some of the details regarding Jinnah's efforts to placate Syed see, in particular, Muhammad Qasim Soomro, "Muslim Politics in Sindh, 1938-1947", M. Phil Thesis, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 1985, pp. 92-94. For a larger perspective on the politics of Sind at this point in time see, Hamida Khuhro, *Mohammad Ayub Khuhro: A Life of Courage in Politics* (Karachi, 1998).

provincial leaders of the Punjab and Bengal who had joined the League in 1937 at Lucknow, more out of expediency than any genuine conviction. These leaders were highly reluctant to yield to the control of the centre. This was clearly reflected in the attitude of Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab, and Maulvi A.K. Fazlul Haq, the Premier of Bengal. But then it was clear to Jinnah that without exercising direct and decisive power over these recalcitrant provincial leaders eventually, the League could not claim to be the sole representative body of the Muslims. He was thus keen to work to bring these provincial leaders under the authority of the central League even if it meant an arduous, long journey towards that end.

Thus, notwithstanding his lukewarm attitude towards the League, Jinnah approached Sikandar Hayat Khan. Not only he appointed him a member of the League Working Committee, he also allowed his followers in the Unionist Party to have a considerable influence and representation in the League Council through the so-called 'Jinnah-Sikandar Pact', much to the dismay of the old Leaguers like Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Malik Barkat Ali. The climax, of course, came when the League Council, in its meeting of 23 April 1938 rejected the affiliation of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, represented by the old Leaguers. Jinnah was distressed. He respected the sentiments and indeed sacrifices of the old Leaguers in the province. But he could not ignore the kind of hold the Unionists had come to exercise in the Punjab over the years, since the early 1920s. He was thus at pains to ensure that Sikandar Hayat Khan remained associated with the League in the Punjab, at least till such time that the League itself could 'take off' and become an effective force in the province in its own right. This of course was an 'expansionist' phase in Jinnah's strategy as far as the provincial leaders were concerned. He was content to 'expand' his power for the present without worrying too much about 'concentration' of power in his own hands. But, as the League began to command general respect, recognition and support in the Punjab, and its Pakistan demand came to inspire significant following in the province, he could not for long postpone the next move.<sup>29</sup>

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29 Jinnah indeed appeared so concerned with the Punjab that there were indications of his "taking up permanent residence in Lahore..." For, as Jinnah himself told a public meeting in Lahore on 2 April 1944, "the League was

In 1941, Jinnah forced Sikandar Hayat Khan to resign from the National Defence Council of the Viceroy, which he had joined, along with some other provincial leaders, without permission and approval of the President of the League. By 1942, Sikandar Hayat Khan was not only “reluctant to break” with him but, more importantly, was “less inclined even than before to stand up to Jinnah”. Indeed, he feared, as he told Penderel Moon, “that unless he walked wearily and kept on the right side of Jinnah he would be swept away by a wave of fanaticism and, wherever he went, would be greeted by the Muslims with black flags”.<sup>30</sup> One revealing instance was his decision to attend the Provincial League Conference in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad), presided by Jinnah himself, and to speak in favour of the League demand for Pakistan. This was for the first time that Sikandar Hayat Khan had addressed a League meeting in the Punjab. Commenting upon the strategy adopted by Jinnah, M.A.H. Ispahani, a close confidant of Jinnah and an important leader of the League in Bengal, summed up the whole situation in these words: “The Quaid [*sic*] gave a long rope to Sir Sikandar. The patience he showed paid dividends. Muslim public opinion in the Punjab swung strongly in favour of the Muslim League, and in spite of the indifference on the part of Sir Sikandar and his associates, the Muslim League began to gain strength in the province. By November 1942, the Punjab Muslim League had developed to such an extent that it was able to hold a Provincial Conference at Lyallpur on 18 November, which was attended and addressed by Quaid-i-Azam himself. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, too, noting the trend of public opinion, showed up at the Conference and made a speech. Before this, he had been careful to avoid League meetings inside his province”.<sup>31</sup> Jinnah himself, in his ‘Foreword’ to *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (1942), not only defended his policy towards Sikandar Hayat Khan but clearly expressed satisfaction with the outcome of his patient approach. “But unfortunately”, he lamented, “he [Iqbal] has not lived to see that Punjab has all around made a remarkable progress

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fighting for the establishment of Pakistan not in Bombay but in the Punjab, which was the key-stone of the proposed Pakistan State”. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writing*, Vol. II, pp. 31-32.

30 Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1961), p. 38.

31 M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: As I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1966), p. 57.

and now it is beyond doubt that Muslims stand solidly behind the Muslim League organization".<sup>32</sup>

Not only he exercised better discretion in the case of Sikandar Hayat Khan, Jinnah also saw to it that the opportunity provided by Fazlul-Haq's entry into the League, no matter how much half-hearted and opportunistic, was not lost. Fazlul Haq, like Sikandar Hayat Khan, was not willing to sacrifice his provincial authority at the altar of an all-India body like the League as long as he could help it. This was so in spite of the fact that he headed a League coalition ministry in the province. While leaders like Ispahani criticized Fazlul Haq for his "lip loyalty to the League"<sup>33</sup>, Jinnah, as in the case of Sikandar Hayat Khan, was patient and tactful. He wanted to make most of the opportunity given to the League to extend its influence and support in the province through Fazlul Haq, no matter how disconcerting it was to the League's genuine followers. As he explained to Ispahani in one of his letters: "You cannot expect everything to go on the footing of a highly developed standard of public life, as these are only the beginnings that are being made. You must not mix up the aims we have with the achievements. The aims are not achieved immediately they are laid down. Bengal has done well and we must be thankful for small mercies. As you go on, of course, with patience and tact, things are bound to develop more and more in accordance with our ideals and aims."<sup>34</sup>

As the turn of events showed, Jinnah's tactfulness paid off. The League emerged as the most powerful organization of the Bengali Muslims. Fazlul Haq was reconciled and was even ready to accept the supreme authority of the central League. While in 1941, he showed signs of defiance by protesting over the manner in which the League leadership had asked him to tender his resignation from the Defence Council and did not care much for his expulsion from the League on that account, by 13 November 1942, he was assuring Jinnah that, "you can easily realize I have been longing to meet you and to assure you of my attachment to you and the Muslim League".<sup>35</sup> On 5 February 1943, he was prepared to "liquidate" his own

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32 *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, pp. 3-4.

33 Ispahani, *As I Knew Him*, p. 50.

34 *Ibid.*, 151.

35 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Quid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence* (Karachi, 1977), p. 78.

party and resign the office of Prime Minister if the League agreed to take him back in its fold.<sup>36</sup> By then, of course, it might not have been difficult for Fazlul Haq to realize the impact of the growing strength of the League. The League candidates had achieved overwhelming victories in two by-elections at Natore and Baburghat against the candidates sponsored by the Haq ministry. By 1943, in fact, Fazlul Haq had lost the majority support and was left with no option but to “assure” Jinnah, “that I will abide by the discipline of the party and the instructions of the President of the Muslim League”.<sup>37</sup> He was back in the League in September 1946, exhausted and tamed. The fact of the matter was that successive constitutions of the League had provided Jinnah the power to bring provincial leaders under the effective control of the centre, making it difficult for “a Sikandar Hayat Khan or a Fazlul Haq to defy the orders of the Quaid-i-Azam”.<sup>38</sup>

Sikandar Hayat Khan died in 1942, upsetting Jinnah’s plans for the future in the Punjab. His successor, Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, encouraged by the British, not only went on to defy Jinnah’s authority at the centre but also chose to break with the League in the province. Not to speak of senior officers and the Governor of the Punjab, Glancy<sup>39</sup> in particular, even the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, tried “to hearten him up for his conflict with Jinnah”. Wavell, in fact, found it hard to believe that a big landowner from the Punjab could not stand up to a “down-country lawyer”.<sup>40</sup> But then, this interference was not unique to the Punjab, where

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36 *Ibid.*, p. 80.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

38 Sayeed, *The Formative Phase*, p. 94.

39 Glancy continued with his support of Khizar Hayat Khan even after the Unionist ministry was routed in the 1945-46 elections. He helped Khizar Hayat Khan form a ministry in spite of the fact that the League won an overwhelming majority of seats in the provincial assembly. Moon, who was closely associated with the Punjab Government acknowledged that the ministry, “a combination of Congress banias, Khizar and the Sikhs”, was “designed with the connivance of the British Governor, simply to keep them from power”. The result was “an example of just the thing that Jinnah always feared and that had prompted the demand for Pakistan. In a United India, the wily Hindus would always succeed in this manner in attaching to themselves a section of the Muslims and using them to defeat the larger interests of the community”. Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 71-72.

40 Penderel Moon, ed., *Wavell The Viceroy's Journal* (Karachi, 1974), pp. 74, 81.

the British had high stakes, being an important recruiting area for the Indian army, particularly during the war years. It was the general thrust of the British policy to keep Muslim-majority areas out of Jinnah's reach. Even a Muslim-minority area like the UP (United Provinces) was not to be given away. As early as 1937, a British Secretary to the Governor of UP was asking, "What has that fellow Jinnah got to do with UP Muslims: who is he in the UP any way"?<sup>41</sup>

Though Jinnah was keen to retain Khizar Hayat Khan's association with the League, he was not willing to accept him as an 'ally', as he had accepted Sikandar Hayat Khan early in his regime. Aware of the phenomenal growth of the League in the Punjab in recent years and the need for discipline in the party in this crucial phase of the struggle for Pakistan, Jinnah was determined to treat him more as a Leaguer, a follower. He wanted him to subject himself to the discipline of the League and its President. Jinnah, in fact, personally came down to Lahore in April 1944 to discuss matters with him at length.<sup>42</sup> But Khizar Hayat Khan, encouraged by the British Government on the one hand and his Unionist supporters on the other, particularly Chhotu Ram, refused to submit to his authority. Subsequent developments showed that this was the beginning

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41 Quoted in C.S. Venkatachar, "1937-47, in Retrospect: A Civil Servant's View", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 469.

42 "I want to make it clear" Jinnah declared in Lahore, "that there is no question of our being bound by any commitment to any one which stands in our way, nor are we under any obligation to any other party in the present coalition, which in any way constitutes any bar or precludes us from taking any decision or decisions we think proper, consistently with our creed, policy and programme". Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol.II, pp. 34-35. Khizar Hayat Khan personally was "prepared to agree that he himself and the Muslims members of the Party should owe direct allegiance to the Muslim League alone, and should in this sense cease to be Unionists..." But then Glancy, Governor of the Punjab, had different ideas: "...the dissolution of the Unionist Ministry and the substitution for it of a Muslim League Ministry, such as Jinnah wants, would be a disaster". As he informed Wavell on 14 April 1944, "I can only tell him [Khizar Hayat Khan] as a friend what I would do in his place and it is my considered opinion that he will have no peace hereafter, nor will he be serving the interests of the Province or of India or of Muslims of the Empire if he gives way to Jinnah and places himself in his power". Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of power*, Vol. IV (London, 1973), pp. 881-82 and 923.

of the end of Khizar Hayat Khan's government. Jinnah not only effectively blocked his political manoeuvres at the centre in Simla Conference of 1945,<sup>43</sup> but also went on to challenge his authority in his home province. Mobilizing mass support in the Punjab over the issue of Pakistan, he first had his Unionist Party routed in 1945-46 elections, and then forced him through a massive 'civil disobedience movement' in January 1947 to resign the ministry. On 3 March, Khizar Hayat Khan had no option but "to leave the field clear for the Muslim League... in the best interest of the Muslims and the Province".<sup>44</sup>

Interestingly, while Jinnah was disposed to 'expand' and 'concentrate' power in his own hands to bring the Muslims under the authority of the President of the League, he was not hesitant to delegate powers to his associates. In December 1943, he set up a 'Committee of Action', with the authority to exercise power on his behalf. As he told the Karachi session of the League on 24 December 1943:

...the work of the Muslim League organization has grown beyond the physical capacity of any single man. If you were to know what I have to attend to all alone, you will be astonished. All over India, today this happening in Patna, tomorrow that thing happening in Bengal; the day after tomorrow this thing happening in N-W.F.P.; the day after that this

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43 Jinnah was determined to make it clear to all the Muslim leaders and especially Khizar Hayat Khan that he could not get his nominee in the Viceroy's expanded Executive Council over and above the head of the League President. Wavell, in a letter to L.S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, thus wrote on 27 June 1945: "We have arrived at the critical point of the Conference and the main stumbling block is the attitude of Jinnah, i.e., his claim to nominate all Muslim members... The most difficult problem will be to provide for the inclusion of a Punjab Muslim". Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. V (London, 1974), p. 1166. While Amery felt that the "rejection of a Punjabi would surely put him in a position of grave discredit with much of Muslim public opinion", Jinnah's position improved, ironically enough, not only in the Punjab where men like Feroz Khan Noon rushed to join him but also in the NWFP. Abdul Qaiyum Khan, Deputy Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, was moved to offer his services to Jinnah and the League. Also see George Cunningham, Governor NWFP's letter to Wavell, dated 24 July 1945. In *Ibid.*, pp. 1228 and 1293; and Pirzada, *Quaid-i-Azan Jinnah's Correspondence*, pp. 300-1.

44 Quoted in Moon, *Divide and Quit*, pp. 76-77.

thing happening in Madras. All sorts of questions arise from day to day and from week to week. Now it is not possible for one single man to do justice to all this...<sup>45</sup>

This delegation of authority also revealed that Jinnah, like a true “modernizing” leader, had now decided to move from a phase of concentration and expansion of power to a phase of “dispersion of power.”<sup>46</sup> He wanted to disperse power. But Jinnah followed a path characteristically peculiar to the modernizing leaders of the developing societies. Power had to be dispersed within the League, and not outside. It was to be “a single-party system”,<sup>47</sup> as Jinnah made it abundantly clear on a number of occasions. There must be no Muslim ‘show-boy’ of the Congress, as he admonished Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in July 1940, nor a Muslim ‘quisling’ such as, Khizar Hayat Khan, as he told Viceroy Wavell at 1945 Simla Conference. Indian Muslims belonged to one party, and that was the All-India Muslim League.<sup>48</sup> In his message to the Muslims of the Frontier Province on 27 November 1945, he boldly stated: “...support League candidate even though he may be lamp-post...”<sup>49</sup>

Jinnah was by now convinced that the League alone was ‘the sole representative body’ of the Muslims. “If anybody disagreed with the League policy”, he challenged, “let him convince him and the League that the League policy was detrimental to the interests of the Muslims”.<sup>50</sup> Jinnah, in fact, equated the League with Pakistan itself during the election

45 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 576,

46 Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p.146.

47 It was extremely rare that modernizing leaders had gone for more “competitive two-party or multiparty systems for expansion and assimilation of groups”. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

48 In this sense, of course, the League appeared more of “a nationalist movement” than a political party in the ordinary sense of the term. Even some of the contemporary writers chose to describe it as “the organ of a surging nationalism” than a mere political party. W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 275.

49 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 247.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 212. Jinnah, thus asserted in a meeting in Delhi on 23 March 1942: “We cannot tolerate Muslims in camp of enemy. Non-League Muslims are traitors in enemy camp”. Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I (London, 1970), p. 468.

campaign. "Every vote in favour of Muslim League candidates", he declared in the course of a speech in the 1945-46 elections, "means Pakistan. Every vote against Muslim League candidate means Hindu Raj".<sup>51</sup> The League was Pakistan and Pakistan was League. The two were inseparable. Indeed, this was to be the hallmark of Jinnah's appeal to the Muslim masses in his next tactical move.

Jinnah made his appeal at two levels: 'normative' and 'structural'. The normative appeal had two distinct components. The first component was that of particular interests of the Muslims and was one of opposition both to the present British rule and the imminent threat of Hindu rule once the British were out of India. British parliamentary system of the government, resting on the majority principle and its authoritarian application at the hands of the Congress in 1937-39 years, clearly showed that, no matter what constitutional guarantees were given, the system could not safeguard or promote Muslim interests. "Muslim India", therefore, Jinnah declared, "cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon the minorities can only mean Hindu raj".<sup>52</sup> But then Jinnah also made it absolutely clear that the Muslim were "not a minority as it is commonly known and understood". The Muslims and Hindus were two separate and distinct nations, and that Muslim nation was "a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state".<sup>53</sup> The Muslims, Jinnah explained,

...are a nation of a hundred million, and what is more, we are nation with our distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclatures, sense of values and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions – in short we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law, we are a nation.<sup>54</sup>

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51 *Ibid.*, p. 247.

52 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 170.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

54 Prizada, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence*, pp. 112-13.

The second and the more important component of Jinnah's normative appeal was that of Islam as an 'ideal' (or ideology). "We wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideal and according to the genius of our people".<sup>55</sup> Islam, he emphasized, "is not a set of rituals, traditions and spiritual doctrines. Islam is also a code for every Muslim which regulates his life and his conduct..."<sup>56</sup> It regulates, he explained, "everything from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life, from the salvation of the soul to the health of the body, from the rights of all to those of each individual, from morality to crime... It is complete code regulating the whole Muslim society, every department of life, collectively and individually".<sup>57</sup>

Jinnah's appeal was thus a blend of both traditional and modern norms, promoting on the one hand the modern concept of nationalism based on culture, language, history and aspirations of the people, and advancing the traditional, all-embracing character of Islam on the other. The reconciliation of the two, that is, Islam and nationalism in Muslim nationalism, and ultimately the demand for Pakistan as a separate homeland for the Muslims, not only went on to win the support of all groups and classes of Muslim community, traditional and modern, but also to encourage some of the most affected groups of the community to see it and profess it as primarily their own call to duty. But before we proceed to identify and delineate the role of some of these groups here, it should be emphasized that an appeal based on both traditional and modern norms, or indeed the case of a nationalist movement based on religious identity, was not a unique phenomenon. Many nationalist leaders have experienced and benefited from this development to advance their cause, especially in the Muslim world.<sup>58</sup> As Wilfred Cantwell Smith, after a detailed analysis of Muslim nationalist movements described it, "the driving force of nationalism has become more and more religious the more

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55 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 171.

56 Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statement of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-34 and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1976), p. 456.

57 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol.II, pp. 208-9.

58 Jamal-al-Din al-Afghani offers the most striking example. Echoes of his rhetoric were heard in the speeches of modern "nationalists" in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East ever since.

the movement has penetrated the masses. Even where the leaders and the form and the ideas of the movement have been nationalist on a more or less Western pattern, the followers and the substance and the emotions were significantly Islamic".<sup>59</sup>

Jinnah, however, was comfortable with it and indeed promoted the Islamic sentiment in his mass mobilization campaign as a "higher aspect" of the Pakistan goal. As he explained this to Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, one of his young followers, in early 1943 at some length:

The Muslim ruled India for well-nigh a thousand years. But what is the position now? You can go around Delhi and see the descendants of Moghul Princes earning a miserable living by carrying earth-loads on their heads. The Muslims have been going down and down due to Hindu machinations and discrimination under British rule. What will be the Muslims' lot in an independent United India with Hindus in absolute power? They will be just another class of pariahs occupying a status lower than even that of the Scheduled Castes. That is the economic aspect of the situation which makes it essential and indispensable for Muslims to seek their emancipation in the form of a separate independent State in regions of their majority. But that is not the whole object of the Pakistan movement. The other and higher aspect of Pakistan is that it would be a base where we will be able to train and bring up Muslim intellectuals, educationists, economists, scientists, doctors, engineers, technicians, etc. who will work to bring about Islamic renaissance.<sup>60</sup>

But while Islam inspired and moved the Muslims in the struggle for Pakistan and was indeed the basis, it needs to be stressed that Muslim nationalism, like any nationalism, remained a political project. It had a political character and function, and thus served the Pakistan movement, led by Jinnah and the League, in a political way and for political ends, that is, the creation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for the Muslims.

The most affected groups of the Muslim community who worked for Pakistan and worked for it enthusiastically were: 1) students; 2) ulama, pir and sajjadanashin; and 3) women.<sup>61</sup> They were the ones who felt more

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59 W.C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton, 1957), p. 75.

60 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam As Seen by His Contemporaries* (Lahore, 1966), p. 42.

61 "In theory" also, claims Huntington, the most effective support "should come

than others the need for a separate homeland, and thus did their utmost, even beyond the call of duty, to spread the message of Pakistan among the Muslim masses. In the process, they also strengthened the League beyond expectations. As it was largely their efforts that helped Jinnah successfully mobilize mass support behind the League and Pakistan, it will not be inappropriate to discuss their contributions in some detail. Although they worked in concert, reinforcing each other more often than not, for the sake of analytical clarity, their account will be summarized under separate heads.

