

*Quaid-i Azam and the Punjab Muslim
Leadership
A Comparative Study of Quaid-i Azam M. A.
Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain's Political Strategies:
(1924-1936)*

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A lot of commendable research work has already been undertaken covering almost every aspect of Quaid-i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's political career. However, as regards his relations with the Punjab Muslim leaders between 1924 and 1936, especially the dissident group,¹ still needs a careful study. The present study, therefore, focuses on the most crucial period of Muslim struggle for an independent state in South Asia. In the context of Indian politics, personalities have played a dominant role in the national growth and development. The Quaid was one of those exceptionally talented personalities who accomplished a memorable task by creating a sense of separatism among the Muslims of the subcontinent when he found that his efforts to reunite both the communities and to unify them in their struggle against foreign domination did not bear fruit. He was gifted with enough moral courage and persuasive power which he used to organise the Muslims as a united community under the banner of Muslim League and thereby gained sufficient strength to speak with authority and confidence on their behalf. Undoubtedly, he was a great leader who possessed not only the qualities of a man of integrity but also those of a man of principles. Being a firm believer in the use of lawful

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1. This group was headed by Muslim stalwarts like Sir Muhammad Shafi (1869-1932), Sir Fazl-i Husain (1877-1936) and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938).

democratic means, he was always ready to co-operate with the British Government for the realisation of the idea of the development of Indian society in line with the advanced nations of the world. He started his political career as a moderate nationalist politician who always preferred constitutional methods and had the courage of conviction to remain constant throughout his struggle.

The Punjab was an important Muslim majority province having political dimensions different from other parts of India. It was an interesting scenario composed of a variety of ethnic and religious groups who were always hostile to each other. With the passage of time such patterns of association and interaction among the major religious communities were reflected in their communal identity that they intensified their antagonistic attitude towards each other. Though the Punjab was a politically backward province, its Muslim population became a vital force in the government's administrative and military strategy. But ironically they were kept far behind other provinces in matters of constitutional development. The Punjab Legislative Council was constituted in 1897, which had only nine members and all of them were nominated by the Governor.² At that stage, at the central level, the newly whispered socio-political change led to the recognition of developed human ability while the systematic methods of governance required the establishment of political organisations. Consequently, in 1885, the establishment of Indian National Congress, in 1906 the creation of Muslim League as a communal organisation and the formation of their provincial branches were in fact a prelude to the recognition of the principle of representation on the basis of class, community and interests. Further the grant of communal representation with the introduction of elections in Local Bodies and Legislative Councils, increased mutual differences and reinforced separatist tendencies among the major communities. In 1919, the Montagu – Chelmsford Reforms granted some political concessions to divert the Indian attention to the provincial arena enabling the people of the Punjab to benefit from these reforms. The political situation in the Punjab, therefore, was completely changed with the enactment of new reforms and there appeared to be no place for any political party which was not in close relationship with the rural areas.

During 1920's, political leadership in the Punjab was in the hands of Sir Muhammad Shafi and Sir Fazl-i Husain. Fazl-i Husain, called by his

2. *The Punjab Administrative Report: 1911-1912* (Islamabad: National Documentation Centre), 92.

son Azim Husain "as a Child of the Muslim Welfare, advocated the communal question, notwithstanding his membership of the Congress, considering it a necessity, but not a political goal".³ He was of the view that this principle could enable the Muslim community, "particularly the backward and numerically weak Muslim voters to contribute their due quota of numbers and talent to a common Indian national life".⁴ Apart from the mainstream political parties, some regional parties also emerged in various provinces. The Punjab National Unionist Party of the landlords, being the notable one, was wedded to the rural uplift and betterment of peasant proprietors. It remained a very significant political organisation in Punjab till independence. Actually, it was an agrarian grouping of the Muslim landlords and the *Pirs* of western Punjab along with the Hindu Jats of the South-eastern Punjab. According to Malcolm Hailey, the Muslims of the Punjab "can never (take) quite the same interest as the Moslems in other provinces with large Hindu majorities and they seriously think of breaking away from the All India Muslim League and starting a federation of their own".⁵ On the basis of this argument it appeared that the dominant Muslim demand in the Punjab "found its spokesman not in Jinnah, nor in League, but in Fazl-i Husain"⁶ and in the Unionist Party which came into being by the end of 1923. As suggested earlier, in Punjab, Fazl-i Husain held a unique position on the political horizon and was hailed as the protagonist of the Punjab politics till his death in 1936. According to Farzana Shaikh, Fazl-i Husain, by organising the Unionist Party and evolving "a three-cornered alliance between Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, proved too much for the communal ethos of the League and its centrist concerns. Here the League was clearly no match for Fazl-i Husain's National Party with its solid political base, drawn from all three communities and representing powerful rural interests".⁷

3. Muhammad Khurshid, *The Role of the Unionist Party in the Punjab Politics*, (Unpublished Dissertation), (Bahawalpur: Islamiah University, 1992), 66.

4. Syed Nur Ahmad, *Mian Fazl-i Husain: A Review of his Life and Work*, (Lahore:1930), 15-16.

5. Ayesha Jalal and Anil Seal, 'Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics between the Wars', *Modern Asian Studies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 15 March 1981), 432.

6. *Ibid.*, 433.

7. Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 85.

During the World War I the Khilafat Movement seriously involved the Muslims of the subcontinent. The fear of the dismemberment of Turkey and the attitude of Great Britain at the peace conference remained the main concern of the Muslims all over India. The Congress politicians joined hands with the Khilafat Committee while organising Non-cooperation Movement and Punjab was the main centre of these revolutionary activities. Khilafat conferences were held, *hartals* were observed, non-co-operation programmes were arranged. Hijrat Movement was supported, agitation was spread and disturbances were created all over India. It was rightly assumed by leaders like Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain that the Muslims were being wrongly used by the Hindus to advance the Congress, cause of *Swaraj* for India. Consequently, Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain being the members of two major organisations, rejected the noncooperation programme and other unconstitutional steps and advised the Muslims to adopt constitutional measures. After the annual session of Congress held at Nagpur in December 1920, as a protest Jinnah resigned from the Congress. The same year when the Congress and the Muslim League decided to cooperate with the revolutionaries, Fazl-i Husain followed the same way and resigned from the both parties as he was also against the revolutionary agitation. The revolutionary movement completely absorbed the Muslim attention and badly affected the activities of Muslim League. There was left no life in Muslim League and it held no proper session for almost four years.⁸

At that time, the government was in search of allies among its Muslim subjects. Fazl-i Husain as a 'guardian of conservative interests' succeeded to win the British support. In these circumstances Jinnah tried his best to resuscitate the Muslim League. He "called the council of the League at Delhi on 16 March 1924 and persuaded his colleagues to agree to a session at Lahore".⁹ Fazl-i Husain, to confirm his old association with the League, also invited Jinnah to hold its session at Lahore. The special session of the League was held on 25 and 26 May 1924, presided over by Jinnah, "who also had remained unaffected by the emotional frenzy of the period and was keen to have a representative Muslim gathering to

8. S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1977), 233. Although the Muslim League was resuscitated somewhat in 1925, its total membership at the end of 1926 was scarcely impressive – merely a 1,184. Chaudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, (Lahore: Ferozsons, 1961), 137-138.

9. David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1987), 112.

formulate Muslim demands".¹⁰ The choice of Lahore was more suitable because the Muslims of the Punjab were most likely to support a policy of constitutional advance.¹¹ A large number of Khilafatists and Congressmen were present and the proceedings of the session were dominated by the Punjabi Muslim toeing the provincial line given by Fazl-i Husain. Sheikh Abdul Qadir then moved and Sheikh Neyaz Muhammad seconded the following resolution: A common government on a federal basis so that each province 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; no measure of territorial redistribution should affect Muslim majorities in Punjab, Bengal & NWFP; representation according to the population and scant provision for the position of minorities; full religious liberty and representation by means of separate electorates.¹² Keeping in view this resolution David Page wrote that "it was an almost entirely Punjabi affair"¹³ because "Fazl-i Husain was keen on provincial autonomy, but he was wary of selling his support too cheaply and he made sure that he was in a position of overwhelming strength at the League meeting".¹⁴ Anyhow, through such efforts, Jinnah succeeded to revive the Muslim League, after a long 'suspended animation' and its resolutions on Muslim demands marked the beginning of a new phase in the Muslim struggle. The Muslims from all over India had agreed on a political goal which continued unchanged till the final struggle which resulted in the establishment of Pakistan.

In February 1922, sudden suspension of Non-co-operation Movement by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), effected the Muslim feelings badly and it was assumed by the Muslims that they had been wrongly used merely to advance the Congress cause. The Hindu - Muslim unity came to an end with the break-out of communal riots. In the thick of such "communal frenzy, mutual hatred and political confusion, Jinnah initiated his efforts to evolve a comprehensive formula of political and constitutional adjustments so that the political situation of the subcontinent may be restored to normalcy and it may be organised on

10. S.M. Ikram, 233.

11. David Page, 112.

12. Syed Sharif-ud-din Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan: Documents of the All India Muslim League, 1906-1947*, vol.i, (Karachi: National Publishing House, 1970), 578.

13. David Page, 113.

14. *Ibid.*, 113.

genuine national rather than any other sort of communal lines".¹⁵ M. A. Jinnah was of the opinion that without unity, freedom was merely a dream. The Hindu leaders were constantly opposing the separate electorates while calling them the bone of contention between the Hindus and the Muslims. At that political juncture he "agreed, to give up much against the wishes of the Muslims, for the sake of some other political and constitutional concessions, so that the harms suffered by the Muslims may be compensated in some other form".¹⁶ At a meeting of the All Parties Conference at Delhi on 23 January 1925, Jinnah put forward some proposals but no agreement could be achieved and the conference proved to be useless. On 30 December 1926, the Muslim League's annual session, held in Delhi, under the presidentship of Jinnah, passed a resolution which aimed at defending the rights of the Muslims. In this session Jinnah also suggested an early appointment of a Royal Commission to frame a new constitution with the provision to establish a responsible government in India. For this purpose the Muslim League was ready to cooperate with other political parties but the British government was not yet interested to appoint such a commission before 1929.¹⁷ Consequently, the leaders of two major communities were bent upon working out the essentials of an agreed constitution on behalf of all political parties. According to the Hindus, separate electorates were the greatest hurdle in the way of communal settlement. Earlier in 1913, after joining Muslim League, it was Jinnah, who being the ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity, sought to devise ways and means for the growth of inter-communal harmony. In 1916, he succeeded in persuading his fellow-congressmen to accept the right of separate electorates for the Muslims. They agreed upon a common scheme of reforms for the future constitution. In the Punjab the two famous leaders, Fazl-i Husain and Muhammad Shafi were not identical in their views because the former, as a progressive leader like Jinnah, wanted to cooperate with the Congress.

In 1927, the question of Muslim share in the next-installment of reforms had become complicated on account of communal antagonism caused by the *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements, Multan and Malabar

15. A.H. Dani, (ed.) "*Quaid-i Azam and Pakistan*" in Shafique Ali Khan, 'Separate Electorates as the Genesis of Pakistan, (Islamabad: Markaz-i Sha'oor-i Adab, 1981), 153.

16. *Ibid.*, 153.

17. Riaz Ahmad, *Quaid-i Azam Jinnah: Second Phase, 1924-1934*, (Islamabad: NIHCR, 1994), 86.

riots and attacks on the Messenger of Islam (PBUH) by *Arya Samaj* writers. The situation in the Punjab was at its worst. Further the demand of Muslim share in the services and educational institutions, on the basis of agreed formula at Lucknow had completely upset the Hindu intelligentsia in the Punjab. These developments created an atmosphere of ill-will and distrust which was hardly conducive to the success of Jinnah's dream of Hindu-Muslim entente, but he persisted in his task.¹⁸ Ultimately, a significant development in all-India politics took place at a conference of the Muslims,¹⁹ which met at Delhi on 20 March 1927 to give up their insistence on separate electorates if four demands were accepted by the Hindus leaders. These demands were: representation on population basis in the Punjab and Bengal; thirty three per cent seats for the Muslims in the central Legislature; separation of Sind from Bombay and reforms for the Frontier province and Baluchistan. Jinnah made it clear that the offer of Delhi proposals "is inter-dependent and can only be accepted or rejected in its entirety".²⁰ He further said that it was a sort of a package deal of "give and take policy".²¹ Here a question arises as to what were the Quaid's views about the common nationality of Hindus and Muslims. He was very clear about it that even if the Muslims were deprived of separate electorates they will not completely merge in 'Indian nation'. For him this issue was not an end in itself, but a means to an end, i.e., "how to give a real sense of confidence and security to the minorities".²² Further if we look at the proposals, it was simply the change of words, and the aims – the protection of Muslim rights, were the same.