**1. Students.** Being educated, informed and aware of the political developments in India, especially constitutional, the students were obviously more motivated by Jinnah's appeal in the Pakistan demand.<sup>62</sup> They were already behind the Hindus in government jobs and professions, and the future did not seem to hold much promise to them. They were finding it increasingly difficult to gain employment based on their educational qualifications. They were convinced that this had to do a great deal with their 'minority' status, made all the more complicated by the inherently biased system of government, placed in the hands of the Hindu majority community. Of course, this feeling was not peculiar to the students. Almost all groups of the Muslim society were confronted with this state of affairs. But the frustrations of youth added a further impetus to their suppressed energies and denied opportunities. This was amply demonstrated by their enthusiasm and commitment in the struggle for Pakistan.

While the Indian students had been active on the political scene for a long time, since the days of the partition of Bengal (1905-11), Jinnah had in particular advised the Muslim students to shun active politics and confine their interest to studies and development of their professional careers. He was for most part content to urge them to stay out of the political arena. It

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from groups which are not so directly identified with particular ethnic or economic strata. In some measures, students, religious leader... may fall into this category". Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 239.

62 For a detailed view of the students' role in the struggle for Pakistan see, Mukhtar Zaman, *Students Role in Pakistan Movement* (Karachi, 1979); Sarfraz Hussain Mirza, ed., *The Punjab Muslim Students Federation: An Annotated Documentary Survey, 1937-47* (Lahore, 1978); and Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, App. 2, pp. 437-51.

was only when he realized that the Muslims were confronted with a difficult situation in the mid 1930s that he blessed, in 1937, the formation of the All-India Muslim Students Federation to help organize the Muslim students on a political platform.<sup>63</sup> But he still did not recommend an active political role for them. He wanted them “to study and think and realise your responsibility”.<sup>64</sup> But, then, Jinnah could not for long deny that the students had a role to play in the future life of the Muslims, and an active one at that, especially in mobilizing support for Pakistan among the masses. In a message to the UP branch of the Muslim Students Federation in late 1944, he eventually told them:

...it is up to you now – Muslim students and Muslim young men – to take this nation-wide task in its right perspective and in the spirit of voluntary service in the cause of Islam and the Millat. It is the young men who can make the great contribution to mould the destinies of a nation. It is the youth who fight, toil and struggle for the freedom of a nation. I hope this grim reality is not lost upon you.<sup>65</sup>

With this call, the “grim reality” was of course not lost upon the Muslim students. They promptly organized themselves under the umbrella of All-India Muslim Students Federation, and moved to make sure that the struggle for Pakistan was not lost by their failure to act. They planned tours of different parts of the country, particularly during the summer vacations, when the colleges and universities were closed, to make personal contacts with the masses, to explain to them the rationale, the need for Pakistan. They made it a point to visit the rural areas in particular. Aligarh university students travelled extensively in the rural areas of the Punjab and Sind to enlist support for the League and the Pakistan demand. In their efforts, the students were of course helped by the administration, faculty, and staff of the university. Besides travelling to remote areas, the students also brought about a number of journals and magazines devoted to the Pakistan cause. Journals such as, *Awakening*,

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63 Yet, Jinnah was careful to point out to the organizers of the All-India Muslim Students Federation in its very first conference held at Calcutta on 29 December 1937: “You are in no way auxiliary to the Muslim League, although you may have sympathy with it.” Cited in Mukhtar Zaman, *Students Role*, p. 28.

64 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I. p. 40.

65 Shamsul Hasan Collection, National Archives of Pakistan, Islamabad, “*Students*”, Vol. II, p. 129.

a quarterly published by the Aligarh Muslim Students Federation, played a distinct role in propaganda work.

The students not only helped Jinnah with the political aspect of the campaign for Pakistan but also played an important role in social and economic uplift of the poor masses. Hailing mostly from a middle class background, they were prone to see the plight of Muslim masses from an angle different from that of big landowners dominating the provincial Leagues, especially in the Punjab and Sind. They shared their thoughts with the political leadership at the centre who, in turn, revised and reformulated their socio-economic policies and election manifestos considerably. This shift was bound to pay dividends in the short-term as well. By the end of 1944, the Punjab and Sind Leagues claimed a following of nearly two hundred thousand and three hundred thousand members respectively.<sup>66</sup> The result was an overwhelming success for the League in these two provinces in the 1945-46 elections. Speaking of Sind, in particular, Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad claimed that: "I can say without fear of contradiction that the League's cent-per-cent success in the second general election held in Sind towards the end of 1946 was due, in a large measure, to the thorough and systematic work done by Aligarh men."<sup>67</sup>

But the students were not simply keen to mobilize support for the League among the sympathetic, pro-Pakistan Muslim masses. They were also determined to take on the powerful opponents of Pakistan demand, especially the recalcitrant provincial leaders. This was demonstrated most convincingly in the Punjab where the Punjab Muslim Students Federation, led by Mian Bashir Ahmad, Hameed Nizami, Zahur Alam Shaheed, and others, not only bore "the brunt of the entire opposition" to the Pakistan demand but also took it upon themselves to launch a civil disobedience movement against Khizar Hayat Khan's ministry, the most powerful organized threat to the League in the province.<sup>68</sup> The ouster of Khizar Hayat Khan in March 1947, mainly because of their untiring efforts, proved to be the turning point in the fortunes of the League in the Punjab and the

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66 Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 268; and W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 274.

67 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, "A Disciple Remembers," in *Quaid-i-Azam as seen by his Contemporaries*, ed. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad (Lahore, 1976), p. 216.

68 Mukhtar Zaman, *Students Role*, p. 59.

struggle for Pakistan. Jinnah was thrilled. In a rare tribute, he exclaimed: "Perhaps the students do not know that by organizing this successful movement, they have changed the course of history of India".<sup>69</sup>

**2. Ulama, Pir and Sajjadanashin.** Those ulama, pir and sajjadanashin who came to foster, in the years following the demand for Pakistan in March 1940, a fervent hope of Islamic order in the Muslim state responded enthusiastically to Jinnah's call. Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi issued an exhaustive *fatwa* (edict) in favour of the Muslim League.<sup>70</sup> While some went on to contribute individually, many leading ulama, pir and sajjadanashin agreed to launch a collective, organized campaign under the auspices of *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam*, established in October 1945. Led by Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and his associates from Deoband who did not approve of Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani and the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind's* pro-Congress 'composite' nationalism viewpoint, the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam* promoted the cause of Pakistan and defended in particular Jinnah's leadership from attacks from the dissenting ulama. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani appreciated that Jinnah was honest and incorruptible and was also impressed, like Allama Iqbal before him, that Jinnah was the only Muslim leader of his time who understood fully well the intricacies of modern-day politics in India, including the Congress brand of 'Indian nationalism'.<sup>71</sup> He had thus nothing but contempt for those ulama who served the Congress and dubbed Jinnah as '*Kafir-i-Azam*' and issued *fatwas* suggesting that the act of associating with the League was 'un-Islamic'. Maulana's faith in Jinnah's leadership and trust in the League was fully evident in his efforts in the 1945-46 elections and the 1947 referendums in the North-West Frontier Province and Sylhet.<sup>72</sup>

The ulama and other religious leaders toured the length and breadth of

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69 Quoted in Mirza, *The Punjab Muslim Students Federation*, Ciii.

70 See Maulana Muhammad Shafi Deobandi, *Congress aur Muslim League kay mutalliq Shari Faisalah* (Deoband, 1946), pp. 1-3.

71 Sherkot, *Khutbat-i-Usmani*, p. 77.

72 See, in particular, Sayyid A.S. Pirzada, "Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam Pakistan, 1947-1970", M.Phil Thesis, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 1982, pp. 10, 21. For a detailed study on the subject see his, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Pakistan, 1971-77* (Karachi, 2000).

the country,<sup>73</sup> particularly Sind, the Punjab, and the N-W.F.P., exhorting the Muslims to vote for the League. "Any man", they warned, "who gives his vote to the opponents of the League, must think of the ultimate consequences of his action in terms of the interests of his nation and the answer that he would be called upon to produce on the day of Judgment".<sup>74</sup> The response was positive, especially in the religiously conscious Muslim masses of the rural areas.<sup>75</sup> They voted overwhelmingly in favour of the League candidates in the elections. In the NWFP, where the League failed to do relatively well,<sup>76</sup> the ulama returned to wage another campaign in early 1947 to secure the support of the province for Pakistan in a historic referendum. Led by the Pir of Manki Sharif (Mohammad Aminul Hasnat), Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Pir Jamaat Ali Shah, and Maulana Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi, the ulama toured different parts of the province, telling their Pathan gatherings that, "A Pathan is a Muslim first, and a Muslim last",<sup>77</sup> and thus he must vote for Pakistan. They claimed that Islamic *sharia* would be enforced in Pakistan.

In addition, the pir and sajjadanashin, and particularly the Pir of Manki Sharif, took full advantage of *piri-muridi* network to woo followers in the province, especially in the Congress-khudai khidmatgar-dominated areas

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73 A special *Mashaikh* Committee was appointed by the League in 1946 to lend further support to the efforts made by the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam, comprising eminent religious leaders such as, Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif, Pir Jamaat Ali Shah, Khawaja Nazimuddin of Taunsa Shrif and Makhdum Raza Shah of Multan. *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted under Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953* (Lahore, 1954), p. 255. In addition, the League was also able to utilize the support of the sajjadanashin of the highly prestigious shrines in the Punjab, that is, of Pakpattan (Sahiwal), Sial (Sargodha), Jalalpur (Jhelum) and Golra (Rawalpindi).

74 Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, *Khutabat-i-Sadarat Meerut Muslim League*, 1954, p. 11.

75 Wavell, in a letter to Amery, the Secretary of State for India, thus described the Unionist predicament. "According to Khizar", he wrote, "Jinnah is importing into the Punjab, a number of Maulvis, religious leaders, from the United Provinces to agitate against the Unionist Government on religious lines". Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 1035. Also, see a letter reiterating the point: "Muslims Leaguers have been exhibiting an increased tendency to make use of mosques for propaganda purposes". *Ibid.*, p. 1148.

76 The League managed to secure only seventeen out of the fifty seats.

77 *Dawn* (Delhi), 2 July 1947.

to vote for Pakistan. He warned them that they will become 'slaves' of the Hindus in united India if they did not vote for Pakistan.<sup>78</sup> As Phillips Talbot, an American journalist and writer covering India for his paper then, highlighted his contribution: "Significantly, onlookers agree that one of the strongest men on the Frontier [NWFP] today is a young *mullah*, the Pir of Manki Sharif, who I believe is still in his 20s. Like the *mullahs* before him – ...his cry is simple and direct: 'Islam is in danger' – 'Muslims will be slaves in the Hindu raj' – 'Organize yourself before you are crushed.'"<sup>79</sup>

The League won the July 1947 referendum convincingly, securing 289,244 votes as against 2,874 votes for India, 99.02 per cent of the total votes cast, or 50.49 percent of the total electorate entitled to vote, with the Khudai Khidmatgars and the Congress having boycotted it.<sup>80</sup> Ironically, the Congress itself had called for the referendum, instead of an election for the provincial assembly afresh to ascertain, like in all other provinces of British India, wishes of its people for Pakistan or India. Perhaps its leadership thought that "the Congress Party would win a referendum if the Pathans were not given the hope of independence..."<sup>81</sup> But that was not to be, in spite of the removal of Olaf Caroe as governor, and elections being held under military supervision. Clearly, the ulama had succeeded in creating a strong trend for Pakistan. The NWFP voted for Pakistan.

Led by Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani, the ulama also helped the League secure Sylhet's adhesion to Pakistan. The district voted overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan. 239,619 votes were cast in favour, 184,041 were against.<sup>82</sup>

Thus, the ulama, pir and sajjadanashin played a critical role in the two referendums that led to the achievement of Pakistan. Jinnah was highly

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78 Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Pir Saheb Manki Sharif, Syed Aminul Hasnat and his Political Struggle* (Islamabad, 1990), p. 89.

79 Phillips Talbot, *An American Witness to India's Partition* (New Delhi, 2007), p. 198.

80 *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/2, p. 239.

81 Phillips Talbot, *An American Witness*, p. 299.

82 For more details on the activities of the ulama in Sylhet see, S.A.S. Pirzada, "Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam Pakistan", pp. 20-21. Also see, Atful Hye Shibly, *Abdul Matin Chaudhury: Trusted Lietenant of Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Dhaka, 2011), esp. Appendix A, "Assam in Pakistan Scheme", pp. 161-66, for a personal account of the referendum held in Sylhet.

appreciative of their contributions. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani was duly nominated a member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, after its formation in 1947.

**3. Women.** Although women<sup>83</sup> were associated with the League activities since 1938,<sup>84</sup> they assumed a new role and relevance in Jinnah's call for Pakistan, offering them opportunities for a positive change in their conditions of life. As Jinnah himself highlighted it forcefully in the course of a speech on 10 March 1944, to a predominantly male audience:

Another very important matter which I wish to impress on you is that no nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you. We are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. I do not mean that we should imitate the evils of Western life. But, let us try to raise the status of our women according to our Islamic ideas and standards. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable conditions in which our women have to live.<sup>85</sup>

A large number of Muslim women leaders responded to Jinnah's efforts to improve the status of women by uniting themselves increasingly under the banner of the League. Many of them severed all connections with other women organizations in the country. Prominent women leaders associated with the Unionists,<sup>86</sup> pro-Congress All-India Women's Conference,<sup>87</sup> and

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83 For a very informative discussion on the role of women in Indian Muslim politics in general and the Pakistan movement in particular see, Sarfraz Hussain Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role in the Pakistan Movement* (Lahore, 1969); and Shah Nawaz Begum, Jahan Ara and others, eds., *Quaid-i-Azam and Muslim Women* (Karachi, 1976).

84 The League, in its annual session held at Patna in December 1938, had resolved that "an All-India Muslim Women's Sub-Committee be formed... with the, following objects in view: (a) to organize provincial and district women's sub-committees under the Provincial and District Muslim Leagues; (b) to enlist large number of women to the membership of the Muslim League; (c) to carry on intensive propaganda amongst the Muslim women throughout India in order to create in them a sense of greater political consciousness; (d) to advise and guide them in all such matters as mainly rest on them for the uplift of the Muslim society". Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. II (Karachi, 1970), p. 318.

85 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II. pp. 17-18.

86 Bajji Rashida Latif, for instance, resigned from the Unionist Party to join the

several other organizations joined the League. Even Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, who had been expelled from the League in 1941 over the Defence Council episode, approached Jinnah in 1945 to allow her to re-enter the League and serve its cause.<sup>88</sup>

The women leaders moved to make the most of the opportunity provided by the 1945-46 elections to mobilize Muslim masses behind the League, especially in the NWFP and the Punjab, the two provinces Jinnah desperately needed to win for Pakistan.<sup>89</sup> They organized themselves into several groups and campaigned together for the League candidates in their respective constituencies. Leaders such as, Begum Salma Tasadduque Husain, Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz, and Begum Bashir Ahmad personally went to visit League constituencies to appeal to the Muslim masses to vote for the League candidates. In areas that the women leaders could not personally visit, they assigned the task to Punjab Girls Students Federation and the Women's National Guards, the two auxiliary organizations attached to the League. In addition, in order to make sure that the popular response to their strenuous efforts was not lost, they concentrated on the enrollment of voters. Besides, they also took upon themselves the responsibility of transportation of women voters to the polling stations and back to ensure maximum turnout and polling in favour of the League.<sup>90</sup> The results were incredible.

The League was not only able to capture overwhelming majority of the seats in the Punjab Assembly, but two of its women candidates also managed to get elected with a huge margin. In the NWFP, of course, things proved to be a little disappointing. In spite of the best efforts of the women leaders in the province and a helping hand extended by their counterparts from other provinces, who toured the province under the leadership of Lady Abdullah Haroon, the League could not secure majority

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League in October 1945. *Inqilab*, 11 October 1945.

87 The most prominent woman to leave the All-India Women's Conference was the provincial head of its Punjab branch, Begum Mian Iftikhar-ul-Din. She also joined the League in October 1945. *Ibid.*, 13 October 1945.

88 *Ibid.* 21 October 1945.

89 Punjab, in particular, Jinnah told the women, "is the soul of Pakistan, and it is a pity that it is slumbering". *The Eastern Times*, 18 January 1946.

90 For a more detailed discussion of some of these aspects of women's activities see, Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role*, pp. 74-79.

in the provincial assembly. The women leaders, however, did not give up and maintained the pressure until the province finally voted for the League and Pakistan in the 1947 referendum. But then, in the Punjab too, they were called upon to launch a new struggle to help the League when Khizar Hayat Khan, in spite of a crushing defeat of his Unionist Party in the provincial elections, went on to form another ministry in the province in coalition with non-Muslim members of the assembly.

In a meeting held in Lahore on 8 March 1946, the Punjab Provincial Women's Sub-Committee condemned the "unconstitutional and unjust" position in the province,<sup>91</sup> and decided to launch a province-wide 'civil disobedience movement'. The movement started off slowly, but gathered momentum when the provincial government, on 24 January 1947, declared the League National Guards, an auxiliary body of the Muslim youth, unlawful. The women leaders brought out huge processions throughout the province, even courting arrest. The more the arrests were made, the more other women came forward to join agitation to press for their release and to reiterate their demand that Unionist ministry must be dismissed. As a result, the civil administration soon found it difficult to cope with the fast deteriorating situation. Some of the women demonstrators succeeded, towards the end of February 1947, in removing the Union Jack from the Civil Secretariat Lahore and hoisting the League flag instead. Indeed, in the end, the ministry could no longer find it possible to govern. The provincial government released all the imprisoned leaders and workers of the League, and on 28 February, the orders declaring the Muslim National Guards unlawful were withdrawn.<sup>92</sup> On 3 March, the Unionist ministry itself submitted its resignation.

In the NWFP, the women leaders launched their 'civil disobedience movement' in February 1947. The political situation in the province was tense in the wake of recent elections. It was further complicated by an unpopular intervention of the provincial government in January 1947 to hand over one Islam Bibi, a Sikh girl, who had embraced Islam, to her relatives.<sup>93</sup> But it suited the women leaders very well. They took up the

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91 *Eastern Times*, 9 March 1946.

92 Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role*, pp. 89-93.

93 For some of the details on the case see, Erland Janson, *India, Pakistan, or Pukhtunistan?* (Uppsala, 1981), p. 191.

issue of Islam Bibi to challenge the authority of the government. They accused the government of pursuing an 'anti-Muslim policy', aimed at compromising Muslim interests for the sake of Hindu and Sikh allies in the government. The government, already confronted with a difficult situation, responded with repressive orders imposing, in particular, Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, banning political meetings, processions and demonstrations throughout the province. Hundreds of League workers and prominent leaders such as, Abdul Qaiyum Khan, Samin Jan, and the Pir of Manki Sharif were arrested. But the women leaders refused to submit. Demanding the immediate resignation of Dr. Khan Sahib, the Chief Minister, they continued to arrange processions and demonstrations in Peshawar almost every day in front of different government buildings. In line with the efforts in the Punjab, they even attempted to hoist League flags on some of these buildings. In a society where it was highly improbable for the elite women to come out in the streets, in processions, the "ladies of upper-middle class families more than once scaled ladder propped up against the walls of the jails which housed political prisoners, and brandished League flags aloft".<sup>94</sup> The climax was reached on 3 April, when a big, noisy procession picketed Dr. Khan Sahib's residence and hoisted the League flag.<sup>95</sup> Towards the end of April 1947, the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, and his entourage were surprised to find "immense Muslim League demonstration" organized on their arrival in Peshawar, which besides other groups, had "a surprisingly large number of women and children in its midst".<sup>96</sup> The tireless efforts of women leaders, Begum Zari Sarfraz, Begum Mumtaz Jamal, and Begum Shirin Wahab to mobilize mass support for the League cause, in fact, left the Viceroy convinced that a referendum must be held in the province to ascertain the wishes of the people once and for all.<sup>97</sup>

On 4 June 1947, the women leaders, responding to Jinnah's call to "withdraw the movement for civil disobedience",<sup>98</sup> ceased agitation and

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94 Ian Stephens, *Pakistan: Old Country, New Nation* (London, 1967), p. 186.

95 *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 14 August 1962.