On the same day, Muhammad Shafi arrived at Lahore and issued a statement expressing his disagreement with the Delhi proposals. Fazl-i

18. S.M. Ikram, 363-364.

19. Other than Quaid-i Azam the following Muslim delegates were present in this conference: Raja of Mahmudabad, Sir Muhammad Shafi, Muhammad Ali Jauhar, M.A. Ansari, Mawlavi Muhammad Yaqub, Nawab Muhammad Ismael, Syed Abdur Rahman Siddique, Sir Abdul Quaiyum, Shah Mhammad Zubair, Syed Ahmad Shah (Imam of Jami'yah Masjid, Delhi), Syed Murtaza, Mawlavi Muhammad Shafi Daudi, Syed Abdul Aziz, Abdul Matin Chaudhry, Mirza Abdul Qadir, Syed Abdul Jabbar (Ajmer), Ehtashamuddin, Syed Abdul Rahim, Anwar-ul-Azim, Dr. Hyder Arif, Ijaz Hussain, Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan and Abdullah Suhrawardy. Riaz Ahmad, 87-88. Also see David Page, 146-147 and Ashiq Husain Batalvi, *Iqbal Ke Akhri do sall*, (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1978), 199.

20. *Times of India*, (Delhi: 30 March, 1927).

21. *Ibid*.

22. *Ibid*.

Husain equally opposed these proposals, as to him, Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal could only be ascertained through separate electorates. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal who had entered the Punjab politics in 1926, as a member of the Punjab Legislative Council, had similar views. The uniformity in the short-sighted views of these Muslim leaders led to a tug of war between the Muslim League and the Punjab leadership making the validity of Delhi Proposals precarious. These leaders considered separate electorates as a matter of survival for the Muslim community in India. Consequently, the Muslims of the Punjab started demonstration against these Proposals. On May 1, 1927, Muhammad Shafi called a public meeting in Lahore in which Dr. Muhammad Iqbal presented resolution against the proposals. The response of the Muslims of other provinces like U.P. and Madras was not in favour of these proposals and similar sentiments were expressed by the representatives of Bengal and Bihar.²³ At this juncture, the Punjab politicians like Fazl-i Husain were not prepared to agree with Jinnah as they harboured doubts on the intent of the Congress. Additionally, Fazl-i Husain feared that if the Congress and the British Government accepted these proposals, it would weaken the hands of those who wanted to retain Muslim majority in Punjab and Bengal through separate electorates. Thus the political situation pertaining to the electorate issue, particularly in the Punjab, took such a turn that the entire Muslim politics shifted to the unionist camp in one way or the other.²⁴

The Hindu press adopted a strongly antagonistic attitude towards these proposals while the Hindu elite showed a cold response. Consequently, the Muslims initiative widened rather than reduce the breach between the two communities.²⁵ Some of the Congress members opposed these proposals on the ground that Jinnah had not formally presented them. However, Srinavasa Iyengar (1869-1946) held a liberal view and called a meeting of the Congress Working Committee on 15 May 1927, at Bombay and accepted these proposals after some alterations in its wording. Srinavasa Iyengar, Motilal Nehru, Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (1880-1936) and Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949) warmly congratulated the Congress leaders for their decision. As the proposals were not acceptable to the Punjabi Muslim leaders, they held meetings with their counter parts

23. David Page, 148.

24. Muhammad Khurshid, 156.

25. *Irwin to Birkenhead*, 24 March 1927, *Halifax Papers, Series No.3*, (India Office Library official records).

in Calcutta, Patna, Madras and other cities to communicate their viewpoint. Fazl-i Husain contacted Chaudhry Zafrulla Khan (b.1893) and Dr. Zia-uddin Ahmad (1877-1947) on their way to England, asking them to publicise his viewpoint in the British newspapers. Zia-uddin Ahmad, during his stay in France met Aga Khan (1877-1965), a close friend of Fazl-i Husain, who agreed to preside over a public meeting in India to condemn the Delhi proposals. In 1926, the Muslim League, in its Delhi session had decided to hold its next session at Lahore, but due to the fear of Punjabi dominance, the League working committee chose Calcutta instead for its session. Muhammad Shafi who was the member of the working committee refused to accept it. As a result of this split, in December 1927, the two Leagues which claimed to speak authoritatively for Muslims on the subject of India's future constitution, held their separate sessions at Lahore and Calcutta.²⁶

The Shafi League held its session with the help of Fazl-i Husain in Habibia Hall, Islamia College, Lahore, with Muhammad Shafi in the Chair and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal as its secretary.²⁷ The other prominent participants included Nawab Zulfiqar Ali (1879-1942), Mawlana Hasrat Mohani (1872-1951), Feroz Khan Noon (1893-1970), and other Punjabi followers of the Noon faction. In this session, a resolution against the Delhi Proposals was approved and a decision was taken to co-operate with the Simon Commission announced by the British Government on 28 November 1927. This decision was endorsed jointly by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Zulfiqar Ali, Mian Shah Nawaz (1875-1935) and Zafrulla Khan. The prominent Muslim Leaders of U.P., like Shafaat Ahmad Khan (1893-1947), Muhammad Yamin Khan, Masudul Hasan, Sheikh Abdullah and Hasrat Mohani also favoured this resolution. By its third resolution the Shafi League appointed a committee of 27 members to devise a scheme of constitutional advance and to collaborate with the committees appointed by other Indian organisations to frame a constitution for India.²⁸ In June 1928, Shafi group of Muslim League presented its memorandum to the Simon Commission, which did not meet Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's

26. The strength of the delegates attended the Shafi League's session was: Punjab 300, U.P. 21 NWFP. 12, Bombay 6, Bengal 4, Sindh 4. The number of delegates who attended the Calcutta League session were: Bombay 5 Bengal 40, Madras 1, U.P. 10, Delhi 2, Indian states 3, C.P. 1, NWFP 3, Punjab 6, Assam 4, Bihar and Orissa 11. See Riaz Ahmad, 97.

27. *The Times of India*, January 2, 1928.

28. Riaz Ahmad, 97.

requirements. He felt so bitter about it that on 22 June he resigned from the secretaryship of the Shafi League. According to him the Shafi League had failed to press 'full provincial autonomy' which was the real demand of the Punjab Muslim community.

The Jinnah League held its session at Calcutta from 30 December 1927 to 1st January 1928, which was presided over by Mawlavi Muhammad Yaqub (1879-1942). Its main participants were those who had attended the Delhi meeting in March 1927. In this session the independents were represented by Syed Ali Imam (1869-1932) and Mawlavi Muhammad Yaqub, while the Congress-Swaraj-Khilafatist group was composed of Shafi Daudi (b.1879), Syed Murtaza, Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), the Ali Brothers, Chaudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman (1889-1975) and other members of the 'Consolidated Delhi - Aligarh exist'. The Punjab was represented by Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew (1884-1963), Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (1873-1956), Malik Barkat Ali (1885-1946) and Ghulam Mohiuddin, whereas Bengali delegates included congressmen like Maulana Akram Khan and former Swarajists like Tamiz-uddin Ahmad. Others who attended the Calcutta session were Muhammad Alam, Abdul Rahim, Raja of Mahmudabad, M.C. Chagla and Mawlavi Fazl-ul-Haq (1873-1962).²⁹ The resolution was passed for boycotting the Simon Commission. The Calcutta session was more representative in character as it represented all shades of opinion and included persons of greater political calibre. The League's constitution was also amended and Jinnah elected as "permanent President of the Muslim League until the next session which alone could elect his successor".³⁰

The appointment of Statutory Commission, commonly known as Simon Commission, opened the prospect of new constitutional reforms which swung the pendulum of political events back towards the centre. The provincial politicians had to look towards the all Indian level if they were to influence the shape of these reforms. Jinnah was ready to try again to forge a common front between the League and the Congress. He faced the main difficulty of bringing round the Muslim provinces to his scheme of things. The Congress was in favour of a strong unitary centre, while the Muslim provinces wanted a weak federal structure in which the provinces

29. *Ibid.*, 98.

30. *Ibid.*, 97.

and not the centre would be the real repository of power.³¹ Jinnah wanted to find a way to reconcile the conflicting demands of the Muslim provinces and the Congress, but by May 1928, he could not succeed to convince them. Actually, he wanted to seek a way of uniting the Muslims behind a common line of action and then negotiating a joint front with the congress against the British.

The Statutory Commission consisted of seven members, all English, members of the British parliament and no Indian, headed by the distinguished lawyer Sir John Adesbrook Simon. The Commission landed in Bombay on 3rd, February 1928, and the Governor General issued an appeal to all the political organisations for the co-operation.³² It was boycotted by the majority including Jinnah due to its exclusivity of being all white. The daily *Inqilab* opined: "If India is ever to attain freedom it will not be either emanate from the Royal Commission or from the British parliament, but from a cordial coopeation between the different sections of the Indian nation".³³ Jinnah who had objected to the composition of the Commission with the argument that as it comprised only the members of the British parliament, it did not meet the requirements of the Indians. Jinnah further argued: "He could only see two ways by which real equality of status could be given to the Indian committee: one was by turning Simon's Commission into a mixed Commission; and the other was by establishing a twin Indian Commission with parallel authority".³⁴ Consequently, these controversies moved the provincial forces to think in the context of all-India politics to influence the shape of the future reforms. At that stage, the Punjab had rallied to act in a manner different from the rest as the Unionist policy was against any boycott. The Shafi League endorsed this decision as Muhammad Shafi had condemned the policy of boycott and in its 13 November 1927 session held at Shafi's residence had decided to cooperate with the Commission.³⁵ It is

31. For details see Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India: 1916-1928* (Delhi: Manohar Publication, 1979), Chapter No.8.

32. M.H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study*, (Karachi: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1986), 125.

33. *Inqilab*, (Lahore: 20 November 1928).

34. *Irwin to Lord Birenhead*, 15 March 1928 (NDC), M.U. Acc. No.1716.

35. There were twenty two votes in favour whereas only four persons, i.e., Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, Barkat Ali and Ghulam Mohiuddin cast their votes against the move. Feroz Khan Noon to Hailey, 13 November 1927, *Hailey*

noteworthy that most of the Unionist members attended this session and Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Feroz Khan Noon, Gul Muhammad Khan, Syed Mohsin Shah, Ghulam Rasul Khan, Sheikh Din Muhammad and Bashir Ahmad delivered speeches in favour of resolution supporting co-operation.³⁶ At that moment disunity and division belittled the role of Muslim League and it prevailed on the Congress to approach Muhammad Shafi and Fazl-i Husain for its efforts of Hindu-Muslim unity. When the Commission reached the Indian soil, it was greeted with black flags and cries of 'Simon go back'. The Central Legislative Assembly refused to elect members to sit on the committee and work with the Commission. Ultimately, the Governor General formed an Indian Central Committee including four elected members of the Council of State, and five members of the Legislative Assembly.³⁷ With the help of this Committee the Commission started visiting the provinces in September 1928, and on 28 October 1928, reached Lahore. While the announcement of the Simon Commission led to a considerable strengthening of the nationalist feelings, it also provided opportunity to the Punjab executive group for greater influence in political affairs. Some of the political feudatories began to play an important role in the all India political affairs. For example Malik Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana (1874-1944), one of the most influential landlord of the Punjab, was appointed on the Indian Council of the Secretary of the State in 1929. Fazl-i Husain, the leading urban politician, was already serving as the revenue member of the Punjab Executive Council. It is a fact that the Punjab which "had long been considered the sword-arm of India, from early 1920's as a result of Hailey's influence, also became the soul in the machine".³⁸ Undoubtedly, the Punjab could take pride because of its strategic importance.