96 Alan Campbell-Johnson, *Mission With Mountbatten* (London, 1951), p. 74.

97 Mountbatten, in fact, told Dr. Khan Sahib in his meeting with him at Peshawar that he felt he had to ascertain the wishes of the people before moving any further with the idea of the partition of India. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

98 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, pp. 396-97.

began their preparations for the upcoming referendum. Public meetings were held, processions were arranged and the masses were exhorted to vote for Pakistan. The intensity of their enthusiastic campaign could be gauged from the fact that soon Dr. Khan Sahib was on the defensive, approaching the Acting Governor of the province to help find some sort of understanding with the opposition, but to no avail.<sup>99</sup> The referendum was indeed held, and long, strenuous, and, at times, difficult struggle of the women leaders<sup>100</sup> finally resulted in an overwhelming vote in favour of Pakistan. Their “remarkable” efforts were successful.<sup>101</sup> The women leaders had vindicated Jinnah’s trust reposed in them.

The enthusiastic and effective support of the students, the ulama, pir and sajjadanashin, and the women leaders must have clearly shown to Jinnah the normative strength of his appeal as it had come to build up momentum for the League and Pakistan. But, Jinnah was not to be content with it. He also wished to extend the scope of his appeal further to some other groups and classes by offering them a new mode of political participation and behaviour. He was particularly interested in industrial and commercial classes, labourers and farmers, as well as the general mass of the Muslim youth. He wanted to seek their support for Pakistan. This, in fact, constituted the second, and equally important, ‘structural’ level of his appeal.

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99 On 14 August 1947, Dr. Khan Sahib and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan met the Acting Governor and told him that they were prepared to open negotiations with Jinnah. But Jinnah did not agree. As he informed Sir Mieville on 25 July 1947: “I have carefully considered the matter and I regret to say that it is not possible for me to meet Abdul Ghaffar Khan and discuss an agreement on the basis reported to you by the Governor of the N-W.F.P. I am sure you will see that all these matters can only be dealt with by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan which will frame the constitution of the Pakistan Federation. It is obvious that I cannot negotiate with any section or party over the head of the Constituent Assembly. Besides, I have no power to commit the Constituent Assembly in advance or anticipate their final decisions”. *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/2, pp. 253-54.

100 On many occasions the women were lathi-charged, tear-gassed, beaten severely and even fired upon as happened during a peaceful demonstration in Dera Ismail Khan. *Inqilab*, 18 April 1947.

101 Dushka H. Saiyid, *Muslim Women of the British Punjab: From Seclusion to Politics* (London, 1998), p. 99.

To take the case of Muslim industrial and commercial classes first, it hardly needs to be emphasized that most of the industries and almost the entire internal trade, ranging from money lending to the production and sale of economic goods – raw and finished – were in the hands of the Hindus. The Muslims were largely producers of jute, cotton and food grains which were purchased from them at ‘exploitation rates’ by the Hindu industrialists and traders leaving them a mere subsistence margin. In the case of jute, for instance, out of 111 jute mills in India on the eve of partition, comprising about 69,000 looms, only two mills belonged to the Muslims, one of 500 looms and the other of 150 looms. On top of it, there was not a single mill installed in the Muslim Bengal area. The tea industry which was another big source of earnings did not present a different picture. Except for “a couple of nonentity garden-owners who were Muslims, virtually the entire industry, worth 561, 740,000 lbs in 1947, was in the hands of the Hindus (and the British)”. In other industries, such as mining, engineering, cement, etc., the position of the Muslims “was even more pathetic”.<sup>102</sup>

Commerce and commercial services offered no solace either. The Muslims were generally small traders, mostly retailers depending upon the supply of their goods from whole-sale Hindu merchants. The nature of the relationship was so exploitative that they were afraid even to admit publicly their financial contributions to the League’s funds, especially the election funds, lest it might offend their Hindu ‘benefactors’. Besides, the commercial system was almost entirely in the hands of Hindus. The Muslims had only one bank – Habib Bank – which was no match to the countless big Hindu and British banks operating in India. There were of course three Muslim insurance companies in operation – The Eastern Federal Union Insurance Co., the Habib Insurance Co., and the Muslim Insurance Co., – but they were small companies, and were in fact “smaller than the smallest non-Muslim companies and their field of operation was very limited”.<sup>103</sup>

Jinnah was greatly moved by the plight of industrial and commercial classes, especially as he saw it in relationship with their counterparts in

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102 See M.A.H. Ispahani, “Factors leading to the Partition of British India”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, pp. 356-58.

103 *Ibid.*, p. 359.

the Hindu community. He lamented, for instance, that: "We claim that we are a nation one hundred million strong and yet we have just one bank... out of the scores which operate in India."<sup>104</sup> Again, he noted that in spite of "many rich merchants" he could "hardly think of anyone who was running a heavy industry. Great and heavy industries formed the backbone of a nation".<sup>105</sup>

Jinnah wanted commerce and industry not only to grow but, in the process, help provide jobs and opportunities to the Muslim community, particularly the educated youth. As he told the prospective Muslim investors, "you must have your own commerce and your own industry in which you will be able to give employment not only to thousands of workers and labourers, but also to the educated youth, who have infinitely better prospects and will be in a position to do better work in these lines than Government service".<sup>106</sup>

Jinnah thus did not hesitate to personally prod the Muslim entrepreneurial classes into action. Despite his hectic, all-absorbing political activities in the mid-1940s, he urged them again and again to organize themselves for the task under the umbrella of All-India Federation of Muslim Chamber of Commerce. He gave Ispahani who was in charge of the project, "a full charge blast" on 15 April 1945, saying: "... Have you been sleeping over the Federation of Muslim Chamber of Commerce, and is it merely to remain a paper scheme? I am very much disappointed indeed that so much delay has been caused in holding even your first meeting... Every week that passes is now not only creating a sense of frustration and despair amongst those who have worked and are willing and ready to work, but in the rapid developments that are taking place... the business and commercial Muslim India will suffer very seriously". Though the first meeting was held soon after, Jinnah was still not satisfied, and kept up the pressure. "I hope", he wrote to Ispahani again, "that you people realize the urgency and the importance of Muslim India making every effort to make up the leeway. What we want is selfless workers and deeds and not mere words and thoughts and speeches".<sup>107</sup>

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104 Ispahani, *As I Knew Him*, p. 145.

105 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 552.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

107 Ispahani, *As I Knew Him*, pp. 138-40.

Jinnah, thus, not only helped the formation of the Muslim Chamber of Commerce, “one more instrument of unity and commercial and industrial struggle which was so necessary for achieving independence”,<sup>108</sup> but also took personal interest in the establishment of a number of industrial and commercial ventures under its auspices. He encouraged in particular the creation of Muslim Commercial Bank, which was eventually founded in July 1947, Muhammady Steamship Company, and Orient Airways, a Muslim airline. “It is all very well”, he told Ispahani in June 1946, “to talk of Muslims as a nation and to demand a separate homeland for them, a homeland in which they can live according to their own light and shape their own destiny, but do you realize that such a state would be useless if we did not have the men, the material and the wherewithal to run it? Do you realize that in India there is not a single airline which is owned or operated by Muslims?... Do you know how many Muslim pilots and mechanics we have in the country? How can we do anything with this inadequacy of material – material which every nation must have in ample supply?” Jinnah himself went on to purchase some shares in the proposed airline “to prove that he backed his idea with financial participation”. Had it not been for this airline which operated from its new base in Karachi in 1947 without a day’s break until it was absorbed by the new corporation, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), there would not have existed an air link between East Bengal and West Pakistan for a long time after partition. Such was to be the importance of this airline in the future development of the new state.<sup>109</sup>

Jinnah, in fact, was planning for some time to cater to the needs of the new state. He personally persuaded not only the Ispahani family, Habib brothers, Adamjees, and a number of other prominent Muslim businessmen to invest in industries but also invited a number of Muslim entrepreneurs from outside India to join in. In 1944, he was looking for “suitable and qualified” men to staff the Planning Committee to be “ready before the occasion arises to make the fullest use of the potentialities of Pakistan areas”.<sup>110</sup> By early 1947, he was working on the formation of five

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108 *Ibid.* p. 142.

109 *Ibid.*, pp. 143-45.

110 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 7. On 25 November 1945, Jinnah was happy to declare: “The Muslim League Planning Committee was at work and was making useful schemes”. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

“expert committees to advise in connection with the various subjects affecting the future of Pakistan”, which included committees on Finance, Currency, and the distribution of Assets, Communications, Post and Telegraph, Civil Aviation, Meteorology, and the Industry.”<sup>111</sup> While, in the long run, these measures made significant contribution to the building up of Pakistan’s economy, in the short run, too, they helped Jinnah win support of the industrial and commercial classes who could not be oblivious of the benefits which would accrue to them in a separate, independent state once they had established their own industrial and commercial enterprises.

Jinnah’s interest in economy and economic life of the Muslims constituted but one “pillar” in his scheme of things. There was no progress unless it was supported by what he called two other “pillars”, that of education and social uplift. Only “when the Muslims had built up those three pillars”, he emphasized, “they would be strong enough to put up the political pillar without difficulty”.<sup>112</sup> And the reason was very simple. As he told the Memon Chamber of Commerce on 1 October 1943:

...it was impossible to separate politics from economics and the social and educational life of a nation. One was so closely interwoven with the other, that every Muslim, man and woman should take the keenest interest in politics. He knew of no nation that had built up its economic, social and educational life without political power and authority vested in the hands of the people.<sup>113</sup>

Jinnah was convinced that, “educationally, the condition of the Musalmans today was hopelessly bad”.<sup>114</sup> He realized that the Muslims could not go any further with their national struggle unless they took to education in full earnest. The extent of his faith in the primacy of education could be gauged from the fact that when Baluchistan Muslim League in its

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111 Nawab of Bhopal to Jinnah, 9 June 1947. *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/10, p. 61. Jinnah was in fact receiving proposals and plans from the Muslims all over India as how to help improve economic development of Muslim areas. See, for instance, an article submitted by an engineer for the economic development of NWFP and the tribal areas and the one by Mohammad Akram, entitled “The Construction of State of Eastern Pakistan.” *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/11, p. 337.

112 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 599.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 551.

114 *Ibid.*, p. 599.

Conference on 4 July 1943 presented him “an historic sword, which was said to have been wielded in several battles in defence of Islam”, he was not moved. He told them: “It will rise only in defence. But for the present the most important thing is education. Knowledge is a greater force than sword. Go and acquire it... when you have done it successfully then comes sword which we have been wielding for the last thirteen centuries”.<sup>115</sup>

In 1944, Jinnah appointed an Education Committee to “examine the system of education in vogue in India”, taking into consideration the existing conditions and problems as well as those which were likely to arise in future, and to make necessary recommendations for “the preservation, fostering and promotion of Islamic traditions, culture and ideals; and general well-being of the Muslims; and to suggest ways and means for implementing the recommendations...” The Committee appointed various sub-committees like the primary and secondary education committee, the women’s education committee, the teachers’ training committee, the higher education committee, and science education committee. These committees made contacts with eminent educationists and submitted a number of proposals for the improvement of education among the Muslims.<sup>116</sup> As a result of these efforts, the state of education improved a good deal in the next few years. The number of Muslims under instruction also increased considerably. This increase in the number of students took place at all stages of education – primary and secondary schools, technical and vocational schools, professional colleges and universities. On 25 November 1945, Jinnah could proudly claim that the Muslim League had not only “awakened the Musalmans politically but had organised them economically as well as educationally too because without money there is starvation and without education darkness”.<sup>117</sup>

Concrete steps for social uplift of the Muslim masses were suggested at the Karachi session of the League held on 24-26 December 1943 focusing, in particular, on the reform of land tenure system, stabilization of

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115 *Ibid.*, pp. 541-42.

116 Z.H. Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 271.

117 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 246.

rent, security of tenure, improvement in the conditions of labour and agriculture, and control of money-lending.<sup>118</sup> Jinnah sought for the Muslim farmers, the most deprived section of the Muslim society,<sup>119</sup> a deal based on “rule of justice and fairplay”. He was not prepared to allow any more “undue advantage to other interests at the cost of farmers”. He thus not only supported “plans on how a tiller of the soil may get the best from his rights”,<sup>120</sup> but also did not hesitate to condemn the exploitative tendencies of the landowning classes in unequivocal terms:

The exploitation of masses has gone into their blood. They have forgotten the lessons of Islam. Greed and selfishness have made these people subordinate the interest of others in order to fatten themselves... You go anywhere to the countryside... There are millions and millions of our people who hardly get one meal a day. Is this civilization? Is this the aim of Pakistan? Do you visualize that millions have been exploited and cannot get one meal a day! If that is the idea of Pakistan, I would not have it. If they were wise they will have to adjust themselves to the new modern conditions of life.<sup>121</sup>

Jinnah’s public censure not only forced the landowning classes to think again about the plight of farmers, duly reflected in the new Punjab and Bengal provincial Leagues’ manifestos,<sup>122</sup> but also moved these farmers and labourers to see the party in a new light and thus join it in their thousands of thousands. There was a new and vigorous sense of “Muslim solidarity”. A contemporary observer called it “a remarkable achievement”,<sup>123</sup> and rightly so. In the case of Bengal, for instance, Abul Hashim, the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, in his annual report submitted in 1944, claimed that the League had become a “revolutionary” and “mass movement”, with no less than 550,000 members enrolled, a figure that “exceeded the number ever scored by any organization in the

118 Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, p. 468.

119 “I have seen”, Jinnah told the League workers at Calcutta on 1 March 1946, “the abject poverty of the people. Some of them did not get food, even once a day... my heart goes out to them...” Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 272.

120 Pirzada, *Foundation of Pakistan*, Vol. II, pp. 454-69.

121 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 526-27.

122 Sayeed, *Formative Phase*, p. 209; and W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 276.

123 *Ibid.*, p. 274.

province not excluding Congress". This, he insisted, was "apart from the vast allegiance of the large Muslim population to the League".<sup>124</sup> It will not be inappropriate to mention here that, as opposed to the League, the Congress could not care less about the farmers. It opposed the Tenancy Bill, because the farmers were Muslims and the landlords were Hindus.<sup>125</sup>

Jinnah finally made the most of his efforts to consolidate Muslim India under the banner of the League by taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by the British and the Congress during the war years. The Congress provided him the first and the most momentous opportunity by resigning its ministries in reaction to the decision of the British Government in 1939 to declare war on behalf of India, and thus leaving "the field entirely to the Muslim League..."<sup>126</sup> Jinnah not only seized the opportunity through his call for a 'Deliverance Day', but also moved to install League ministries in its place, especially in the Muslim-majority provinces of Assam, Sind, Bengal, and NWFP.<sup>127</sup> The only province that stayed out of the League's advance was the Punjab. But there, as it has been discussed above, the League still had an alliance with the Unionists under the aegis of the so-called 'Jinnah-Sikandar Pact'. Jinnah thus had come to have the League ministries in virtually all the Muslim-majority provinces included in his Pakistan scheme (except for Baluchistan, which had a special status).

This development had important implications for all. First, it provided the provincial Leagues' leadership a direct stake in the success of the League, encouraging them to work more actively for its growth and development in their respective provinces. Secondly, it helped Jinnah control and direct, for the first time, Muslim-majority provinces from the centre, and thus show to all the concerned parties in the political arena,

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124 Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 268.

125 Ajeet Jawed, *Secular and Nationalist Jinnah* (Karachi, 2009), p. 207.

126 V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957), p. 438.

127 These ministries were installed in August 1942, October 1942, March 1943, and May 1943, respectively. Jinnah, thus, noted a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, in April 1944, "has seized the opportunity of the Congress eclipse to strengthen the position of the League, with great success... his party is in the ascendant and growing in power". Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 962.

including the wavering Muslims, that the League represented all the Muslims in the country. Finally, and related to the above-mentioned two implications, was the all-important message conveyed to the British and the Congress both that the League's demand for a separate state of Pakistan was not merely a demand of the central leadership. It had support in provinces, the Muslim-majority provinces, comprising Pakistan. The Congress was now convinced that it could no longer "overwhelm the Muslim-majority areas except by wading through a bloody civil war in order to impose unity by its own strength".<sup>128</sup>

As if the resignation of ministries was not a blunder enough, the Congress, after failing to come to terms with the British Government, went on to launch on 8 August 1942 a civil disobedience movement to force the British to 'Quit India', without first taking the Muslims into confidence. This unilateral act led the Muslims to the "firm conclusion" that, in fighting the British, the Congress was indeed "fighting the Muslims by proxy".<sup>129</sup> As Jinnah expressed it: "Under the facade of nationalism the Congress demand, in short, from the British is to hand over to it power to establish Hindudom in this country".<sup>130</sup>

The Muslim reaction to the Quit India movement, in fact, fitted into the pattern seen earlier, during the 1937-39 years, when the Congress rule in the Hindu-majority provinces, in utter disregard to their feelings and concerns went on to arouse their anxieties and apprehensions. The announcement of this movement, without any reference to or consultation with them,<sup>131</sup> stirred again their now well-established sense of insecurity in India. They saw the movement "not merely [as] a declaration of war against the British and the Government, but... [also] a war against the Muslim League, which means Muslim India..."<sup>132</sup> Any illusion that they may still have had about the Indian 'National' Congress was shattered. Indeed, as Maulana Azad, one of the staunchest Muslim supporters of the Congress and its eventual President during the crucial war years, admitted that the "Muslims who stood on Congress or any other ticket had

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128 Venkatachar, "1937-47 in Retrospect", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 474.

129 *Ibid.*, p.473.

130 Ahmed, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 428-29.

131 *Ibid.*

132 *Ibid.*, p. 428.

great difficulty in even securing a hearing from the people".<sup>133</sup> A large majority of the Muslims associated with the Congress itself "began trickling into the League".<sup>134</sup> There was no turning away from the League and its leadership now. The League had come to emerge as "a mass movement of the Indian Muslims, virtually unanimous."<sup>135</sup>

Apart from the Congress acts of commission and omission during the war years, the war itself provided Jinnah an ideal opportunity to mobilize support for the League. The British, in view of the Congress's non-cooperation during the war, were left with no choice but to woo the non-Congress leaders in the country, and especially Jinnah,<sup>136</sup> and for two very important reasons. One, Jinnah was the leader of a party, only second to the Congress on all-India level. And then, as a leader of the Muslims, he had a special clout. The Muslims, though on the whole a 'minority' in India, contributed as much soldiers to the British Indian army as the Hindus, a fact known to responsible British authorities both at home and in India.<sup>137</sup> The Muslims contributed 37.65 percent against

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133 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 124.

134 Most important defection was that of Mian Iftikhar-al-Din, President of the Punjab Congress, who resigned his office to join the League in September 1945. See Wavell's letter to Pethick-Lawrence on the subject, dated 1 October 1945, in Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), p. 306. Also see, Cunningham to Wavell. *Ibid.*, p. 318.

135 Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 271.

136 This, insisted Humayun Kabir, a long-time Indian 'nationalist' Muslim, was in spite of the fact the British "did not like Jinnah who often criticised the British in sharper language than any used by the Congress. Not only so, he even insulted British dignitaries..." Humayun Kabir, "Muslim Politics, 1942-47", in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 391. But then, as Wavell put it succinctly to Amery: "The more vociferous the Congress demands and the more intransigent their claims, the more essential it is that Government should have at its back the support of the Muslim League..." According to Wavell, "this is a consideration which should not be overlooked when dealing with a triangular contest in which one of the parties refuses to play and, by so doing, hopes to disqualify the other two from taking part in the game". Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, pp. 888, 892.

137 See, for instance, Francis Tucker, *While Memory Serves* (London, 1950), p. 653. Also see, Winston Churchill to President Roosevelt, 31 July 1942; and Linlithgow to Sir G.S. Bajpai, 21 July 1942, in Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R.

37.50 percent contributed by the Hindus.<sup>138</sup> And Jinnah was well aware of it. On 13 September 1942, he told a British correspondent who wanted to know what effect the League's decision to hamper war effort will make on the army and the Muslims in the Middle East: "...the League campaign, if launched, will affect a large body of the army and besides the entire Frontier would be ablaze... and the various Muslim countries (such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Egypt)... were bound to be influenced if there was a conflict between the Muslims and the British Government". The League, in fact, he warned, could give "five hundred times more trouble" than the Congress.<sup>139</sup>

Jinnah had perceived very early that the League had a ready opportunity in the war and that the British Government needed its support badly. As he explained to his followers the invitation he received from the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, to meet him in the days immediately following the declaration of war:

After the war was declared, the Viceroy naturally wanted help from the Muslim League. It was only then that he realised that the Muslim League was a power. For it will be remembered, that up to the time of the declaration of war, the Viceroy never thought of me but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone. I have been the leader of an important Party in Legislature for a considerable time, larger than the one I have the honour to lead at present, the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislature. Yet the Viceroy never thought of me before. Therefore, when I got this invitation from the Viceroy along with Mr. Gandhi, I wondered within myself why I was so suddenly promoted and then I concluded that the answer was the 'All-India Muslim League' whose President I happen to be.<sup>140</sup>

Unlike the Congress leaders, and particularly Gandhi, its top leader, Jinnah realized the critical importance of the war to the British Government. He knew that the British wanted to win the war at all costs. He was not naïve or insensitive or indeed unreal like Gandhi to tell a

Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II (London, 1971), pp. 423, 553.