In March 1927, Birkenhead had asked the Governor General, Lord Irwin (1926-1931) to appoint Indians on the Commission. Irwin forwarded this letter to Hailey for comments. In reply he wrote that "if Indians were to be appointed, the Commission would have to be representative, but if it were representative, it would not be unanimous,

Papers. Also see Muhammad Rafique Afzal, *Malik Barkat Ali: His Life and Writing*, (Lahore: 1969), 19-20.

36. *Inqilab*, 15 November 1927.

37. Lal Bahadur, *The Muslim League: Its History, Activities and Achievements*, (Lahore: 1979), 181.

38. David Page, 152.

and if it were not unanimous, parliament would not be satisfied".³⁹ It shows that the central government was working in consultation with the Punjab government officials and these officials were not in favour of local representation. Moreover, after the submission of Delhi Proposals, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the Unionist Party were working on similar lines and it was clear to the provincial administration that these two political organisations would fully support the operation of the Simon Commission. Hailey was confident that there was a lot of conformity between his own views and those of the Punjab politicians and this understanding was also well known to the Governor General. Moreover, Hailey had close working relationship with Feroz Khan Noon, another unionist minister enjoying better relations with the leaders of Punjab Provincial Muslim League. It shows that in Punjab these forces were working completely in favour of Simon Commission and Jinnah had no hope to gain any support from this Muslim majority province. Further the government had concluded that the Muslims would boycott the Commission only if the Hindus unhesitatingly accepted their demands. So there had never been any question of the Punjab Muslims boycotting the Commission.

The Commission, in spite of the majority opposition, continued its work and advised the central and provincial governments to submit their reports on the working of the Indian Councils Act of 1919. The Punjab took the lead as the Punjab Legislative Council voted without any division to appoint a committee to cooperate with the Commission. On behalf of the provincial government, the chief secretary of the Punjab prepared a draft for Hailey's review. In this draft he blamed that the communal tension had worsened the law and order situation in the province. Fazl-i Husain personally appeared before the Commission and recorded his evidence on the working of the Act of 1919. The suggestions made by Fazl-i Husain and Feroz Khan Noon about the future government of the province were quite revealing as they had demanded 63 seats out of 126 Council seats on the basis of the Lucknow Pact which had proved to be controversial document as it had left the Muslim majority in Punjab and Bengal at the mercy of the Hindu minority. The Punjab Committee, headed by Sikandar Hayat Khan (1892-1942), held the opinion that in case of joint electorates, "the interest of an economically and educationally backward community can not be safeguarded unless it is allowed a free choice in the selection of its representatives. If common

39. *Hailey to Irwin*, 23 April 1927, *Hailey Papers*, 10 A.

electorates are introduced, the moneylenders and financially stronger community will be able to influence the voters of the backward and poor communities and get their own nominees elected, which will practically mean the backward communities being left unrepresented in the legislature".⁴⁰

As the Simon Commission was boycotted by most of the distinguished leaders and political organisations except the Punjab National Unionist Party and the Muslim League (Shafi group), and the resolutions were passed by the politicians to condemn the composition of the Commission, Lord Birkenhead, while justifying the exclusion of Indian politicians, challenged the political parties to produce an agreed constitution. The Indian politicians accepted this challenge and immediately on 19 May 1928, an All Parties Conference was held at Bombay, which was presided over by Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari. At that juncture, for most of the Congressmen, Jinnah was the only man to deliver the goods on behalf of the Muslim League and his absence from the country was most unfortunate. As Motilal Nehru wrote: "I can think of no other responsible Muslim to take his place".⁴¹ Other Hindu leaders such as Srinivasa Iyengar and Sarojini Naidu advocated postponing the conference till Jinnah returned from Europe in August. Anyhow, the conference agreed to set up a committee.⁴² Under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft and determine the basic principles of the future constitution. In the second session of the All Parties Conference which was held on 28 August 1928, at Lucknow, Nehru Committee submitted its report. The Committee report rejected the plan of reserving seats for Muslims in their majority provinces. In the Central Legislative Assembly, the Muslim had demanded one-third representation but the Committee reduced the ratio to one-fourth. The main objectionable recommendation was the unitary form of government at the centre, because the Nehru

40. *Report of the Punjab Reforms Committee*, (Constituted to confer with the Indian Statutory Commission), *Mehr Collection*, (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan), No. 50.

41. David Page, 167.

42. Other than Motilal Nehru, there were nine members – Shuaib Qureshi and Sir Ali Imam to represent the Muslims, M.R. Joyakar and M.S. Aney for the Mahasabha, Sardar Mangal Singh for the Sikhs, G.R. Pradhan for the non-Brahmins, T.B. Sapr, the liberal leader, N.M. Joshi, the trade unionist and Subhas Chandra Bose from Bengal. Most of the work was done by Motilal Nehru, Shuaib Qureshi, Mangal Singh, Aney and Sapru, and Jawharlal Nehru also attended some of its important meetings. *Report of All-Parties Conference 1928*, 23.

Report clearly rejected the federation as a possible solution of the communal problem. Consequently, in Punjab, Fazl-i Husain and Muhammad Shafi rejected the Nehru Report. Feroz Khan Noon, sharply reacted against the Hindu forces by writing a pamphlet in October 1928, with the title 'Dominion Status or Autonomous Provinces'. In this pamphlet he wrote that the congress had tried to centralise the entire political structure "because in the central legislature, the Hindus will always be in an overwhelming majority and if they have the power to legislate for the provinces also, then the Muslim majorities in Bengal, Punjab, North-west Frontier province, Sind and Baluchistan will be entirely imaginary".⁴³ Feroz Khan Noon wanted a constitution in which the powers of the central government were more restricted than in the proposals of Sikandar Hayat Khan. Shuaib Qureshi, who was one of the members of the Nehru Committee, also disagreed with these proposals but his opinion was completely over-looked by the majority.

In October 1928, Jinnah also returned from England. After his arrival, he issued a statement by which he requested the Hindus and the Muslims to be united for the national cause and asked the Hindu leaders to make necessary amendments in the Nehru Report. Moreover, the Muslim League (Jinnah group) decided to hold its annual session in Calcutta under the presidentship of Raja of Mahamudabad to chalk out the future line of action and to participate in the All Parties Conference to be held on 22 December 1928. As Raja of Mahmudabad was one of the main architects of the Delhi proposals and also one of the supporters of the Nehru Reports, the Unionist leaders and the Shafi League suspected that Jinnah League might accept the Report. At this stage, Fazl-i Husain brilliantly suggested to call an Muslim Conference to nullify the decisions taken by the Nehru Committee. It was decided, with the support of Muhammad Shafi, to invite at least six hundred delegates of different shades of opinion to think over the Nehru Report. The last week of December 1928 had great importance in the constitutional history of the subcontinent because the All Parties Conference and the Muslim Conference were held simultaneously. The All Parties Conference met on 22 December while its open session was held on 27 December 1928. About 1200 delegates from different political groups and provinces attended its open session. Jinnah attended this meeting along with thirty Muslim delegates⁴⁴ to secure the

43. Firoz Khan Noon, *Dominion Status or Autonomous Provinces*, (Lahore: 1928), v.

44. The main participants were Raja of Mahmudabad, Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew, M.C. Chagla, Malik Barkat Ali, Syed Mahmud, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, Syed Abdullah

conference support for his three amendments to the Nehru Report. The proposed amendments were as under:

1. The government at the centre must be federal and the residuary powers should be left to the provinces.
2. In Punjab and Bengal, in the event of adult suffrage not being established, there should be reservation of seats for the Muslims on the population basis for ten years subject to re-examination after this period, but they should have no right to contest additional seats.
3. One-third of the elected representatives of both the Houses of the central legislature should be Muslims.⁴⁵

Although Jinnah was supported by Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1950), the majority of the House was not even ready to listen to him. M.R. Jayakar (1873-1959) who was representing Hindu Mahasabha, opposed these amendments by arguing that he was only representing a small minority of the Muslims. He said, "Jinnah Sahib is like an obstinate child whose mind has been spoiled by the affection of the Congress".⁴⁶ One after another the All Parties Conference rejected all of Jinnah's amendments and ultimately brought him to 'the parting of the ways'. On 30 December 1928, Jinnah made it finally clear that "if we cannot agree let us agree to differ, but let us apart as friends".⁴⁷

After the failure of All Parties Conference, Jinnah had felt very much disappointed and at such a challenging situation desired to unite all the factions of the Muslim League. It was evident that without Muslim majority provinces' support no one could forge a new alliance between the Muslims and the Congress. It was due to this political pressure that the constitutional negotiations which followed the Simon Commission Report called for some Muslim voice at the centre.⁴⁸ On 3rd. March 1929, all the Muslim leaders were invited to attend the Muslim League council meeting

Brailvi, Muhammad Alam, Seth Yaqub Hasan, Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani, Chaudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman, Liaquat Ali Khan, Mawlavi Fazl-ul Haq, Aziz-ul-Haq, Muhammad Zubair and Mawlavi Akram Khan. See Ashiq Hussain Batalvi, 213-214.

45. *Times of India*, 31 December 1928.

46. Craig Baxter, *From Martial Law to Martial Law: Politics in the Punjab, 1919-1958*, (Lahore: 1985), 70.

47. *Times of India*, 31 December 1928.

48. Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 11.

at Delhi in which both the groups participated.⁴⁹ Representatives of the Muslim Conference also attended this meeting. Thus all the three Muslim sections at last agreed with Jinnah to formulate joint proposals to safeguard the Muslim rights. They also agreed that in the light of the new political developments the Muslim League should be strengthened for its being the sole representative body of the Muslims.⁵⁰ Consequently, Shafi League was dissolved⁵¹ and the United League decided to adopt the resolution of Muslim Conference. On 30 December 1929, at the Muslim League conference at Delhi Jinnah emphasised: "United Muslim opinion should be recorded through the Muslim League so that not only those engaged in considering the question of the future constitution of India, but the whole world should know what our opinion is before it is too late".⁵² Two days before this meeting i.e. on 28 March, Jinnah presented his Fourteen Points Formula which removed all the doubts of the Muslim majority provinces.

As earlier mentioned, on the other side Fazl-i Husain, the leader of the Punjab Unionist Party, stepped forward to back his claim to speak for Indian Muslims by organising the Muslim Conference. Consequently, on 31 December 1928, under the presidentship of Aga Khan the Muslim Conference opened its session in Delhi. Many of the Muslim delegates who held titles from the British and other prominent leaders like Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar (1878-1931) and Maulana Hasrat Mohani, had come from different parts of the subcontinent to attend the conference. Moreover, the representatives of several parties including Unionist Party and the Jami'iyat Ulama-i Hind attended the conference. In this conference Muhammad Shafi moved a detailed resolution which consisted of Muslim demands similar to those of Jinnah's famous Fourteen Points. It shows that though the participants of the Muslim Conference were the advocates of separate electorates but the demand for the autonomy of the provinces

49. Riaz Ahmad, 109.

50. This compromise was made possible when Jinnah went to the house of Muhammad Shafi and made him agree to shun his differences and come back in the fold of one unified and potential Muslim League. *Times of India*, 5 March 1929.

51. Along with it, Jinnah was also busy in uniting all the Muslims on the platform of Muslim League. He emphasised upon Nawab Ismael Khan, President, and Mawlana Shah Masood Ahmad, Secretary, All India Muslim Conference to disband this party. Consequently, both in early 1932 resigned from their offices and announced to merger All India Muslim Conference in the Muslim League. *Times of India*, 5 January 1932.

52. *Times of India*, 31 December 1928.

was given a higher place. It is also important to point out that not only Fazl-i Husain, who was the chief architect of the Conference policy during this period, but also all Muslim political parties had played a significant role in organising the conference and in drafting the text of the resolution. However, after a detailed discussion, the resolution was adopted on 1st January 1929. It means Fazl-i Husain, who effectively used the platform of Muslim Conference to advance the Muslim cause both at the all-India and provincial level, sponsored such a policy which included all the marks of Punjab dominance. At that time preparations were going on for the commencement of the first session of the Round Table Conference. During this period Fazl-i Husain not only tried to retain the previously obtained safeguards but also wished to secure complete security for the Muslims under the new reforms. So, he introduced his political programme through Muslim Conference and further advanced it both in India and in London throughout the Round Table Conference. In his opinion, separate electorates, weightage system, official blocks in the provincial and central legislature and special powers of the Governors might provide actual safeguards to the Muslim community in India.