138 Noor-ul-Haq, *Making of Pakistan: The Military Perspective* (Islamabad, 1993), p. 38.

139 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 434.

140 *Ibid.*, p. 154.

bewildered Viceroy that, “the best thing for the British to do was to ‘fight Nazism without arms... invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of... your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island... If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child, to be slaughtered.’”<sup>141</sup> Jinnah was sure that the British would do everything possible to win the support of Indians for the war effort.

This, of course, did not mean that Jinnah was willing to acquiesce in the British war effort. He would have nothing to do with it unless the British, in turn, were prepared to offer the Muslims “their real voice and share in the government of the country.”<sup>142</sup> On 8 August 1940, the British Government was left with no option but to state publicly that they “could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India’s national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government”.<sup>143</sup> This, according to Khalid bin Sayeed, was “perhaps one of the greatest triumphs that Jinnah had achieved through his brilliant strategy”.<sup>144</sup>

Though Jinnah did not accept the August Offer, as it did not ensure that the Muslims had “their real voice and share in the government of the country” and the British also did not mean to transfer any real and substantial authority at the centre, as the later events were to demonstrate, the die was cast. Henceforth, no move could be made at the centre without the League influencing the proceedings. Indeed, in the same year, in 1940, the Viceroy “could see no prospect of getting any Muslim League leader” to join his expanded Executive Council (and a War Advisory Council) “who would be prepared to disregard the League’s mandate”.<sup>145</sup> Subsequent moves at the centre, in 1942 (Cripps Mission),

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141 Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny* (London, 1997), p. 273.

142 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 433.

143 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. I, App. 1, p. 878.

144 Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah and his Political Strategy”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 287.

145 Menon, *Transfer of Power in India*, pp. 101-2.

1945 (Simla Conference) and 1946 (Cabinet Mission), merely went on to confirm the now unassailable position of the League.<sup>146</sup> The League was *the* party as far as the Muslims were concerned.

By the end of 1946, the League stood as the “sole representative body of Muslim India”. It won all the thirty Muslim seats in the Central Assembly. It did very well on the provincial seats too. It secured 444 out of a total of 494 Muslim seats in the provincial assembly elections.<sup>147</sup> This was a remarkable improvement over the 109 seats it had bagged in the 1937 elections. “If one remembers”, thus wrote Z. H. Zaidi, “the weak, disorganized League of 1935, with its small membership and extremely limited appeal, one is filled with wonder at the revolution in Muslim politics which the party had brought about in a decade”.<sup>148</sup> In fact, this “revolution” showed beyond any shadow of doubt the successful culmination of Jinnah’s well thought-out strategy employed in mobilization of the Muslims for the cause of Pakistan. Jinnah himself was elated: “Now the only thing I can say”, he declared at the League Legislators’ Convention held in Delhi on 7-9 April 1946, “is this: I do not think there is any power or any authority that can prevent us from achieving our cherished goal of Pakistan... I am confident that we shall march on from victory to victory until we have

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146 On 22 July 1945, Wavell informed Amery: “The most important parties in India now are the Congress and the Muslim League, and I do not see how you can disregard either or both of them any more than you could disregard the Conservative and Labour parties at home”. Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. V, p. 1291.

147 The League won 439 seats in February elections, including 28 in the Sind. Elections were held in Sind again in December 1946. The League improved its position by capturing 33 seats now. See, Z.H. Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 272. The League’s success was all the more impressive in view of the fact that there were, in some provinces, reports of official support to the opponents of the League. One such province was the Punjab where the Unionists were in power since 1920. Pethick Lawrence in a letter to Wavell on 12 October 1945, thus, rationalized the whole issue: “...officials in the Punjab were not being impartial as regards the conduct of the elections. I quite agree that we have to accept a fundamental difference from Western conditions”. Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI. p. 335.

148 Z.H. Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 274.

Pakistan".<sup>149</sup>

Indeed, because of the great victory in the elections, Jinnah now did not hesitate to deal with the British and the Congress with a strong hand. Thus, when the Congress did not agree to a compulsory grouping clause, as stipulated in the Cabinet Mission Plan, he refused to attend the newly constituted Constituent Assembly, and thus ended all prospects of a united India. Ready, at last, to resort to 'Direct Action', he created a situation where Pakistan emerged as the only alternative to civil war and chaos in the country. There were brutal communal riots in Calcutta (now Kolkata) and indeed in eastern and northern India, the worst riots witnessed so far. Things increasingly began to get out of control. On 3 June 1947, the British Government hastened to announce the partition plan, advancing the date of its withdrawal from India, and accordingly, on 14 August 1947, Pakistan was born as a separate, sovereign state. Jinnah's political strategy had indeed "helped him in achieving the state of Pakistan."

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149 Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, p. 510.

## Chapter 8

### Jinnah's Acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan

One of the most difficult and challenging tasks for writers on the Pakistan Movement has been explaining Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946. More so, because it came after the adoption of Lahore Resolution of March 1940, demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims of India, and after an overwhelming electoral victory of the All-India Muslim League in the 1945-46 elections over the issue of Pakistan. One major explanation offered by some writers, including Penderel Moon,<sup>1</sup> Kanji Dwarkadas,<sup>2</sup> and, of course, Ayesha Jalal has been that Jinnah did not really want an independent, sovereign Pakistan. The Lahore resolution was more of a 'bargaining counter,' intended to raise stakes in the struggle for the future constitution of India. The Cabinet Mission Plan offered him "the last chance to achieve what he had always really been after", that is, two federations representing Muslim provinces (Pakistan) and Hindu provinces (Hindustan), with "equal status," and a few union subjects.<sup>3</sup>

This is hardly a tenable explanation given his refusal to attend the Constituent Assembly on three successive occasions, on 9 December 1946, 20 January 1947, and 3 February 1947, in spite of the fact that he had joined the interim Government, and the Indian National Congress was insisting that the "League must either get out of the interim Government or change its Karachi decision,"<sup>4</sup> that is, the decision to reject the Cabinet Mission Plan. Otherwise, the Congress would quit the government. Indeed this caused a grave crisis not only for the British Government but for all the parties involved. But Jinnah was not moved. He would not change his mind. His persistent refusal to attend the Constituent Assembly showed,

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- 1 Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1961), p. 21.
  - 2 Kanji Dwarkadas, *Ten Years to Freedom* (Bombay, 1968), p. 224.
  - 3 Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 207, 174. According to Akbar Ahmad, it is quite possible that Jinnah, by accepting the Cabinet Mission Plan, felt that "he would not only secure the rights of those living as a majority in some provinces but also those living as a minority." Akbar S. Ahmad, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity* (Karachi, 1997), p. 114.
  - 4 V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India* (Princeton, 1957), p. 337.

clearly and convincingly, that the Cabinet Mission Plan did not offer him "what he had always really been after." If that had been the case, attending the Constituent Assembly sessions provided him an ideal opportunity to embrace the plan even at this belated stage. But Jinnah was not interested. He would not attend the assembly. He would not endorse the Indian Union. His goal was an independent, sovereign Pakistan. His entire struggle, since the adoption of the Lahore resolution in March 1940, was a means to that end. That is what he was really after. It is indeed time that this 'revisionist' thesis of the 'bargaining counter', that is, Jinnah going back on the demand for Pakistan was finally put to rest. There must be other explanations, plausible explanations. But, first, a consideration of the Lahore resolution and the developments leading to the Cabinet Mission Plan itself.

Moved on 23 March 1940, and adopted by the All-India Muslim League on 24 March, the Lahore resolution stipulated "that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."<sup>5</sup> Although the idea of one sovereign state of Pakistan was to crystallize years later, through greater political mobilization and support of the Muslim 'nation', the implications of the resolution were absolutely clear. The Muslims demanded a separate homeland, a homeland where, according to Jinnah, their leader and President of the Muslim League then, they could develop to the fullest their "spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideal and according to the genius of our people."<sup>6</sup> In addition, Jinnah was convinced that a separate homeland would resolve the perennial conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims, and would lead ultimately not only to peace and harmony in the region but also to the cherished goal of freedom for all. Freedom, he insisted, "must be freedom for all India and not freedom of one section, or worse still, of the Congress

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5 Liaquat Ali Khan, Comp., *Resolutions of the All-India Muslim League, from December 1938 to March 1940* (Delhi, nd.), pp. 47-48.

6 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writing of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 171.

caucus and slavery of Musalmans and other minorities.”<sup>7</sup> We want an “honourable life as free men, and we stand for free Islam and free India.”<sup>8</sup>

Facing agony and frustration at the hands of the Congress, particularly during its provincial rule in the 1937-39 period,<sup>9</sup> the promise of their own separate homeland not only provided the Muslims “a reassuring anchor in a climate of turbulence and uncertainty”<sup>10</sup> but also suggested to them the only way in which freedom would have any meaning and purpose. They will have political power, and will also be safe and secure. They will not be at the disposal of the Hindu majority community, whether represented by the Congress or by any other Hindu-majority party in the future. They will be their own masters. No wonder, it soon become the symbol of their “nationalism,” and their ultimate demand and goal.

Jinnah increasingly went on to articulate this demand in his negotiations with the British (and the Congress) in the years ahead. In this endeavour, he was certainly helped by the fortuitous turn of events during the Second World War. With the Congress not cooperating with the war effort for its own reasons, the British were hard-pressed to woo the Muslim League, the other major political party in the country, although dominated primarily by the Muslims. But, then, the Muslims also comprised a bulk of the Indian army as much as supplied by the Hindus. The Muslims contributed 37.65 per cent against 37.50 per cent troops contributed by the Hindus.<sup>11</sup> Jinnah

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7 *Ibid.*, p. 155.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 183.

9 In spite of the fact that the Muslim League did much better than the Congress in securing Muslim support in the 1937 elections (109 out of 482 reserved seats for the Muslims. The Congress could bag only 26 Muslim seats, 19 of them in the NWFP in alliance with the Khudai-Khidmatgars led by Abdul Ghaffar Khan), the Congress refused to form coalition governments with the League. Indeed, on the contrary, Jawaharlal Nehru in early March 1937 publicly declared that there were only two parties in the country, that is, the British Government and the Congress, thereby denying the Muslims their own place in the political life of India.

10 Cynthia H. Enloe, *Ethnic Conflict and Political Development* (Boston, 1973), p. 15.

11 Noor-ul-Haq, *Making of Pakistan: The Military Perspective* (Islamabad, 1993), p. 38. For information on other communities contributing to the Indian Army, see *Ibid.*, pp. 209-10.

was well aware of this critical value of the Muslims to the armed forces, and thus to the British authorities.

On 8 August 1940, Jinnah forced the British Government to declare that the British "could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life."<sup>12</sup> This assurance was the first major victory for Jinnah during the war years, also the first as the charismatic leader of Muslim India over the issue of Pakistan, his charismatic goal of a separate homeland for the Muslims since the adoption of the Lahore resolution. Although the demand for Pakistan was not conceded, not even in principle, the British did commit themselves publicly to some sort of understanding of the Muslim apprehensions as to their future in India. However, in 1942, he did succeed in forcing the British Government to recognize the "principle of partition."<sup>13</sup> The Cripps proposals made room for the 'non-accession' of a province. But this, of course, meant the whole of province, comprising both Muslim and non-Muslim populations. The proposals "did not provide for the right of option to be exercised by vote of Muslim population alone."<sup>14</sup> The British of course knew very well that the "situation proposed" amounted to "rejecting the Pakistan claim, since the League could not obtain necessary majorities in [the two Muslim-majority provinces of] Bengal and Punjab."<sup>15</sup> Jinnah dismissed the proposals, though he was happy to note that this was a considerable improvement over the August Offer. Things could not be the same henceforth. The British had tacitly recognized the 'case' for Pakistan. Jinnah had made an important advance in pursuing the goal of Pakistan. In fact, as H.V. Hodson observed, the Cripps proposals offered Jinnah "a hole in the dyke" which he was determined to exploit<sup>16</sup> as more and more opportunities came in his way in due course of time.

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12 Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. I (London, 1970), App. I, p. 878.

13 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 395.

14 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), p. 464.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 938.

16 H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide* (London, 1969), p. 105.

Refusing to yield to the Wavell Plan of June 1945, Jinnah indeed made the British concede that: "the question of Pakistan is the first and foremost issue to be decided preliminary to any consideration of the framing of any future constitution".<sup>17</sup> The Simla Conference of June-July 1945 was the first organized conference of leaders of all the major political parties and politicians of India after the end of war in Europe. Thus, Jinnah was careful enough to demand at the very outset a "declaration" by the British Government "guaranteeing the right of self-determination of Muslims and pledging after the war, or as soon as it may be possible, the British Government would establish Pakistan having regard to the basic principles [sic] laid down in the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League passed in March 1940."<sup>18</sup> Although the conference concentrated and indeed broke down on the short-term issue of nominations to the Viceroy's expanded Executive Council, Wavell, and even the Congress leaders such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, then Congress President, could not help but admit that the issue was "not merely a question of seats, but one affecting a fundamental principle."<sup>19</sup> Jinnah was not prepared to compromise on his sovereign Pakistan. Earlier, his talks with Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the supreme leader of the Congress, in September 1944 in Bombay (now Mumbai), had failed precisely on this issue of Pakistan as 'an independent and sovereign state'.

In the meanwhile, Jinnah had concentrated on mobilizing support for Pakistan and the Muslim League, its main vehicle, and quite successfully. For example, in Madras (now Chennai), a Hindu-majority area, with a mere 6 percent Muslim population, the League could claim more than 100,000 members in 1941. In Bengal, a Muslim-majority province, there were 550,000 members in 1944, the figure, according to an estimate, exceeding "the number ever scored by any organization in the Province, not excluding the Congress." The same year, Sind (now Sindh), another Muslim-majority province, claimed the enrollment of some 300,000 members, almost a quarter of the adult Muslim population of the

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17 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. V (London, 1974), p. 811.

18 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 186.

19 Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (New Delhi, 1988), p. 123.

province.<sup>20</sup> A further indicator of Jinnah's success was an increasing number of seats won by the League in the by-elections after 1940. Between 1937 and 1943, in 61 by-elections, the League won an amazing number of 47 seats against Congress's four. But, of course, the most telling evidence was the enormous electoral victory in the 1945-46 elections. The League won all the thirty Muslim seats in the Central Assembly, and secured 444 out of a total of 494 Muslim seats in the provincial assembly elections.<sup>21</sup> "Now, the only thing I can say", Jinnah promptly declared at the League Legislators' Convention held in Delhi on 7-9 April 1946, "is this: I do not think there is any power or any authority that can prevent us from achieving our cherished goal of Pakistan."<sup>22</sup> Except that he accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan, our main concern here, to which we must now turn our full attention.

Comprising Pethick-Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, the Cabinet Mission arrived in India on 24 March 1946 to discuss with the Indian leaders a way out of the constitutional impasse (since the partial implementation of the 1935 Act), and entered into protracted negotiations with them, including Jinnah, as the leader of the League. Jinnah obviously focused on Pakistan, demanding a separate, sovereign state, comprising Muslim-majority areas, including all the Muslim-majority provinces of India. But the Mission was not receptive. They told him to choose between his "sovereign" Pakistan which will be essentially restricted to Muslim-majority areas, and "a larger Pakistan which would come into a [sic] central federal nexus..."<sup>23</sup> Cripps, in particular, warned him that, "we could not press [Indian National] Congress to accept anything more than what we might call a smaller Pakistan." Pakistan could only mean Baluchistan (now Balochistan), Sind, the NWFP (North-West Frontier Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), and West Punjab in the northwest, and East Bengal and Sylhet in the east. There was no way "larger areas within Pakistan

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20 Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of the Muslim League Policy, 1937-47", in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds., C.H. Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright (London, 1970), p. 268.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 274.

22 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*, Vol. II (Karachi, 1970), p. 510.

23 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds, *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII (London, 1977), p. 210.

including all the Punjab and Bengal” could be secured. It was “not possible”, he asserted, “to get agreement with the Hindus or the Sikhs upon such an area...”<sup>24</sup> Cripps, indeed the whole of the Mission, was convinced that the idea of a ‘smaller’, though ‘sovereign Pakistan’, would have no appeal for Jinnah, and thus he would eventually come around to accept the alternative, that is, a ‘larger Pakistan’, federated with India.

In the end, Jinnah, who could not agree to the division of the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal was left with no choice but to agree to the idea of an Indian ‘Union’. However, he made it a point to demand that all the six Muslim-majority provinces of British India then, that is, the Punjab, NWFP, Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal and Assam, must constitute a “Pakistan Group”, and that there must be “a separate Constitution – making body”, to frame constitution for this group and for each one of the provinces in this group. Only after these constitutions are “finally framed by the Constitution-making body, it will be open to any Province of the Group to decide to opt out of its Group, provided the wishes of the people of that Province are ascertained by a referendum to opt out or not.”<sup>25</sup> But since these demands were not acceptable to the Congress leaders who sought, among other things, one all-India Constituent Assembly, there was a complete stalemate. The Mission ended its deliberations.

With no consensus developed among the Indian leaders, the Mission was thus left with no option but to offer its own plan, keeping in view the conflicting positions of the League and the Congress in particular, the two main parties in the dispute. Its two statements of 16 May and 16 June 1946, together, constituted that plan, called the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The main thrust of the plan was to offer India a three-tiered constitutional structure in which the provinces were ‘grouped’ to form ‘Sections’ which, in turn, would determine themselves what subjects would be under the jurisdiction of their respective sectional governments. Section A comprised the provinces of Madras, Bombay, United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces, and Orrisa. Section B included the provinces of the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Sind (with the addition of a

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24 *Ibid.*, pp. 233-34.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 516-17. For a complete summary of Jinnah’s position, also see, Quaid-i-Azam Papers, F/12, pp. 131-37.

representative of British Baluchistan). Section C consisted of the provinces of Bengal and Assam. The three Sections of the Constituent Assembly had to come together, along with representatives of Indian States, to settle the Union Constitution after the provincial constitutions had been formed. Once the Union Constitution had come into force, the provinces could 'opt out' of their assigned groups. Besides the long-term proposals, the 16 May statement also suggested a short-term proposal relating to the formation of an interim Government. "While the constitution-making proceeds", the statement added, "the administration of India had to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance to the setting up at once of an interim government..."<sup>26</sup> 16 June statement reinforced and refined the idea further. The two sets of proposals, that is, the long-term proposals and the short-term proposals, were inter-twined and integral to the plan, and were to be accepted or rejected together, as a whole. The plan, of course, recommended that: "The constitutions of the Union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10 yearly intervals thereafter."<sup>27</sup>

In outlining the above plan, the Cabinet Mission firmly ruled out Pakistan as demanded by Jinnah and the League. They even opposed a "small sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone," and indeed went on to claim that "neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign state of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem."<sup>28</sup> While this statement obviously pleased the Congress leadership for passing a "sentence of death on Mr. Jinnah's Pakistan",<sup>29</sup> Jinnah was shocked and much disappointed that "the Mission should have thought fit to advance common place and exploded arguments against Pakistan... calculated to hurt the feelings of Muslim India."<sup>30</sup> In fact, he charged that this was being done "simply to appease and placate the

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26 See the details in Z.H. Zaidi, *Jinnah Papers*, Vol. I, part II (Islamabad, 1993), App III, "The Cabinet Mission Plan", pp. 32-42.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 35.

29 Quoted in Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1969), p. 259.

30 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writing*, Vol. II, p. 293.

Congress.”<sup>31</sup> But that was the position taken by the Mission, a harsh reality on the ground now, and Jinnah had to deal with it, whether he liked it or not, both for the sake of the League and the Muslim nation he represented, especially after the historic 1945-46 elections.

This was not to be an easy task. The Second World War was over, and it was not possible to reject a British offer off hand. The British were free, once again, to take charge of the political situation, with the Congress back in the mainstream politics as the largest political organization in the country. In the three-party contest, as was the case here, the loss of one party was bound to be the gain of other parties. Given the friendly and conciliatory nature of the relationship between the Congress and the British after the war, under the Labour government of Clement Attlee, the loss of the League could well have been a loss beyond redemption. So, Jinnah could not straightaway reject the plan, in spite of the fact that he had been insisting on a sovereign state of Pakistan since the adoption of the Lahore resolution and had also told the Mission during his talks with its members that, even at the worst, he could not agree to anything less than two separate constituent assemblies and the right for the ‘Pakistan Group’ to secede from the Union after an initial period of ten years. Jinnah had to weigh all the pros and cons before deciding the matter.

To make things more difficult for Jinnah, the League Working Committee had left the matter entirely up to him. To further add to his difficulties, the statement of 16 May was far from definite. It was not clear as to what the British Government would do in case one party accepted the offer and the other rejected it. How then would the interim government be formed? Since the Cabinet Mission Plan was a package deal, with the long-term proposals being essentially linked with the short-term proposals, Jinnah, in fact, saw no sense in considering the 16 May statement even on its face value unless doubts about the short-term proposals were removed. Thus, he approached the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, as early as 3 June to help clarify the issue. Wavell’s response was quite positive and encouraging. He stated that, although the Mission

cannot give you a written assurance of what its action will be in the event of the breakdown of the present negotiations; but can give you, on behalf of the Delegation, *my personal assurance that we do not*

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31 *Ibid.*, p. 295.

*propose to make any discrimination in the treatment of either party; and that we shall go ahead with the plan laid down in our statement as far as circumstances permit; if either party accepts...*<sup>32</sup>

This assurance from the Viceroy was "one of the most important considerations" with the League Working Committee in its acceptance of the statement of 16 May, when Jinnah brought up the matter for discussion and decision.<sup>33</sup> The subsequent approval of the League Council was also precisely the result of this assurance. Interestingly, on 16 June, the Mission, in a declaration of their final proposals reiterated the assurance in these words: "In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join the setting up of a coalition government... it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an interim government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of 16 May."<sup>34</sup>

But then, one wonders, what more, besides this critical assurance may have influenced Jinnah's mind and led to acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. After all, he had successfully mobilized the Muslims around his own sovereign concept of Pakistan, reflected in the massive victory of the League in the 1945-46 elections. That it was not an easy decision was evident from what he told M.A.H. Ispahani, one of his close confidants: "I have slept very little during the last week. My brain worked incessantly. I have tossed in bed from one side to the other, thinking and worrying what we should do...because the decision I was called upon to make would mar or make the destiny of our nation."<sup>35</sup> In the end, of course, as we know, he decided to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan, and, in my opinion, for a number of good reasons which I will highlight here one by one.

First, Jinnah was convinced that the "foundation and the basis of Pakistan were there in their own scheme."<sup>36</sup> The two Sections, Sections B and C, comprising essentially the Muslim-majority areas helped "reach our goal

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32 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 785 (Italics added).

33 *Ibid.*, p. 841.

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 954-55.

35 M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah: As I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1966), p. 168.

36 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 300.

and establish Pakistan.”<sup>37</sup> In fact, Jinnah assured the League Council, as soon as it had accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan that: “Believe me, this is the first step towards Pakistan.”<sup>38</sup> The plan provided for a ‘reconsideration’ after an initial period of ten years. In addition, as the League’s resolution of 6 June 1946, accepting the plan, clearly stated, it could always “keep in view the opportunity and the right to secession of Provinces or groups from the Union, which have been provided in the Mission’s Plan by implication.”<sup>39</sup> The “right to secession” was Jinnah’s best opportunity to secure Pakistan in the end, if the plan did not deliver.

Secondly, Jinnah did not want the Congress to have a walkover in the formation of interim Government at the centre. He knew that an exclusive Congress government could badly hurt his efforts to achieve Pakistan. He was aware that the Congress was keen to form a government at the centre for a long time now. As early as 1940, an emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee had called for the formation of ‘a provisional national government’ at the centre as a pre-requisite for its cooperation with the British war effort. Subsequently, too, the main burden of Congress’s negotiations with Cripps in 1942 rested on its demand for the formation of a national government. In fact, the most important reason for the failure of the negotiations was the question whether the “Executive Council” which the Congress appeared willing to join for the war period could “function like a cabinet.”<sup>40</sup> In a similar vein, composition of the central government formed the basis of Congress’s negotiations with Viceroy Wavell during the Simla Conference of 1945. The conference failed on the issue of nominations to the Executive Council. Even now, during talks with the Cabinet Mission, the formation of the government

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37 *Ibid.*, p. 301.

38 William Metz, *The Political Career of Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2010), p. 127.

39 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 838. In this sense, some critics hastened to charge that the League’s acceptance of the plan was with “reservations” like the acceptance of the Congress. But these critics forgot that there was a fundamental difference between the two sets of reservations. As Wavell “pointed out that they were long term reservations on a possible Pakistan a number of years ahead; whereas the Congress reservations were short term ones affecting the immediate issue.” Penderel Moon, ed., *The Viceroy’s Journal* (Karachi, 1974), pp. 325-26.

40 Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, p. 53.

seemed to be the main concern of the Congress. As Wavell wryly noted in his *Journal*: "Nehru disclosed almost nakedly the real Congress objective – immediate control of the centre, so that they can deal with Muslims... and then make at leisure a constitution to suit themselves".<sup>41</sup> But, then, the British, too, were favourably inclined towards the formation of a national government at the centre since the start of the Second World War, whether through the medium of Viceroy's expanded Executive Council or through the setting up of an interim Government, as in the present case.

Therefore, Jinnah could not afford to be indifferent to this whole issue of government formation. In fact, it was in this context that he had sought an 'assurance' from the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission that they would allow the League to form the government even if it was the only party to accept its plan. And it was after he received a 'personal assurance' from the Viceroy, as shown above, stating clearly that, "we do not propose to make any discrimination in the treatment of either party; and that we shall go ahead with the plan laid down in our statement as far as circumstances permit; if either party accepts,"<sup>42</sup> that he eventually decided to accept the plan. Indeed, he did not hesitate to impress upon the Viceroy the fact that it was precisely because of this "assurance" that the League Council "finally gave their approval" of the plan.<sup>43</sup>

Thirdly, as a lawyer-constitutionalist, and a very good one at that, Jinnah was sure that the plan was too cumbersome, too unwieldy, too much out of touch with the constitutional dynamics of Hindu-Muslim politics, and thus unworkable in the end. In fact, even today, decades after, "Conventional Wisdom on both sides of the Radcliffe line ordains the scheme to be unworkable."<sup>44</sup> But then Jinnah knew, more than anybody else, how much the plan was "cryptic with several lacunas."<sup>45</sup> This was amply borne out by his sharp criticism of the various aspects of the plan in his statement of 23 May 1946. A few instances of his criticism will suffice.

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41 Moon, *Viceroy's Journal*, p. 271.

42 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 785.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 841.

44 A.G. Noorani, *Jinnah and Tilak: Comrades in the Freedom Struggle* (Karachi, 2010), p. 185.

45 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. II, p. 292.

Taking the case of three subjects given to the Union, that is, foreign affairs, defence and communications, Jinnah pointed out: "There is no indication at all that the communications would be restricted to what is necessary for defence. Nor is there any indication as to how this Union will be empowered to raise finances required for these three subjects..." Again, referring to the role of the executive and the legislature on questions of communal nature, stipulating that "a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting", Jinnah wondered: "who will decide and how as to what is a major communal issue and as to what is a minor communal issue?" Finally, Jinnah highlighted the apparently minor but very significant role of the Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas "to be incorporated in the Provincial Group, or Union Constitution," and warned: "This raises a very serious question indeed, for it is left to the Union Constituent Assembly to decide these matters by a majority vote whether any of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee should be incorporated in the Union constitution, then it will open a door to more subjects being vested in the Union Government. This will destroy the very basic principle that the Union is to be strictly confined to three subjects".<sup>46</sup> This surely would be the end of the Union. Thus, Jinnah was not much impressed with the Cabinet Mission Plan, and indeed felt that it was a non-starter. It will not work. Strangely enough, Woodrow Wyatt, Private Secretary to Cripps during his stay in India, too, was convinced that: "The scheme contained in the Cabinet Mission's Statement was impracticable and could not work."<sup>47</sup>

Finally, and perhaps, more importantly, Jinnah was convinced that some proposals in the Cabinet Mission Plan were not, and could not, be acceptable to the Congress leadership under any circumstances. So, what was the harm in accepting the plan knowing fully well that the Congress

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46 *Ibid.*, pp. 294-97.

47 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 687. Wyatt said this in his meeting with Jinnah, on 25 May 1946. In my opinion, this, more than his suggestion that the League should "accept the Statement as the first step on the road to Pakistan," may have helped Jinnah accept the Cabinet Mission Plan.

itself would “sabotage” it, sooner than later.<sup>48</sup> He knew, for sure, for instance, that the ‘grouping’ clause, which formed the crux of the plan was not acceptable to the Congress leadership. Not only had the Congress leaders claimed during talks with the Mission in Simla (5-12 May 1946) that “the previous consent of the province is not necessary for joining the group” but had also insisted, time and again, that the “matter should be left to the provinces and if they wish to function as a group they are at liberty to do so to frame their own constitution for the purpose.”<sup>49</sup> Gandhi and some important Congress leaders were “frontally opposed to Assam and NWFP being placed, without their prior approval, in the ‘Pakistan’ area...”<sup>50</sup> Rafiq Zakaria claimed that “the local Congress leaders of Assam headed by their icon, Gopinath Bardolai, created such a commotion that the attitude of not only Gandhi but that of [Jawahar] Nehru and [Vallabhbhai] Patel also changed; they opposed Assam’s inclusion in Group C.”<sup>51</sup> Gandhi indeed called upon the provincial government of Assam “to offer *satyagraha*”.<sup>52</sup> Jinnah, thus like some of his ardent followers, hoped that the Congress “would either reject the proposal or ask for such amendments or put such interpretation on it as would vitiate their acceptance of it”. What is more, “the blame would now fall upon the Congress, and the Muslim League would be able to extricate itself from a difficult situation.”<sup>53</sup>

That it was not a forlorn hope was evident in less than twenty-four hours of the announcement of the plan and, ironically enough, at the hands of a man whose prior “full approval” had been claimed by Cripps only a few days back.<sup>54</sup> Writing in his *Harijan* on 17 May, Gandhi asserted that:

there was no ‘take it or leave it’ business about their recommendation. If there were restrictions, the Constituent Assembly would not be a

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48 S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their Role in India’s Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), p. 238.

49 Nicholas Mansergh and E.W.R. Lumby, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II (London, 1971), p. 519.

50 Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (Albany, NY., 1986), p. 176.

51 Rafiq Zakaria, *The Man Who Divided India* (Mumbai, 2001), p. 115.

52 Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi*, p. 238.

53 Ispahani, *As I Knew Him*, p. 169.

54 Moon, *Viceroy’s Journal*, pp. 260-61.

sovereign body free to frame a constitution of independence for India. Thus the Mission had suggested for the centre certain subjects. It was open to the Assembly, the majority vote of Muslims and non-Muslims separately, to add them or even reduce them... Similarly about grouping. *The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will to belong to a group even if the idea of grouping was accepted.*<sup>55</sup>

Two days later, Gandhi reiterated the point in a letter to Pethick-Lawrence making an issue not of "the legal position" but the "honourableness of opposition to grouping."<sup>56</sup> The Congress Working Committee, in its meeting of 20 May, followed the lead, and passed a resolution putting "its own interpretation on the grouping of Provinces."<sup>57</sup> The matter was complicated further by a damning statement issued by Jawaharlal Nehru (who had replaced Maulana Azad as President of the Congress) on 10 July, suggesting that "the big probability is that from any approach to the question, there will be no grouping. Obviously Section A will decide against grouping... 'there was four-to-one chance of the North-West Frontier Province deciding against... Then Group B collapses. It is highly likely that Assam will decide against grouping with Bengal... I can say, with every assurance and conviction there is going to be no grouping there... *Thus this grouping business approached from any point of view does not get on at all.*"<sup>58</sup> The British Government obviously could not agree to this interpretation given by the Congress leadership, "that the provinces have a right to decide both as to grouping and as to their own constitutions,"<sup>59</sup> and, thus, for all practical purposes, the plan was almost dead on arrival.

Although Maulana Azad blamed Nehru for the ultimate blow to the plan, the fact of the matter was that he was present in Nehru's meeting with the Mission on 10 June (a month before his 10 July statement) where he had

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55 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 614. (Italics added).

56 *Ibid.*, p. 622.

57 See the full text in *Ibid.*, pp. 679-82.

58 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII (London, 1979), p. 26. (Italics added).

59 See the "Statement of His Majesty's Government on 6 December 1946", in Zaidi, *Jinnah Papers*, Vol. I, Part II, App. III, pp. 43-44.

declared that, "the Congress was going to work for a strong centre and [sic] to break the Group system and they would succeed," and he did not challenge or correct him. He also heard Nehru say that: "They did not think that Mr. Jinnah had any real place in the country,"<sup>60</sup> and he did not object. Thus, Nehru alone could not be blamed for wrecking the plan, a favourite target of writers both in Pakistan and India on this issue. He was representing the Congress leadership, including Maulana Azad. But, more importantly, he was representing Gandhi who, as discussed above, was strongly opposed to the grouping clause in the plan and its obvious implications for the NWFP and particularly Assam. Gandhi's will was the will of the Congress. In the light of above, one wonders how could the Cabinet Mission Plan (or any constitutional plan, for that matter) ever work in India. As H.M. Seervai has aptly remarked:

It is clear that the Plan could have worked successfully only if the Congress showed goodwill towards Jinnah and the Muslim League. The Plan upheld the Congress demand for a united India... Once the League accepted the Unity of India, it had nothing more to give to the Congress. Only the Congress representing the majority community could show goodwill by working the Plan in the spirit in which it was intended to be worked, namely for the Congress to share power with the Muslim League. However, the Congress showed no goodwill towards the League and the Plan failed.<sup>61</sup>

In the end, it can be safely argued that Jinnah's decision to accept the Cabinet Mission Plan was a smart 'tactical' move under the difficult circumstances facing the Muslims in the post-War period.<sup>62</sup> The Congress was upbeat, charged, and convinced that the freedom was around the corner, and the British were more than keen to 'appease and placate the Congress.' The Viceroy, Wavell, himself acknowledged that the Mission was "living in the pocket of Congress" while negotiating the terms of agreement. Though he singled out Cripps, "an old friend of several

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60 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, p. 855.

61 H.M. Seervai, *Partition of India: Legend and Reality* (Rawalpindi, 1991, rep.), p. 50.

62 "In that one decision, combining as it did sagacity, shrewdness and unequalled political flair, he justified – I am convinced – my claim that he was the most remarkable of all the great statesmen that I have known," wrote Aga Khan appreciatively in his memoirs. Aga Khan, *The Memoirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time* (New York, 1954), p. 298.

Congress leaders,” especially Nehru, for his “hole-and-corner private negotiations” with the Congress leadership, he had no doubt that the Mission, as a whole, was “unable to remain really impartial.”<sup>63</sup> The Mission’s attitude was indeed clearly reflected in the extraordinary efforts made by Pethick-Lawrence to devise a “formula” aimed at helping to set the Congress “fears definitely at rest.” As he explained to Wavell, “in this agreement, Congress would I suggest accept the proposition that the Sections would meet *and decide whether there should be groups and if so, the nature of Groups Constitution.*”<sup>64</sup> While Wavell did not hesitate to term this formula “both dishonest and cowardly,” he himself could do no better than tell Pethick-Lawrence “to avoid pressing the grouping question to a final issue before the Interim Government takes over and has a period of office.”<sup>65</sup> So much for his own integrity!

The fact of the matter is that, by accepting the Cabinet Mission Plan, Jinnah defeated both the British and the Congress at their own game and, thus, paved the way for Pakistan as the only way out of the communal-constitutional problem of India. On 29 July 1946, the League formally rejected the plan, and called upon “the Muslim nation to resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan.”<sup>66</sup> Jinnah who had already moved the Working Committee to withdraw the League’s acceptance of the plan, called it “a most historic decision.” Indeed, he declared that:

Never before in the whole life-history of the Muslim League...did we do anything except by constitutional methods and constitutional talks. We are today forced into this position by a move in which both the Congress and Britain have participated. We have been attacked on two fronts – the British front and the Hindu front. Today we have said goodbye to constitutions and constitutional methods. Throughout the painful negotiations, the two parties with whom we bargained held a pistol at us; one with power and machine guns behind it, and the other with non-cooperation and threat to launch a mass civil disobedience. This situation must be met. We also have a pistol. We have taken this

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63 See, Moon, *Viceroy’s Journal*, pp. 251, 287, 305, and 324.

64 Mansergh, *Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 333. (Italics added).

65 *Ibid.*, p. 382.

66 Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. II, pp. 557-58.

decision ...with full responsibility and all the deliberations possible...and we mean it.<sup>67</sup>

The rejection of the Cabinet Mission Plan, and eventually a decision to resort to 'Direct Action' signalled the end of united India in the ensuing struggle for transfer of power between the League and the Congress, and correspondingly between the Muslims and the Hindus. The "pusillanimous attitude of the British Government" which "encouraged the Congress to persevere in its unjustified and misplaced claims" led to India's "eventual break up."<sup>68</sup> The communal violence and bloodshed witnessed in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on 16 August, and soon spread to other areas in the country, particularly Bihar and United Provinces, creating a 'civil-war' like situation, in spite of the fact that the League eventually joined the Interim Government on 15 October 1946, forced the British Government to realize that "the present state of uncertainty is fraught with danger and cannot be indefinitely prolonged."<sup>69</sup> Viceroy Wavell was hastily (and unceremoniously) replaced by Lord Mountbatten, to oversee the process of transfer of power in India. On 3 June 1947, Partition Plan was announced. However, the announcement still insisted: "The Cabinet Mission Plan...offers the best basis for solving the Indian problem... But, as Indian leaders have finally failed to agree on a plan for a united India, partition becomes the inevitable alternative..."<sup>70</sup> The "inevitable alternative" finally materialized on 14 August 1947. India was partitioned and Pakistan emerged as an independent, sovereign state in South Asia.

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67 *Ibid.*, pp. 560-61.

68 Muhammad Iqbal Chawla, *Wavell and the Dying Days of the Raj: Britain's Penultimate Viceroy in India* (Karachi, 2011), p. 130.

69 See the full text in V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, pp. 506-9.

70 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. X (London, 1981), p. 108.

## Chapter 9

### Emergence of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah as the Charismatic Leader of Muslim India

The main argument of this chapter is that Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah emerged as the charismatic leader of Muslim India during the crisis-ridden decade of 1937-47,<sup>1</sup> and his emergence, as such, was due both to his extraordinary personal qualities of leadership and the grave crisis faced by the Muslims in India. He offered them a way out of their distressful situation in the form of a separate homeland of Pakistan, and through his able and devoted leadership, led them successfully into the 'promised land'. His followers hailed him as their 'man of the moment', their 'saviour', indeed their *Quaid-i-Azam* (Great Leader). But before we proceed to analyze his charismatic leadership at some length,<sup>2</sup> let us delineate the theory of charisma first.

The theory of charisma, formulated by Max Weber,<sup>3</sup> and developed subsequently by its modern-day exponents, including Dankwart A.

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- 1 Most prominent writers to argue that Jinnah was a charismatic leader included Waheed-uz-Zaman, Sharif al Mujahid, R.J. Moore and Stanley Wolpert. Those who disagreed included Khalid bin Sayeed, Saleem M.M. Qureshi and Z.H. Zaidi. See, Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Myth and Reality* (Islamabad, 1976); Sharif al Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi, 1981); R.J. Moore, "Jinnah and the Pakistan Demand", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1983); Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York, 1984); Khalid bin Sayeed, "The Personality of Jinnah and His Political Strategy", in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-1947*, eds., C.H. Philips and Mary Wainright (London, 1970); Saleem M.M. Qureshi, "The Consolidation of Leadership in the Last Phase of the Politics of the All-India Muslim League", *Asian Profile*, Vol.1, No.2 (Oct. 1973); and Z.H. Zaidi, "Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy, 1937-47", in Philips, *The Partition of India*.
  - 2 For a detailed, theoretical discussion of his charismatic leadership see, Sikandar Hayat, *The Charismatic Leader: Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Creation of Pakistan*, 2nd ed (Karachi, 2014).
  - 3 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated and edited by A.R. Henderson and Talcot Parsons (New York, 1947); and *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated and edited by H.H. Gerth and C.Wright Mills (New York, 1958).