The Simon Commission report, published in May 1930, disappointed the political forces specially those who had co-operated with the Commission wholeheartedly. It "rejected the idea of an immediate federation of British Indian provinces, instead introduced a proposal for the All-India Federation of British India and the states at some future unspecified date".⁵³ The Commission itself admitted that "such a federation consist of both autocratic and democratic governments, would only be possible if the greatest possible internal freedom was given to each of the constituent units".⁵⁴ Moreover, the Commission had clearly opposed separate electorates and proposed to introduce indirect system of elections through proportional representation. The Commission was of the opinion "that if the Punjabis and Bengalis wanted majorities, they would have to fight for them within joint electorates".⁵⁵ As the Commission's recommendations were quite unsatisfactory, they made things worse in Muslim majority provinces. Keeping in view that Report Fazl-i Husain stood firm and demanded representation according to population in Muslim majority provinces. He was also firm in demanding and retaining

53. *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, vol.ii, May 1930, 9-14.

54. *Ibid.*, 18-19.

55. *Ibid.*, 71-72.

separate electorates and weightage for Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces. The Indian political parties did not agree with the Simon Report. The Congress in December 1929, at its Lucknow session decided to launch the 'Civil Disobedience' movement on 9 March 1930. The executive board of the Muslim Conference, on 5 July 1930, at Simla, appreciated two recommendations of the Commission – federal form of government and substantial degree of provincial autonomy but rejected other proposals. Even British officials such as Hailey and de Mont Morency believed that "Political considerations might require that the Muslims be given majorities in these two provinces while retaining their weightage in the minority provinces".⁵⁶

On 12 May 1930, Lord Irwin announced that His Majesty's Government was convinced to hold a conference of the Indian representatives to resolve constitutional problems. In pursuance of this announcement the first session of RTC was inaugurated by His Majesty the King Emperor in the Royal Gallery of the House of the Lords on 12 November 1930.⁵⁷ It included all the leading members of different Indian political parties and the representatives of the states except Congress, which had already launched a 'Civil Disobedience' movement. It provided opportunity to the politicians to put forward their claims directly before the British Government. With the emergence of a new political arena – the Round Table Conference and the constitution making process entered into a new political phase.⁵⁸ In the presence of critical communal problems, the main problem was the shortage of Muslim representatives with identical views to present Muslim cause effectively in the new surroundings.⁵⁹ Anyhow, sixteen Muslim delegates from different provinces and political organisations were selected. In the presence of Jinnah and Muhammad Shafi, Fazl-i Husain feared that the provincial cause might be defaulted. Keeping in view this fear he persuaded Lord Irwin to include Aga Khan, Zafrulla Khan and Shafaat Ahmad Khan to counteract Jinnah's nationalistic efforts. In accordance with Fazl-i Husain's instructions the Muslim delegates remained stuck to the communal safeguards.

During the Round Table Conference first and second session Jinnah played an effective role and in the plenary session during his speech he

56. David Page, 213.

57. *The Indian Annual Register*, (Calcutta: The Annual Register Office, 1930), 107.

58. *Ibid.*, vol.ii, 1930, 292-318.

59. S.M. Ikram, 235.

appealed for unanimity for the purpose of attaining full dominion status for India but with due safeguards for the Muslims.⁶⁰ Being the member of Federal Structure Committee he suggested that provinces should be made sovereign states in British India by vesting residuary powers in them. Jinnah also pleaded for an autonomous Federal Legislature. This legislature was intended to have the power to make laws which may come into operation in all the provinces and states. As the Muslim delegates reached an agreement outside the conference, it was Muhammad Shafi who propagated Jinnah's Fourteen Points as being the united Muslim demand. During the second session of Round Table Conference, Jinnah showed his superb skill as a debater and as an advocate. He was fully aware of the intentions of his opponents. Moreover, he helped Muhammad Shafi, Dr. Shafaat Ahmad, Sir Aga Khan and Zafrulla Khan to elaborate the legal aspects of their viewpoints. There was great co-ordination among the Muslim delegates as they had decided not to accept anything less than Jinnah's Fourteen Points. They discussed the agenda for every meeting and their speeches in consultation with Jinnah. While Jinnah and Muhammad Shafi functioned as most important spokesmen of the Muslim Delegation and Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan acted as their secretary. So on 26 November 1931, he on behalf of all the Muslim delegates, repeated his stance, earlier expressed in the first session of Round Table Conference, that no constitution "will work for 24 hours" in India if it fails to meet the Muslim demands.⁶¹

Though this conference failed to reach at any unanimous decision, most of the leaders who attended the Round Table Conference or were outside, impressed upon the British Government and the Round Table Conference delegates to accept Jinnah's Fourteen Points, as the unanimous demand of the Muslim India. It was for this reason that towards the close of his famous address to the Allahabad session of the Muslim League on 29 December 1930, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal seems to have drawn his concept of a separate Muslim State from Jinnah's Fourteen Points. Chaudhry Rahmat Ali (1897-1951) on his part claimed that, in framing his scheme of Pakistan, he was in turn influence by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's address. By the end of Round Table Conference, so far as Muslim stand was concerned, it was Jinnah's and Fazl-i Husain's views which had largely prevailed. The Muslim delegates unanimously refused to agree to any advance towards a responsible centre unless their

60. Proceedings of the Round Table Conference 12 November 1930, Riaz Ahmad, 132.

61. *Ibid.*, 147.

communal safeguards were maintained. Throughout the Round Table Conference and announcement of Communal Award, Fazl-i Husain took infinite pains to coach the key delegates, like Aga Khan, Zafrulla Khan and Shafaat Ahmad Khan. The result of this co-ordinated work at Delhi and London provided the Muslims their share, to some extent, in the shape of Communal Award. At that moment other politicians like Khawajah Nazim-ud-Din, Sir Akbar Hydri and M. A. Khuro admired the work done by Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain to save the Muslims from utter ruin. They regarded it more conducive for the emergence of political pan-Islamism which could signify the unification of Muslims into a political state.⁶² The entire scheme regarding the future constitution was thrashed out in the light of Round Table Conference which finally received the Royal assent as Government of India Act, 1935.