Rustow, Robert Tucker, and Ann Ruth Willner, highlights a kind of leadership suited most to the ex-colonial and, for that matter, developing societies<sup>4</sup> undergoing the strains of political modernization and change.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, according to Willner, these societies provided the most ideal setting for the emergence of charismatic leaders. The 'traditional' order was discredited or destroyed under the impact of the colonial rule. The newly introduced 'legal-rational' systems of authority, introduced by the colonial rulers were not always satisfying or even adequate to meet the demands and aspirations of the new politically mobilized social groups.

The result was a crisis of 'authority', of legitimate political authority. This crisis helped facilitate the emergence of a charismatic leader who, with his extraordinary personal qualities,<sup>6</sup> could fill in the void by offering his followers a new system of authority vested in his own person. In the process, he devised a 'formula' to alleviate their distress. This formula was geared towards a goal, a rallying point for the followers. The more its appeal and acceptance, the more charismatic authority was enhanced. But, in order to sustain and support this authority, the charismatic leader had to 'routinize' his charisma through a disciplined organization such as, a political party. In the end, however, the charismatic leader was personally recognized by his followers, and it remained his job to lead his party disciples and followers towards the cherished goal.<sup>7</sup>

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4 Dankwart A. Rustow, "Ataturk as Founder of a State" *Daedalus*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (1968); Robert Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership", *Daedalus*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (1968); and Ann Ruth Willner, "Charismatic Political Leadership: A Theory", Princeton University Centre of International Studies (1968) and *The Spellbinders: Charismatic Political Leadership* (New Haven, 1984).

5 Besides Rustow, Tucker and Willner, also see, Edwards Shils, "Charisma, Order and Status", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 30, No.2 (1968) and "The Concentration and Dispersion of Charisma", *World Politics*, Vol. XI, No.1 (1958); and David E. Apter, "Nkrumah, Charisma and the Coup", *Daedalus*, Vol. 97, No.3 (1968).

6 These qualities include the qualities of 'passion', tempered by reason, and a sense of "responsibility and proportion". The charismatic leaders are essentially rational leaders. For this aspect of the personality of the charismatic leader see, Max Weber's later writings, especially, "Politics as a Vocation" and "The Meaning of Discipline", in Gerth and Mills, *From Max Weber*.

7 For a detailed analysis of the theory of charisma and charismatic Leadership see, Sikandar Hayat, "Max Weber: Concept of Charisma and Charismatic

To put it in operational terms, thus, the emergence of charismatic leaders was made possible by a combination of two sets of factors, that is, 'personal' and 'situational'. The personal factors included: 1) extraordinary qualities of a leader which seemed to set him apart from the rest; 2) capacity to offer a formula which could help alleviate the distress of his followers; and 3) capability to move his followers to shift their old allegiances to the new system of authority vested in his own person. The situational factors included: 1) absence or lack of the traditional order; 2) weak or ineffective 'legal-rational system of authority'; and 3) the crisis. In this sense, charismatic leadership is also regarded as 'crisis leadership'.

The examination of both personal and situational factors will help us in exploring, systematically and methodically, the case of any genuine charismatic leader, and, in the present case, that of Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah as the charismatic leader of Muslim India.

Let us begin with Jinnah's personality, and with his political career. As Tucker has argued, an analyst should "always go back to the beginnings of the given leader-personality's emergence as a leader, rather than start with the status achieved at the zenith of his career."<sup>8</sup> He should recognize "indication of a charismatic following or movement...[sic] very early in the career and in any event before power is achieved."<sup>9</sup>

Jinnah formally joined politics in December 1906, when he attended the Calcutta (now Kolkata) session of the Indian National Congress as a delegate and honorary personal secretary to President Dadabhoj Naoroji, known to him since his stay and studies in London.<sup>10</sup> His choice of the Congress platform was as significant as, in retrospect, the choice of two issues that he spoke on: 1) *Waqf-alal-Aulad* (trust), a Muslim issue; and 2) the Congress demand for self-government in India. Supporting the

Leadership Reconsidered," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (July-December, 1983). Also see, Hayat, *The Charismatic Leader*, Ch. 1, "Towards an Operational Framework of Charisma and Charismatic Leadership", pp. 12-53.

8 Rober Tucker, "The Theory of Chariamstic Political Leadership", *Daedalus*, Vol. 97, No.3 (1968), p. 739.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 739-40.

10 Jinnah did his Bar-at-Law from the Lincoln's Inn. In 1895, he was called to the Bar. In May 1896, he returned to India.

Congress resolution on *Waqf-alal-Aulad*, he exclaimed: "This shows one thing, gentlemen, that we Muhammadans can equally stand on this common platform and pray for our grievances being remedied through the programme of the National Congress."<sup>11</sup> He was a votary of 'Indian nationalism'. However, he was mindful of a "section" in India which was "dreaming in terms of Hindu raj."<sup>12</sup> They stood for "Hindu Nationalism."<sup>13</sup> But, he stressed, "hope sprang almost eternally in my heart and soul, derived from Dadabhoy Naoroji. I was not going to give it up, but nourish it."<sup>14</sup>

Jinnah's choice of Congress platform to give public expression to his political ideals was, in fact, typical of the educated, urban middle class optimism about the emergence of Indian nationalism. Indeed, Jinnah wondered, "is it too much to ask and appeal to Hindus and Mohamedans, the two great communities in India to combine in one harmonious union for the common good, where we have to live together in every district, town and hamlet, where our daily life is interwoven with each other in every square mile of one common country."<sup>15</sup> He did not want any conflict between particular Muslim interests and all-India national interests. He was confident that the Congress, through mutual accommodation and adjustments, will lead the way and will be able to reconcile those particular interests with general interests in the common cause of self-government for India.

Jinnah himself made this reconciliation possible when, in November 1916, acting as President of the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League, which he had joined in 1913 and had helped it adopt the goal of 'self-government suitable to India', moved the League and the Congress to draft a scheme for self-government to which both parties were now committed. Popularly known as the 'Lucknow Pact', the main gain for the Muslims was the acceptance of the principle of separate electorates, already granted by the British Government under the Act of 1909. This

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11 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *The Collected Works of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Karachi, 1984), p. 2.

12 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. I (Lahore, 1968), p. 497.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 498.

14 *Ibid.*

15 Pirzada, *The Collected Works of Quaid-i-Azam*, p. 15.

was a major concession by the Congress. In fact, the Lucknow Pact showed that it was possible for Hindu and Muslim educated, middle classes to reach an “an amicable settlement of Hindu-Muslim constitutional and political problems.”<sup>16</sup> But, most importantly, the pact enhanced “the strength of Indian nationalism.”<sup>17</sup> Jinnah was declared not only an ‘ambassador’, but “an embodied symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity.”<sup>18</sup>

However, the situation changed radically, first with the collapse of the Khilafat-non-cooperation movement, a grand alliance of the Hindu and Muslim masses under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and the Ali Brothers, Maulana Mohamed Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali (with Jinnah on the sidelines) and the resultant Hindu-Muslim riots, and then with the elevation of provincial politics under the Act of 1919. There arose issues of the distribution of seats in the legislative councils and municipal bodies, and the proportion of representation in government jobs. The Muslims and Hindus vied with each other for scarce ‘loaves and fishes’. Clearly, a struggle for power had begun. While, under the 1909 Act, the absence of devolutionary process acted as a spur to Hindu-Muslim unity, as exemplified by the Lucknow Pact mentioned above, the working of the 1919 Act projected and promoted the conflict of interests between the two communities.

This was most evident in the framing of the Nehru Report of 1928, constituted under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to “consider and determine the principles of the constitution for India.”<sup>19</sup> This move was India’s response to the ‘all-white’ Simon Commission announced by the British Government in November 1927 to devise a constitutional scheme for India. Jinnah had opted to cooperate with the Congress than with the commission in the common cause of India, though, in the process, this split up the Muslim League into two factions, Jinnah League and Shafi (Mian Muhammad Shafi) League. “India cannot”, Jinnah declared, “participate in this policy and share in the work of the Commission in any

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16 Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1858-1947* (London, 1968), p. 42.

17 Reginald Coupland, *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India, Part I: The Indian Problem, 1853-1935* (London, 1968), p. 52.

18 Sarojini Naidu, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: An Ambassador of Unity* (Lahore, 1989, rep).

19 M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970), p. 128.

form at any stage because it is a complete negation of India's status as partner."<sup>20</sup>

It was only after the Nehru report was published that Jinnah realized that Muslim interests and Indian national interests, as aggregated and articulated by the Congress, were not easily reconcilable. There were fundamental differences. Most importantly, the Muslims were "opposed to the concept of an all-powerful central government", led by the majority community, without any prior settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem. Therefore, to maintain a credible position, in addition to separate electorates, they specifically demanded a federal constitution, with provincial autonomy and residuary powers vested in the provinces, reservation of seats for the Muslims on population basis in the Punjab and Bengal in the event of adult suffrage not being established in the country, and one-third representation of the Muslims in the central legislature.<sup>21</sup> Jinnah took these demands to the All Parties National Convention held in Calcutta on 22 December, and again, on 28 December 1928, and fervently appealed to the Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, and other involved parties:

[W]hat we want is that Hindus and Muslims should march together until our object is attained. Therefore, it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but the Mussalmans of India and here I am not speaking [sic] as a Mussalman but as an Indian. And it is my desire to see that we get seven crores [seventy million] of Mussalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom.<sup>22</sup>

But the Congress was not moved. In fact, it did not agree with Jinnah's fundamental premise that the Hindu-Muslim problem was "a national problem",<sup>23</sup> and thus required working out a solution earnestly and urgently. Indeed, ignoring Jinnah and his demands and of course the overall hostile Muslim reaction to the Nehru report, the Congress

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20 Waheed Ahmad, ed., *Jinnah-Irwin Correspondence, 1927-30* (Lahore, 1969), p. 6.

21 Ian Bryant Wells, *Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity: Jinnah's Early Politics* (New Delhi, 2005), pp. 179-81.

22 Cited in S.M. Burke and Salim Al-Din Quraishi, *The British Raj in India: A Historical Review* (Karachi, 1995), p. 267.

23 Jinnah to M.C. Chagla, 5 August, 1929. Cited in Wells, *Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity*, p. 184.

presented the British Government with an ultimatum to accept the report within a year, by 31 December 1929 at the latest, or else face the Civil Disobedience Movement. Jinnah's determined effort at Hindu-Muslim settlement was thwarted. In fact, in the opinion of one Indian writer, "The Nehru Report episode was the real turning point that launched Jinnah on the path of becoming what he became – the Quaid-i-Azam."<sup>24</sup> This was all the more incredible in view of the fact that there was "little evidence to show that the Nehru Report received a serious consideration in official circles."<sup>25</sup>

However, by now, Jinnah had come to realize that "he either had to be in the Congress camp or in the Muslim camp; but he simply could not be in both."<sup>26</sup> He had to choose. Jinnah chose the Muslim camp. He formulated his now famous 'Fourteen Points', which besides insisting on separate electorates and other oft-repeated Muslim demands, sought to create five Muslim-majority provinces, that is, the Punjab, Bengal, NWFP (North-West Frontier Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Sind (now Sindh), and Baluchistan (now Balochistan) to balance the Hindu-majority provinces under a genuine federation with sufficient safeguards for all minorities, especially the Muslims. The idea was "to ensure the 'unity of India' at the top while providing the Muslims with a sense of participation and belonging."<sup>27</sup>

Thus, Jinnah took a position different, radically different, from his earlier position taken in the Delhi Muslim Proposals of 1927. While in those proposals, he had endeavoured to represent both Muslim and Hindu interests (and was even prepared to forego separate electorates) in the greater cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, the 'Fourteen Points' essentially represented Muslim interests and demands. However, he did not become a "communalist" as such, though he "could no longer be called the

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24 Parkash Almeida, *Jinnah: Man of Destiny* (Delhi, 2001), p. 92.

25 B.R. Nanda, *Road to Pakistan: The Life and Times of Mohammad Ali Jinnah* (Delhi, 2010), p. 128.

26 Jaswant Singh, *Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence* (Karachi, 2010), p. 128.

27 Abdul Hamid, *On Understanding the Quaid-i-Azam* (Islamabad, 1977), p. 13. Also see, Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 19.

Ambassador of Unity in the same sense as the title had been applied to him theretofore.”<sup>28</sup>

Still, Jinnah, compulsive nationalist that he was, had not lost faith in Hindu-Muslim unity for the good of India. Thus, on 19 June 1929, he wrote to the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, to invite “representatives of India, who would be in a position to deliver the goods,” to sit in a conference<sup>29</sup> with the British authorities to reach a solution that may have the “willing assent of political India.”<sup>30</sup>

But then, the Congress, armed with its Independence Declaration of Lahore (in 1929), preferred to launch its Civil Disobedience Movement and refused to attend the Round Table Conference in London, in spite of Jinnah’s best efforts to persuade it to make use of the opportunity for what it was worth. Though it did eventually take part in the Second Round Table Conference in 1931, after calling off its movement, considerable damage had already been done to the common cause of India – self-government and freedom. Both Muslim and Hindu delegates had hardened their positions. Communal issues had become entangled with a constitutional problem. The Hindus insisted on a government with strong centre. The Muslims, on the contrary, demanded a loose federation with autonomous provinces. To further complicate the matters, Gandhi, not only not helped with the negotiations, but through his public pronouncements and activities, widened the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims on a host of other political issues too. The result was, as Jinnah described it in exasperation, “we went round and round in London...without reaching the

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28 William Metz, *The Political Career of Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., Roger D. Long (Karachi, 2010), p. 35.

29 Jinnah, however, was not the only leader to call for this kind of conference. There were ‘comparable appeals’. John Simon had suggested such a conference. The Round Table Conference, “when it opened in November 1930, differed fundamentally, however, from that envisaged by Jinnah”, both “in the number and the nature of the persons who were to participate in the conference”, and hence was a different proposition altogether. Metz, *Political Career of Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, p. 60.

30 M. Rafique Afzal, ed., *Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1911-1934, and 1947-48* (Lahore, 1976), pp. 306-7, 310.

straight path that would lead us to freedom.”<sup>31</sup> But then Gandhi and other Hindu delegates were not all the problem. Muslim delegates to the conference, led by the Aga Khan, and directed by Mian Fazl-i-Husain in the pursuit essentially of his ‘Punjab Formula’, did their best to “undercut Jinnah”<sup>32</sup> and his efforts at Hindu-Muslim unity and settlement. The Muslims, Jinnah lamented later, had no idea of what was going on, indeed what was at stake, and thus failed to act together to save their ‘precarious position’. The Communal Award, announced by the British Government in 1932 or the 1935 Act, for that matter, was hardly a solace for the Muslims. As one Muslim leader perceptively wrote to Jinnah: “The closing scene of the Round Table Conference has left the Muslims in the cold. We are unable to judge the real position, and there is no one else to give correct lead and take up the command.”<sup>33</sup>

By the middle of 1930s, the Muslims of India were indeed in a very difficult situation. The Round Table Conference had largely failed to satisfy their demands and interests. There was little progress on constitutional and communal issues. Hindu-Muslim relations were at their lowest ebb. There was hardly any Muslim leader in India who could protect and promote Muslim interests. The Muslim League was badly divided into warring groups. Jinnah, their old and trusted leader, was settled in London. He had decided to stay back after attending the first two sessions of the conference (—he was not invited to the third session). Indeed, the Muslims were completely at a loss. They did not know what to do in the face of a grave crisis confronting them, especially as India appeared to advance towards self-government under a new constitutional set-up.

Jinnah eventually returned to India in 1935, to help. Many Muslim leaders, including Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Liaquat Ali Khan, had appealed to him to come back and lead the Muslims in the hard times. The Muslim League Council, in its meeting on 12 March 1933, after deliberating upon the situation, particularly in the context of the White Paper embodying the recommendations of the Round Table Conference, had sent Jinnah an

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31 For an informative discussion on Gandhi’s activities outside the conference see, in particular, S.K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their Role in India’s Quest for Freedom* (Lahore, 1976), pp. 140-41.

32 Mohammad Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan* (Lahore, 1989), p. 70.

33 *Quaid-i-Azam papers*, F/15, p. 84.

urgent telegram to return and lead the Muslims in this hour of crisis.<sup>34</sup> But, more importantly, Jinnah himself (a potential charismatic leader) realized now that he had to help his distressed community in India. As he put it, "I found that the Musalmans were in the greatest danger. I made up my mind to come back, as I could not do any good from London."<sup>35</sup> Already, he had been elected President of the unified Muslim League, on 4 March 1934. Thus, imbued with "a sense of mission",<sup>36</sup> he returned and soon undertook the task of mobilizing the Muslims all over the country, particularly for the important provincial elections due shortly, in 1937. He launched a systematic effort to reorganize the League for the purpose. In June 1936, the League announced its election manifesto, emphasizing 'responsible government' for India and cooperation with the Congress and other progressive parties for the good of India. Still interested in reviving the "entente" of the Lucknow Pact of 1916<sup>37</sup> between the League and the Congress, Jinnah, in fact, campaigned on a conciliatory note in spite of pressure from a host of sources to the contrary.<sup>38</sup>

The League did not do well in the elections. In large part, it was due to the lack of an efficient, effective machinery. It had fought the elections on an all-India basis for the first time. It had neither the capacity nor the resources, including financial, to spread its message and campaign across the length and breadth of the country. The Central Parliamentary Board and its provincial counterparts were established from the scratch. There was considerable opposition in the Muslim-majority provinces. The provincial leadership was keen to promote its own parochial, provincial interests. In addition, the Muslims in those provinces, "with a Muslim always at the head of the administration", and thus somewhat secure, "felt

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34 Syed Shamsul Hasan, *Plain Mr. Jinnah* (Karachi, 1976), p. 55.

35 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 42. Moore suggests that the Indian Muslims' predicament also happened to coincide with his own predicament in politics, enabling him to "internalize" the Muslims sense of suffering. R.J. Moore, "Jinnah and the Pakistan demand".

36 Hamid, *On Understanding the Quaid-i-Azam*, p. 14.

37 Reginald Coupland, *India: A Re-statement* (Lahore, 1945), p. 150. Lucknow Pact was the only instance of the Muslim League and the Congress joining hands against the British in the greater cause of constitutional advance in India.

38 Wolpert discusses in particular the pressure from Chaudhri Rahmat Ali and his Pakistan National Movement. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, pp. 145-46.

less fearful of Hindu domination.”<sup>39</sup> In the Punjab, for instance, the League or its election campaign had little appeal for the Muslims. However, it did well in Bengal, and bagged 39 seats, a few more than the rival Krishak Praja Party of A.K. Fazlul Haq. In the United Province (UP), a Hindu-majority province, it won almost half, 29 out of 64 Muslim seats. Overall, the League was able to win 109 out of 482 seats reserved for the Muslims. The Congress could capture only 26 Muslim seats, 19 of them in the NWFP in alliance with the Khudai Khidmatgars of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. But the Congress and its leaders were not willing to accept the League as a representative party of the Muslims.

Winning overwhelmingly in the Hindu-majority provinces, the Congress refused to “share power” with the League, even in the UP.<sup>40</sup> The plain meaning of the Wardha Resolution, declared its then president, Jawaharlal Nehru, “is that only the Congress parties with a majority in the provincial assemblies are entitled to form ministries from among their own members.”<sup>41</sup> Referring to this shortsightedness, Rajmohan Gandhi, a distinguished Indian writer, argued that accommodative “gestures from Congress to the League” in the Hindu-majority provinces and particularly in the UP “would have made it more difficult for Jinnah to convince the *qaum* (the Muslim nation)” at a later stage (in the 1940s) “that Congress was its enemy”, but that “opportunity” went begging.<sup>42</sup> A “general feeling” created among the Muslims “was that ‘Hindu Raj’ had arrived.”<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, the Congress attitude and conduct frightened the Muslims all over the country, including the leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces. They clearly saw a threat not only to the League, their natural defense against the Congress at the centre, but, also, more significantly, to their own

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39 Burke and Quraishi, *British Raj in India*, p. 313.

40 I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1974), p. 110.

41 S. Gopal, ed. *Selected Works of Nehru*, Vol. VIII (New Delhi, 1978), p. 110. Ironically, the Congress did form coalitions with other parties in provinces where it was in a minority. No wonder, B.R. Ambedkar observed, “If coalition is bad, how can it be good in one place and bad in another?” Cited in S. M. Burke and Salim Al-Din Qureshi, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: His Personality and His Politics* (Karachi, 1997), p. 225.

42 Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (Albany, NY, 1986), pp. 146-47.

43 Singh, *India – Partition – Independence*, p.200.

survival and status as provincial leaders. Though, numerically, the Muslims were a majority in these provinces, politically, they were a “minority” because of the electoral limitations.<sup>44</sup> They had fewer seats in the assemblies than their numbers warranted. In the Communal Award, for instance, the Punjabi Muslims were conceded only 49 percent of the reserved seats, short of a simple majority. More precisely, they got 86 out of 175 seats. In Bengal, the Muslims received 48 percent, 119 out of 250 seats, clearly short of a majority.<sup>45</sup>

The use of “inexorable logic of ‘majority rule’ by the Congress” also convinced Jinnah that the Hindus and the Congress were “in reality, aspiring and working for unadulterated power for themselves with no co-sharers in power, not even the Muslims.”<sup>46</sup> There was no place for them in the corridors of power. He, therefore, did not hesitate to declare publicly that “the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus...”<sup>47</sup> The “one wholesome lesson”, however, he inferred, was that the Muslims “must realize that the time has come when they should concentrate and devote their energies to self-organization and full development of their power to the exclusion of every other consideration.”<sup>48</sup> They needed to come together, unite, and strengthen the League as their representative organization. Only a strong, representative League could force the Congress to cater to Muslim interests and share power with them. There was no other way to secure a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem. “Honourable Settlement”, he observed, “can only be achieved between equals, and unless the two parties learn to respect and fear each other, there is no solid ground for any settlement” between them. “Politics”, after all, he maintained, “means power and not relying only on cries of justice or fair play or good will.”<sup>49</sup>

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44 Even the Communal Award of 1932, for example, could not secure the statutory majority of the Muslims in the Punjab. Muslims got 49% of the reserved seats, i.e., 86 out of 175 seats.

45 Edward Thompson and G.T. Garrat, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* (Allahabad, 1962), p. 663.

46 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 21.

47 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 30.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

But, then, by now Jinnah was frustrated with the system of government in India too. In fact, in an interview with the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, on 13 March 1939, Jinnah bluntly told him that he saw “no solution” to the Indian problem largely because of the system of government being no help. He was convinced “that the present system would not work and that a mistake had been made in going so far.”<sup>50</sup> In fact, the system, he claimed, had “resulted in a permanent communal majority government”<sup>51</sup> of the Hindus and had thus made the Muslims “virtually feudatories of the central government in all respects.”<sup>52</sup> Safeguards, “constitutional or otherwise”, were of no use.<sup>53</sup> They could not save the Muslims from “the kind of subtle, insidious discrimination for which the law itself could provide no remedy.”<sup>54</sup>

Indeed, it had become clear to a vast majority of the Muslims that the Congress nationalism was “Hindu nationalism”,<sup>55</sup> not Indian nationalism as they had hoped and expected. Not only the Congress failed to distinguish and differentiate between the two but, more significantly, kept on pursuing Hindu nationalism to mobilize support of the majority community in its favour. In particular, Gandhi (not to talk of Hindu Mahasabha leaders) used Hindu religion and culture politically in such a way that many Muslims were convinced that the end goal was a revival of Hinduism in the country. As R.P. Dutt noted: “[This] emphasis on Hinduism must bear a share of the responsibility for the alienation of wide sections of Moslem opinion from the national movement.”<sup>56</sup> Even Nehru admitted that the Congress had a “Hinduized look” for most part.<sup>57</sup> The British system of representative government had already brought to the fore the stark reality of “majority rule” with Hindus “always in power and the

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50 John Glendevon, *The Viceroy at Bay* (London, 1971), p. 124.

51 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol.I, p. 95.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 226.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 228.

54 L.F. Rushbrook Williams, “The Evolution of the Quaid-i-Azam”, in *World Scholars on Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, ed., A.H. Dani (Islamabad, 1978), p. 133.

55 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, *Jinnah and the Making of a Nation* (Karachi, 1969), p. 77.

56 R.P. Dutt, *India Today* (London, 1940), p. 125.

57 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New York, 1946), p. 353.

Muslims never.”<sup>58</sup> While the Hindus “could scarcely be expected to surrender the rights their numbers gave them”,<sup>59</sup> the Congress leadership, in its strict adherence to the Western norms of representative government, based on the majority principle, was not even willing to take into consideration the “peculiar and unique political conditions in India which necessitated a different approach towards the Muslim community.”<sup>60</sup>

But that was not all. The Congress leadership had scant regard for Jinnah and the Muslim interests and demands he represented. Nehru, for instance, as late as 25 March 1947, had the audacity to tell the new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, the very first day he met him, that, “as a financially successful though mediocre lawyer, Jinnah had found success later in life. He had not been politically successful until after the age of 60 [i.e., 1936].”<sup>61</sup> Nothing could be more absurd. As A.G Noorani commented, and our discussion above amply showed, “Jinnah was a national figure well before that in 1916. He was forty then. The comments on his professional competence as a lawyer do not flatter Nehru.”<sup>62</sup> In fact, Noorani lamented that “there must be few precedents where a front rank leader, as Nehru undoubtedly was, to nurse for two decades antipathy towards another leader of a similar rank. An antipathy so irrational, almost violent, as to drive him repeatedly to belittle him to all and sundry, and in effect, to rule him out as an interlocutor during a crucial phase in the struggle for freedom.”<sup>63</sup> While Gandhi was discreet, polite, even calling Jinnah as ‘Brother Jinnah’ and ‘Dear Quaid-e-Azam’ at times, he too thought that Jinnah was “suffering from hallucination”,<sup>64</sup> when it came to his insistence on Muslim demands, particularly the Pakistan demand. In

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58 Coupland, *The Indian Problem*, p. 33.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 35.

60 The Congress, Seervai felt, “overlooked the fact that although in arithmetic 3 is not equal to 1”, the circumstances in India suggested that “for certain purposes about 90 million Muslims should be treated on a par with about 200 Million Hindus” so that the Muslims did not fear “domination under a ‘Hindu Raj’.” H.M. Seervai, *Partition of India: Legend and Reality*, (Rawalpindi, 1989), p. 35.

61 A.G. Noorani, *Jinnah and Tilak: Comrades in the Freedom Struggle* (Karachi, 2010), p. 114.

62 *Ibid.*

63 *Ibid.*, p. 115.

64 Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, p. 236.

fact, in the end, this indifferent, hostile attitude forced Jinnah to deliver his “swan song to Indian nationalism.”<sup>65</sup>

If we agree with Willner in considering “the typical colonial order” to be “a fair approximation of the Western model of “legal-rational authority”,<sup>66</sup> then, indeed, the British system of government introduced in India had failed to satisfy the Muslims. The system was inherently and thus inevitably biased in favour of the Hindu majority community. There was not much that the Muslims or the British, for that matter, could do about it now. In fact, Leopold S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, more than once, in the 1940s, pressed for the replacement of the British with the Swiss or indeed the American system of government,<sup>67</sup> but to no avail. It was too late in the day. It was time to leave.

With the failure of “rational legality” and in the absence of political tradition (the ‘traditional’ Muslim-Mughal-authority already discredited and displaced), there was a severe crisis in Muslim India.<sup>68</sup> The experience of Congress ministries in the provinces in 1937-39 years, refusing to share power with them and ignoring their grievances, had created “a general feeling of insecurity” and helplessness among the Muslims.<sup>69</sup> They saw the Congress rule primarily as an attempt at ‘Hindu domination’. Further attempts, with Gandhi’s blessings, to force Sanskritized Hindi on the Muslims and to remould the educational system at the primary level, as represented by the *Vidyamandir* scheme, made matters worse. The Muslims perceived these measures as an attack on Muslim culture in

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65 *Ibid.*, p. 102. Wolpert suggests that Jinnah and Gandhi “recognized one another as “natural enemies”, and argues that the final outcome of events in India might have been much different if the two could have worked together. “They might even have avoided partition.” *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 55.

66 Ann Ruth and Dorothy Willners, “The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders”, *The Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 358 (1965), p. 81.

67 See, for instance, his letters to Viceroy Linlithgow and Viceroy Wavell in July and October 1943, respectively. Nicholas Mansergh and E.W. R. Lumby, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV (London, 1973), pp.84, 203.

68 Rustow discussed a similar situation in Turkey, facilitating the rise of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Rustow, “Ataturk”, p. 794.

69 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, “The Consolidation of Leadership”, p. 319.

India. Muslim apprehensions, in fact, went as far as they could go. The “fear of the future that weighed heavily on the Muslim mind” since the introduction of representative institutions in India<sup>70</sup> further convinced Jinnah and many Muslim leaders that Gandhi, the Congress, and the Hindu community in general sought Hindu ‘Raj’ in India. The British decision to withdraw from India, after the devolution of their authority in the course of “dislocations” caused by the Second World War, added to the “vacuum of authority and very ambiguous expectations” among the Muslims.<sup>71</sup> Wayne Wilcox summed up their predicament in these words: “Although the Muslims hated the British for offences past and present, they had little desire to trade British for Hindu rule. The implications of a unified democratic India included majority rule, dooming the Muslims, therefore, as a permanent three-to-one minority.”<sup>72</sup> Jinnah himself was fully aware of this impending crisis. As he put it, this would confront the Muslims “with [the] worst disaster that had ever taken place...”<sup>73</sup>

It was precisely into this crisis that Jinnah stepped in by offering a way out through a ‘formula’ which ensured the Muslims the prospects of “political power” and security in a separate homeland.<sup>74</sup> In his 22 March 1940 address at the Lahore session of the Muslim League, he claimed Muslim-majority areas of India.<sup>75</sup> The only way the Muslims, he declared, could feel safe and secure and “develop to the fullest” their “spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life” was to have their own “homelands, their territory and their state.”<sup>76</sup> The League endorsed Jinnah’s formula for the salvation of the Muslims, and in a resolution (Lahore Resolution) moved

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70 Beni Prasad, *The Hindu-Muslim Questions* (London, 1946), p. 74.

71 Wayne Wilcox, “Wellsprings of Pakistan”, in *Pakistan: The Long View*, eds., Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti, and W. Howard Wriggins (Durham, 1977), p. 34.

72 Wayne Wilcox, *Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation* (New York, 1963), p. 20.

73 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 170.

74 Sayeed, *The Formative Phase*, p. 294. Ayesha Jalal, however, contends that Jinnah never really wanted a separate, sovereign homeland, Pakistan. His demand was a “bargaining counter” to help raise stakes in the ensuing struggle for the future constitution of India. See Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge, 1985).

75 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, (Cambridge, 1979), p.231.

76 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 171.

on 23 March and adopted on 24 March, resolved “that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States’ in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.”<sup>77</sup> Denounced as the ‘Pakistan Resolution’ by the Hindu press, and gladly accepted as such by Jinnah and the League, the Muslims increasingly came to associate themselves with the idea of a single state of Pakistan soon. Jinnah himself made this abundantly clear to Gandhi in his September 1944 talks that the two zones “will form units of Pakistan.”<sup>78</sup> The League Legislators’ Convention of April 1946 held in Delhi, comprising all League members of the assemblies, national as well as provincial, elected through the 1945-46 elections, reaffirmed “a sovereign independent State” of Pakistan.<sup>79</sup>

This formula, Pakistan formula, represented not only “the mainstream of Indo-Muslim history”<sup>80</sup> of Syed Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh tradition in defining the Muslims of India in political terms,<sup>81</sup> but also a great sense of Islam and Islamic history in treating “an independent political community” as “the very genius of Islam.”<sup>82</sup> That is why the Indian Muslims took it upon themselves as their “religious duty” to follow Jinnah and his goal of Pakistan than the learned Maulanas like Abul Kalam Azad and Hussain Ahmad Madani.<sup>83</sup>

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77 Liaquat Ali Khan, comp., *Resolutions of the All-India Muslim League, from December 1938 to March 1940* (Delhi, n.d), pp. 47-48.

78 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah’s Correspondence* (Karachi, 1977), p. 113.

79 A.M. Zaidi, ed. *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought*, Vol. VI (Delhi, 1979), p. 176.

80 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 255.

81 Paul Brass, “Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia”, in *Political Identity in South Asia*, eds. David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp (London, 1979), p. 56.

82 Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton, 1947), p. 209.

83 Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 282.

Though the masses tend to follow a charismatic leader “voluntarily and without material recompense”,<sup>84</sup> as indeed the Muslims followed Jinnah in India, the support of powerful social groups and classes is crucial for his success.<sup>85</sup> Without their appropriation and reconciliation of the new goal to their “group or class interests”, he cannot have any significant impact.<sup>86</sup> Jinnah understood this very well and thus worked hard to win the support of a number of Muslim social groups and classes through a massive campaign of political mobilization in support of the League and the demand for Pakistan. He (and his associates) explained to them the rationale, the purpose, and the vast opportunities to grow and develop to their fullest potential in the new state. Indeed, soon, the educated, urban middle classes, merchant-industrialists, traders, bankers, lawyers, journalists, teachers and other professional groups saw plenty of opportunities in securing a state where they would constitute a “great majority”, and where professional services, bureaucracy, army, banks, commerce, and industries, etc., would all belong to them.<sup>87</sup> The students too got excited about the good prospects. They lagged behind the Hindus in government jobs, professions, and vocations, and the future seemed bleak. They found it increasingly difficult to secure gainful employment. They were convinced that their plight had much to do with their ‘minority’ status, made all the more difficult by the inherently biased system of government and the apathetic, indifferent attitude of the Hindu majority community. They readily joined the cause of Pakistan. Some ulama, pir and sajjadanashin, and, of course, women leaders followed suit. The traditional groups such as, the landowning classes were already on board. The result was that, in the end, virtually all the groups and classes of the Muslim society, comprising “the landed aristocracy and the landless peasants, the West-oriented elites and the ‘*ulama*’, the modernists and traditionalists, the literates and the illiterates, the intelligentsia and the masses, men and women, the elders and the youth”, were active on the

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84 Tucker, “The Theory of Charismatic Leadership”, p. 747.

85 Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam* (London, 1974), p. 22.

86 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

87 Khalid bin Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan* (Boston, 1967), pp. 51-52. Also see Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 163-65; and Francis Robinson, “Islam and Muslim Separatism”, in Taylor, *Political Identity*, p. 86.

Pakistan platform.<sup>88</sup> In the process, the League emerged as a “mass movement of the Indian Muslims, virtually unanimous.”<sup>89</sup>

But then, it is true that, whatever the success of the charismatic appeal, it is “never fully accepted by the entire society.”<sup>90</sup> There are always opponents. In the case of Muslim India, too, there were quite a few groups that did not respond favourably to the idea of Pakistan. Led by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the so-called ‘nationalist Muslims’ had pinned their hopes on the Congress and its promise of ‘full autonomy’ to the provinces. Though some prominent ulama did see in Pakistan the prospects of establishing the *shariah* and contributed immensely to the cause of the League and Pakistan, especially in the 1945-46 elections and the two referendums in the NWFP and Sylhet, a significantly good number of them, associated with Deoband and the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, chose to work within the framework of a united India. One of its top leaders, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, for instance, claimed that the Muslims belonged to ‘Hindustani’ nation, in spite of religious and cultural differences with other communities living in India. In fact, he published a treatise under the title of *Muttahida Qaumiyyat aur Islam* in 1939, promoting the idea of ‘composite’ Indian nationalism.<sup>91</sup> Thus, these ulama did not support the movement for Pakistan. Initially, some provincial leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces were not responsive too, as they were still tied to their old schemes of “provincial autonomy,” “regional zones” or, at best, a “federal India”.<sup>92</sup> They were not prepared or willing to accept “new obligations, ideas and social relationship”<sup>93</sup> given in the Pakistan demand. In the end, of course, many of them joined the struggle for Pakistan. The rest were defeated or became irrelevant to political processes as the

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88 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 408.

89 W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis* (London, 1946), p. 271.

90 S.N. Eisenstadt, “Introduction”, in *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building*, (Chicago, 1968), XLIII.

91 Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, *Muttahida Qaumiyyat aur Islam* (Delhi, n.d). Relevant passages are discussed in Habib Ahmad Choudhary, *Tehrik-i-Pakistan aur Nationalist Ulama* (Lahore, 1966), pp. 274-344.

92 For a detailed analysis of the roles of these two groups see, Sikandar Hayat, “Leadership Roles in Muslim India: A Study of Traditional Political Leadership”, *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (Spring 1989).

93 Turner, *Weber and Islam*, p. 23.

Pakistan movement gained momentum, and Pakistan occupied the centre stage of Indian politics.

The charismatic leader is not any leader who can simply draw and inspire a following but the one who can demonstrate exceptional qualities in the process of mobilizing and organizing the people towards achievement of the goal.<sup>94</sup> Convinced that he alone represented the Muslims of India, and demanding “the unity of the Muslim nation”,<sup>95</sup> Jinnah, thus, proceeded with the restructuring of the League organization and instilling new life into its activities.<sup>96</sup> He re-organized the League to make room for newly mobilized social groups and classes, and particularly the educated, urban middle classes who, in the end, truly strengthened his hands. He entered into alliances with major provincial leaders, particularly with Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Unionist premier of the Punjab, through ‘Jinnah-Sikandar Pact’, and thereby ‘expanded’ his power base. He followed it up by ‘concentration of power’ within the League, ensuring that the power of the President was not dependent upon the League as an organization but also “acquired a personal character.”<sup>97</sup> He started appealing to the people directly on the Pakistan issue “over the heads of the old political leaders” by using “mass methods” of political mobilization.<sup>98</sup> He appealed to them in the name of Islam, as an ‘ideal’ or ‘ideology’, which readily moved the masses. In fact, his charisma and ideology provided “immense mobilizing capacity” for his campaign for Pakistan.<sup>99</sup>

In addition, Jinnah went on exploiting the Congress “mistakes and miscalculations”<sup>100</sup> during the war years, and, in particular, the resignation of ministries in 1939, by encouraging the formation of League ministries in their place. The result was that the League could soon claim that it

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94 Tucker, “The Theory of Charismatic Leadership”, p. 737.

95 Keith Callard, *Pakistan: A Political Study* (London, 1968), p. 126.

96 Lal Bahadur, *The Muslim League: Its History, Activities and Achievements* (Lahore, 1979), p. 178. Also see Zaidi, “Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*.

97 Sayeed, *The Formative Phase*, p. 183.

98 C.H. Philips, “Introduction”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 29.

99 Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan*, p. 77.

100 I.H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 195.

controlled the ministries of all the provinces demanded for Pakistan.<sup>101</sup> The League ministries were installed in Assam, Sind, Bengal and the NWFP. The League already had a pact with the Unionists in the Punjab.

The support of the British or the Congress could not help the recalcitrant Muslim provincial leaders as India moved closer to self-government and freedom at the end of the Second World War.<sup>102</sup> The various constitutional negotiations, and especially the one led by the Cabinet Mission in March-June 1946, shifted politics from provincial to the national level, giving Jinnah, in particular, a national leader all his life, "a strategic leverage" against those leaders.<sup>103</sup> They could no longer play a decisive role in provincial matters, let alone in India as a whole. The demand for Pakistan holding forth "the prospect of undiluted power" to the Muslim-majority areas made their position all the more tenuous.<sup>104</sup> In fact, by winning convincingly a vast majority of the Muslim seats in the elections of 1945-46, Jinnah could soon demonstrate that he had the backing of the whole Muslim community, including the Muslims in the Muslim-majority provinces.<sup>105</sup>

It was not enough, however, to be able to speak for the 'united' Muslims of India. Jinnah also had to deal with the British and the Congress, his main political adversaries in his struggle for Pakistan, and this was not going to be an easy task. For, Jinnah, unlike the Congress, had no allies among the British, and had to face criticism, and even hostility of the British

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101 *Ibid.*, p. 202. Ayesha Jalal, however, is of the view that if Jinnah's "aim was to establish loyal League Ministries in the Muslim provinces, his success was less obvious". Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, p. 118. This was particularly evident in the NWFP, where Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum found it exceedingly difficult to turn the tide in favour of the League. See, Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism: Muslim Politics in the North-West Frontier Province, 1937-47* (Karachi, 1999), pp. 57-60.

102 Brass, "Elite Groups", in Taylor, *Political Identity*, p. 61.

103 Francis G. Hutchins, *Indian Revolution* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 102.

104 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 400.

105 The League won all the 30 Muslim seats in the central assembly. In the provincial assemblies, it secured 446 of the 495 Muslims seats. This was a remarkable improvement over the 109 seats it had bagged in the 1937 elections. See Zaidi, 'Aspects of the Development of Muslim League Policy', in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 272.

leaders, who refused to take Pakistan as a serious proposition.<sup>106</sup> Viceroy Linlithgow saw it as an “extreme” and “preposterous” demand.<sup>107</sup> Lord Wavell was trying, as late as August 1945, to the effect that the “crudity of Jinnah’s ideas ought to be exposed.”<sup>108</sup> Their top priority, even when Lord Mountbatten arrived as the last Viceroy of India, was still “the unity of the subcontinent.”<sup>109</sup> They wanted to preserve a united India at all costs.<sup>110</sup> As then Secretary of State for India, L.S. Amery declared on 19 November 1941: “I would say, indeed, that if some sort of Indian unity had not existed, it would have to be invented.”<sup>111</sup> As late as March 1946, British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, was proclaiming: “We should be conscious that the British have done a great work in India. We have united India and given her that sense of nationality which she so very largely lacked over the previous centuries.”<sup>112</sup>

The Congress too refused to take the Pakistan demand seriously, and for both religious and political reasons. Religiously, Hindu leaders, whatever their particular beliefs, always considered the territorial integrity of India as the very essence of Hinduism. As Rajendra Prasad, a prominent Congress leader and first President of India, described it, “irrespective of who rules and what were the administrative or political divisions of the country, Hindus have never conceived of India as comprising anything less than what we regard as India today.”<sup>113</sup> No wonder, Gandhi insisted that the partition of India amounted to “vivisection”, literally “cutting the

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106 H.V.Hodson, “Quaid-i-Azam and the British,” in Dani, *World Scholars*, p. 255. Also see, Leonard Mosley, *The Last Day of British Raj* (London, 1961); Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Mountbatten and the Partition of India* (Delhi, 1982); and Hugh Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom: India and Pakistan, 1947* (London, 1967).

107 Cited in Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah: Myth and Reality* (Islamabad, 1985), p. 59.

108 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds. *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI (London, 1976), p. 29.

109 Hodson, “Quaid-i-Azam and the British”, p. 255.

110 John Terraine, *The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten* (London, 1970), p. 192.

111 Cited in Latif Ahmed Sherwani, ed., *Pakistan Resolution to Pakistan, 1940-47* (Karachi, 1969), p. 35.

112 *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, F/12, p. 6.

113 Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided* (Bombay, 1977), p. 67.

baby into two halves.”<sup>114</sup> Politically, the Congress claimed that the Muslims’ fears were really the result of a British policy of “divide and rule”.<sup>115</sup> Thus, there was no merit in the Pakistan demand. This preoccupation with the “divide and rule” indeed explained, more than anything else, the Congress’s failure to recognize and reconcile with Muslim interests all along, leading, much to their chagrin in the end, to the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan.

Jinnah, however, proved to be an astute strategist in his negotiations with the Viceroy and the Congress leaders: “never to give in, never to retreat, always to attack the opponent at his weakest point, and constantly to repeat his own position.”<sup>116</sup> Taking advantage of the war situation, with the Muslims as “the main army elements” on the Allied side,<sup>117</sup> he indeed went on to extract from the British Government the declaration of 8 August 1940, which admitted that the British could not impose their system of government on unwilling minorities. This was “one of the greatest triumphs” of his “brilliant strategy” on the war, whereby, without giving full cooperation to the British, especially at the centre, he got certain real good concessions from them.<sup>118</sup>

In 1942, Jinnah got “recognition” of the “principle of partition” by the Cripps Mission.<sup>119</sup> In September 1944 talks, he forced Gandhi to concede that a settlement between the Congress and the League involved essentially a “discussion of the Pakistan issue”.<sup>120</sup> Gandhi found it hard to evade the issue of Muslims’ right to national self-determination and the eventual partition of India as Pakistan and “Hindustan”. In fact, Gandhi acknow-

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114 Cited in Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 180.

115 Colin Cross, *The Fall of the British Empire* (London, 1968), p. 199. Also see, D.G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. IV (New Delhi, 1969), p. 187.

116 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, “The Consolidation of Leadership”, p. 311.

117 See, Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas, eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill’s Secret Wartime Correspondence* (New York, 1975), p. 183. Also see for a detailed discussion, Noor-ul-Haq, *Making of Pakistan: The Military Perspective* (Islamabad, 1993).

118 Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, pp. 286-87.

119 Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 395.

120 Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p.285.

ledged that the talks between the two broke down “because we could not come to agreement on the two nation theory of Quaid-i-Azam’s... He wanted two independent sovereign (states) with no connection between them, except by treaty.”<sup>121</sup> Jinnah indeed remained steadfast, legalistic and focused in all the negotiations with the Congress and the British. He refused to join the expanded Executive Council of the Viceroy in June 1945 unless the League was given the right to nominate all Muslim members on the council.<sup>122</sup> Lord Wavell was left with no option but to announce the failure of his efforts, and, in the process, take all the blame.

With League’s enormous victory in the 1945-46 elections, both national and provincial, and convinced that the British “really intended to go”,<sup>123</sup> Jinnah did not hesitate to deal with the two parties with a strong hand. Thus, when the Congress did not agree to compulsory grouping clause in the Cabinet Mission Plan,<sup>124</sup> an integral part of the plan, he refused to attend sessions of the newly constituted Constituent Assembly, and thus repudiated the British-Congress compact of the future constitution of India. This virtually ended the last prospect of united India. Initially, Jinnah had accepted the plan. But it was a ‘tactical’ acceptance. The war was over, and the Congress and the British had joined hands to re-set their relationship. The British were no more obliged to woo the League. The British were in charge again. They had their own priorities. Jinnah understood this. Thus, as a charismatic, “genuinely principled politician”, he knew he had to act with reason and a sense of “responsibility” and “proportion”.<sup>125</sup> He had to consider the changed post-war situation

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121 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. V (London, 1974), pp. 758-59.

122 Penderel Moon, ed., *Wavell: The Viceroy’s Journal* (Karachi, 1974), p. 152.

123 Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, p. 247.

124 This scheme was meant “to provide a lure to the Muslim League, since ‘Pakistan’ territory would not be partitioned” and they would also have the advantage of Hindu-Muslim parity in the central government. But the Congress had its own plans. By not accepting the compulsory grouping clause, it wanted “to break up the two nascent autonomous ‘Pakistan’ before they were even created.” See Patrick French, *Liberty or Death: India’s Journey to Independence and Division* (London, 1997), pp. 242-43.

125 For this theoretical insight on charismatic leadership see, Hayat, *The Charismatic Leader*, pp. 32-33.

realistically. Fortunately for him, as he happily observed, “the foundation and the basis of Pakistan are in their own scheme.”<sup>126</sup> In addition, the plan provided for a ‘reconsideration’ after an initial period of ten years. But, most importantly, Jinnah knew that the plan was not workable, and, above all, the Congress would never agree to the grouping clause. In fact, in an article in the *Harijan*, on 17 May 1946, Gandhi asserted: “The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will to belong to a group even if the idea of grouping was accepted.”<sup>127</sup> It was only a matter of time before Nehru, in his press conference of 10 July 1946, delivered the final blow to the plan declaring that, “there will be no grouping...this grouping business approached from any point of view does not get on at all.”<sup>128</sup> The Congress, in fact, “wrecked the Mission’s Plan systematically and with crass lack of integrity.”<sup>129</sup> Jinnah promptly rejected the plan. Though he later joined the interim Government in October 1946, he never entered the Constituent Assembly in spite of protest and clamour of the Congress leadership and worrisome concerns of the British authorities in India and at home.

After having rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and ready, at last, to resort to “Direct Action”, Jinnah finally created “a situation where partition emerged as the only acceptable alternative” to civil war and bloodshed.<sup>130</sup> The so-called interim Government, which included the League ministers too, more for tactical reasons than for any genuine participation, was no help at all. It merely went on to accentuate the bitterness and hostility between the League and the Congress on the one hand and the Muslims and the Hindus on the other. There were communal riots all over the country. In Calcutta alone, what has come to be known as the ‘Great Calcutta Killing’, there were 4,400 dead, 16,000 injured, and 100,000

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126 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, Vol. II (Lahore, 1976), p. 300.

127 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII (London, 1977), p. 614.

128 Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon, eds., *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII (London, 1979), p. 26.

129 Noorani, *Jinnah and Tilak*, p. 226.

130 Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom and True Muslims* (Lund, 1971), p. 51.

homeless, with casualties in the end equally shared between the Muslims and the Hindus.<sup>131</sup> More was to follow in Bihar, UP and other parts of India. It was “the beginning of civil war in an odious and horrible form” spread all over eastern and northern India.<sup>132</sup> The result was that, soon, the British Prime Minister, Lord Attlee, was constrained to announce the partition of India on 3 June 1947, and with the Congress acquiescing, Jinnah had finally triumphed over both the Congress, a major political adversary, and Britain, “a great imperial power” that it then was.<sup>133</sup>

Had Jinnah not come to the rescue of the Muslims of India in their moment of despair and deep crisis, they would have been left in the lurch. There was hardly any other Muslim leader who could have done it or even attempted it.<sup>134</sup> And if one were to assume for the sake of argument that it would have been attempted without Jinnah, it is still possible to speculate that a ‘compromise’ would have been reached much before 1947, and Pakistan would never have come into being.<sup>135</sup> Pakistan came into being because of “the personality and leadership” of Jinnah.<sup>136</sup> Such was the importance of the charismatic leadership of Jinnah in leading the Muslims towards their cherished goal of Pakistan.

Jinnah was indeed the only leader of Muslim India who could always respond to Muslim interests and aspirations, and who knew “how to express the stirrings of their minds in the form of concrete propositions.”<sup>137</sup> He could bring them “within the compass of popular comprehension by spelling it out in concrete, almost tangible terms.”<sup>138</sup> One reason why his political opponents, and particularly the so-called nationalist Muslims

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131 Mansergh, *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, p. 323.

132 Percival Spear, *India: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1961), p. 416.

133 Hamid, *On Understanding the Quaid-i-Azam*, p. 2.

134 Penderel Moon, “Jinnah’s Changing Attitude to the Idea of Pakistan”, in Dani, *World Scholars*, p. 270.

135 Altaf Husain, “Memories of the Quaid-i-Azam”, in *Quaid-i-Azam As Seen by His Contemporaries*, ed., Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad (Lahore, 1966), p. 73. Also see Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, pp. 403-7.

136 H.V. Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan* (London, 1970), p. 38.

137 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, “A Disciple Remembers”, in Ahmad, *Quaid-i-Azam As Seen by His Contemporaries*, p. 211.

138 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 357.

failed to match his “charisma”<sup>139</sup> was that they were hard put to presenting an alternative formula to Pakistan. In fact, they failed to offer anything substantial. Thus, their challenge to his leadership “was bound to fizzle out and fail ultimately.”<sup>140</sup> Provincial leaders were left with no choice but to support the Pakistan demand in public at least.<sup>141</sup> The ulama associated with the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, too, failed to come up with a formula that could support their “composite” Indian nationalism.<sup>142</sup>

Though the years following the demand for Pakistan saw a steady growth and development of the Muslim League, the fact remained that it was still Jinnah and his personal charisma that motivated and moved the masses.<sup>143</sup> He was the “living visible symbol of Muslim unity, Muslim aspirations and Muslim pugnacity” in India,<sup>144</sup> and indeed represented the Muslim “renaissance”.<sup>145</sup> He rid himself of Savile Row (London) suits and changed to Muslim traditional dress of *Sherwani* and *Shalwar* and *Karakuli* cap (the ‘national’ dress of Pakistan today), and even addressed the masses in his “unrehearsed, broken, anglicized and accented Urdu...”,<sup>146</sup> and held them spellbound.

Indeed, it was the transformation of a man of Jinnah’s “taste, temperament and training” into the charismatic leader of Muslim India.<sup>147</sup> The Muslims trusted him, revered him, and saw in him and his policies a kind

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139 Wilcox, “Wellsprings of Pakistan”, p. 31. In this sense, Akbar S. Ahmad felt that “Jinnah’s charisma added to his central role in the momentum that built up towards the creation of Pakistan...” Akbar S. Ahmad, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: The Search for Saladin* (Karachi, 1997), p. 87.

140 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 398.

141 *Ibid.*, pp. 398-399, fn 2.

142 Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (London, 1964), p. 268.

143 A.A. Ravoof, *Meet Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1955), p. 170.

144 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, “The Consolidation of Leadership”, p. 298. In order to assess the perception of his followers, also see, Z.A. Suleri, *My Leader* (Lahore, 1973); Ravoof, *Meet Mr. Jinnah*; S.A. Latif, *The Great Leader* (Lahore, 1970); and M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study* (Karachi, 1970).

145 Ravoof, *Meet Mr. Jinnah*, p. 221.

146 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 41.

147 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

of moral authority working on them.<sup>148</sup> They regarded him as their deliverer,<sup>149</sup> and were convinced that his “genius will discover some way out of our present difficulties.”<sup>150</sup>

The enthusiastic response of the Muslims grew out of their feelings that he, by virtue of his special powers as a charismatic leader, embodied the salvational promise of deliverance from an oppressive life predicament in India.<sup>151</sup> Hence, they not only followed him enthusiastically, but also surrounded him in October 1937 (Lucknow session of the League) with that spontaneous cult of personality which is one of the symptomatic marks of charismatic leadership.<sup>152</sup> They hailed him as their *Quaid-i-Azam*. The title came to be used so consistently and so extensively that, in the end, even his political opponents, including Gandhi, could not help but address him as such.<sup>153</sup>

The fact that the title of Quaid-i-Azam was used for Jinnah in 1937 suggested that he was considered, even before the launching of the movement for Pakistan, in 1940, to be the man to lead the Muslims in their political struggle for survival and security. This, again, as suggested by Tucker earlier, is a typical mark of charismatic leadership, that is, charisma being manifested and recognized long before the charismatic leader becomes strong and attains power. Allama Iqbal of course recognized him, as early as June 1937, as “the only Muslim in India to whom the community has a right to look up for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps to the whole of India.”<sup>154</sup>

Jinnah, too, believed that it was his destiny to lead the Muslims of India to their “ultimate goal”.<sup>155</sup> He had devoted his entire political career to finding a solution that would give status to the Muslim community “free and equal”

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148 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

149 Latif, *The Great Leader*, p. 183.

150 Muhammad Iqbal, *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (Lahore, 1968), p. 20.

151 Tucker, “The Theory of Charismatic Leadership”, p. 747.

152 *Ibid.*

153 Gandhi addressed him as ‘Dear Quaid-e-Azam’ in September 1944 during his lengthy talks with him in Bombay.

154 *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, pp. 20-21.

155 G. Allana, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: The Story of a Nation* (Lahore, 1967), p. 282.

to the Hindu community.<sup>156</sup> It was this faith in the righteousness of his cause which not only encouraged and sustained him in his political life and career but also helped him achieve the goal of Pakistan. He was always sure of himself and his goal. He knew what he wanted and was “determined” to get it.<sup>157</sup> Nothing could detract him from his mission, and he could “neither be bought nor cajoled, neither be influenced or trapped into a position that he had not himself decided upon.”<sup>158</sup> Having once decided to unite the Muslims “behind a demand for recognition as a nation, nothing deterred him, least of all the practical difficulties...which he declined to discuss...”<sup>159</sup> That was the reason why, in his intricate talks with the British and the Congress leaders, he always managed to retain “the integrity” of the idea of Pakistan “against compromise.”<sup>160</sup>

As the charismatic leader of Muslim India, Jinnah thus possessed two supreme qualities of “single mindedness” and “unrivalled tactical skill.”<sup>161</sup> His tactical skill helped him “to take advantage of every situation, however unpromising in the beginning.”<sup>162</sup> In the opinion of a fierce critic, he “was one of the cleverest strategists among Indian politicians.”<sup>163</sup> Indeed, he was “a master political strategist”.<sup>164</sup> He considered politics “as the art of the possible”,<sup>165</sup> and thus knew when “to take the tide” and when to make suitable mends “in the furnace of reality and expediency.”<sup>166</sup>

Jinnah was a sober, rational leader and his approach to politics was always rational. He never lost “touch with, nor control over the realities of a given situation”.<sup>167</sup> There was “a strong streak of hardheaded realism” in

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156 Ahmad Hasan Dani, “Introduction”, in Dani, *World Scholars*, p. 23.

157 Hodson, “Quaid-i-Azam and the British”, in Dani, *World Scholars*, p. 255.

158 Saleem M.M. Qureshi, “The Consolidation of Leadership”, p. 325.

159 Hodson, *Great Divide*, p. 42.

160 William Golant, *The Long Afternoon: British India, 1604-1947* (London, 1975), p. 217.

161 Hodson, *Great Divide*, p. 42.

162 *Ibid.*

163 Rafiq Zakaria, *The Man who Divided India* (Mumbai, 2001), p. 70.

164 Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Myth and Reality*, p. 24.

165 Sayeed, *The Formative Phase*, p. 285.

166 Mujahid, *Studies in Interpretation*, p. 181.

167 *Ibid.*, p. 155.

his political leadership.<sup>168</sup> The only thing “adventurous” about him, perhaps, was “leading his people, like Moses into the unknown” world. But, there, too, he was “grimly deliberate, secretive and cautious.”<sup>169</sup> He will not provide a “blue-print” of his Pakistan scheme.<sup>170</sup> Well aware that the Muslims were the weakest of the three parties in the “triangular” fight in India, he could not afford to offer “a focus for opposition, either within the Muslim ranks or beyond”, that is, to the Congress or the British.<sup>171</sup>

Jinnah came to lead the Muslims of India, “as if inspired by Divine power,”<sup>172</sup> and applied his drive and devotion to the “cause” he made his own.<sup>173</sup> His devotion indeed helped him realize his formula of Pakistan for the salvation of the Muslims against all odds, and thus, among all the major leaders of India then, Gandhi included, he was only leader who accomplished his mission. In fact, a contemporary American journalist and writer, Phillips Talbot dubbed “Jinnah’s triumph” as “Gandhi’s grief”.<sup>174</sup>

The people of Pakistan received Jinnah with “adulation amounting almost to worship.”<sup>175</sup> On 11 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan elected him as its first President, with the now official title of ‘Quaid-i-Azam’. On 15 August, he was sworn in as the first Governor-General of Pakistan. This was indeed the pinnacle of his political career as the charismatic leader of Muslim India and now Pakistan. Never before in the history of Muslim India, thus wrote Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, one of his ardent followers:

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168 Sayeed, “The Personality of Jinnah”, in Philips, *The Partition of India*, p. 277. In fact, according to Z.H. Zaidi, Jinnah “differed from all other Muslim leaders in so far [as] he was uncompromisingly committed to substance rather than symbol, reason rather than emotion, modernity rather than tradition.” Z.H. Zaidi, ed., *Jinnah Papers: Prelude to Partition, 20 Feb-2 June 1947*, Vol. I, Part I (Islamabad, 1993), XXVI.

169 Hodson, *Great Divide*, p. 216.

170 Beverley Nichols, *Verdit on India* (Bombay, 1946), p. 189.

171 Hodson, *Great Divide*, p. 80.

172 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Creation of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1976), p. 2.

173 Wolpert, *India* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ., 1965), p. 140.

174 Phillips Talbot, *An American Witness to India’s Partition* (New Delhi, 2007), p. 308.

175 Keith Callard, *Pakistan: A Political Study* (London, 1968), p. 19.

...had any single person attained such a political stature or had commanded such implicit confidence and trust of his people as did the Quaid-i-Azam. He was a man who...[with] his singleness of purpose, his unbending will and complete faith in the righteousness of his cause, created a nation out of an exhausted, disarrayed and frustrated people.<sup>176</sup>

Jinnah remained Governor-General of Pakistan for more than a year, till 11 September 1948, the day he breathed his last.<sup>177</sup> How did his charisma affect the institutional office of the Governor-General or indeed vice versa, is an interesting subject for exploration both theoretically and empirically, but it must wait for another day.<sup>178</sup> It is beyond the scope of the present study.

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176 Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, "Foreword", in M.A.H. Ispahani, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah as I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1966).

177 See a detailed account of Jinnah as Governor-General of Pakistan in Farooq Ahmad Dar, *Jinnah's Pakistan: Formation and Challenges of a State* (Karachi, 2014).

178 However, for a preliminary analysis of this perspective see, Sikandar Hayat, "Jinnah, Charisma, and State Formation in Pakistan", in *New Perspectives on Pakistan*, ed. Saeed Shafqat (Karachi, 2007), pp.16-49, esp. pp.33-49.

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