In 1935-36, the emotion-ridden 'Shahidganj Mosque' issue led to a series of violent riots, which greatly disturbed the Sikh-Muslim population of the Punjab. When the matter reached its extreme, Emerson deputed Henry Craik, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, to talk to Jinnah on the existing situation and requesting him to come to Lahore and to give the Muslims the right lead on the 'Shahidganj' issue. The Governor invited Jinnah because he knew that Fazl-i Husain was no longer popular among the urban Muslim masses because of his cold-shouldering the 'Shahidganj' issue.⁶³ On 11 February 1936, Jinnah expressed his willingness to visit Lahore to effect a settlement between the Muslims and the Sikhs. Fazl-i Husain welcomed Jinnah's visit. By late February 1936, Jinnah reached Lahore and set up an arbitration board composed of the representatives of the communities concerned.⁶⁴ He stayed in Lahore till 7th March 1936, but could not succeed in bringing about a permanent settlement between the two communities. However, Jinnah's visit had given some relief to the Muslims as the governor had decided to release the leaders of the agitation provided they would fight their case on legal grounds.

In October 1935, Jinnah had returned to India to organise the Muslim League and to fight the forthcoming elections. For this purpose on 12

62. G. Allana, (ed.), *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents*, (Lahore: 1977), 123.

63. Muhammad Khurshid, 255.

64. Iftikhar Haider Malik, 'The Ahrar-Unionist Conflict and the Punjab Politics during the Thirties', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, vol. v, No. 1, January-June 1984 (Islamabad: NIHCR, 1984), 50.

April 1936, a session of Muslim League was held in Bombay under the presidentship of Wazir Hasan (1874-1947) in which a resolution was passed, authorising Jinnah to nominate a Parliamentary Board to organise election campaign etc. According to this resolution, Muslim League had two main objectives, strengthening the Muslim community and securing for them their proper share in the provincial governments. Fazl-i Husain was also contesting elections in the Punjab with the same objectives. Once again there was a conflict between Punjabi leaders and Jinnah. Soon after the decision of Muslim League in Bombay, M.A.Jinnah came to Lahore to set up electioneering machinery and tried to persuade Fazl-i Husain for his co-operation in setting up a central Parliamentary Board. Jinnah's intention was that the Muslims all over India should contest elections on a common platform under Muslim League Parliamentary Board. The elected members would then constitute a Muslim League Party in the Assembly which would enable them to enter into a coalition with some other group for the purpose of forming a ministry. In other words Jinnah's strategy as to persuade Fazl-i Husain to join the Muslim League along with his unionist colleagues and to contest the election under the League's banner. Like a shrewd politician M.A.Jinnah had desired close relationship with Fazl-i Husain. As early as on 5th January 1936, he had invited him "to preside over the next session of the League",⁶⁵ which the latter had refused. In May 1936, talks between M.A.Jinnah and Fazl-i Husain took place at Daultana's house where M.A.Jinnah was staying. Fazl-i Husain told him that the Punjab, unlike other provinces, had a well established organisation in the shape of the Unionist Party which had been functioning properly as a parliamentary party since 1923. He further explained that the Unionist Party was based upon an economic programme and was organised on non-communal and non-sectarian grounds which suited the political and religious conditions of the province. Fazl-i Husain suggested that Muslim League should not participate in the provincial elections as he was preparing the Unionist Party for that purpose. Moreover, he was of the view that the Muslims of the Punjab could only secure majority seats by contesting elections from the Unionist platform. He believed that supporting the provincial parties was the best way to tackle peculiar problems in each province.⁶⁶ Further he believed

65. S. Qaim Hussain Jafri, (ed.), *Quaid-i Azam's Correspondence with Punjab Muslim Leaders*, (Lahore: 1977), 183.

66. Imran Ali, *Punjab Politics in the Decade Before Partition*, (Lahore: South Asian Institute, 1975), 8.

that any communal approach to the political tangle in the Punjab was likely to disintegrate the Unionist Party which was based on an economic programme and mutual co-operation among all the communities.⁶⁷ In his opinion the Muslims should try to secure maximum advantage out of the local conditions. For Fazl-i Husain, the best way of securing the maximum advantage was that at provincial level Unionist Party should be allowed to contest elections according to its own strategy, while at the centre, he was ready to cooperate with the Muslim League. The same suggestions were made by the general secretary of the Unionist Party to Dr. Muhammad Iqbal the president of the Punjab Provincial Parliamentary Board of Muslim League. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal forwarded these suggestions to Jinnah in his letter⁶⁸ with his comments on this formula, but nothing came out of these discussions. Sikandar Hayat Khan and Ahmad Yar Daultana had different attitude towards the Unionist Party's non-communal character and followed their own lines of action. Feroze Khan Noon was in favour of a communal party which consisted of merely Muslim masses.⁶⁹ Quaid-i Azam's reaction to the predominant position enjoyed by Fazl-i Husain is revealed through this dialogue between Jinnah and Raja Narendra Nath as Jinnah told Narendra Nath: "Fazli thinks he carries the Punjab in his pocket. Raja Sahib, I am going to smash Fazli".⁷⁰ In reply Narendra Nath said, "you must be very strong then".⁷¹ Moreover, during his stay in Lahore Jinnah had tried his best to persuade Fazl-i Husain and other unionists to join the Muslim League but the differences were so strong and divergent that the talks proved futile.⁷² According to the unionists, Jinnah simply depended upon talks and had done nothing to revive the Muslim League, while Fazl-i Husain called the League Scheme "Purely a paper one".⁷³ So the talks proved useless. Jinnah leaving Lahore, said in disgust, "I shall never come to the Punjab

67. Kirpal Singh, 'Genesis of Partition of the Punjab', 1947, *Punjab Past and Present*, vol.ii-ii, October 1971, 404.

68. Muhammad Ashraf, (ed.), *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1942), 11.

69. Azim Husain, *Fazl-i Husain: A Political Biography*, (London: 1946), 306.

70. *Ibid.*, 310.

71. *Ibid.*, 310-311.

72. *Inqilab*, 6 May 1936.

73. *Fazl-i Husain to Sikandar Hayat*, 6 May 1936, in Waheed Ahmad (ed.), *Letters of Fazl-i Husain*, (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), 534.

again. It is such a hopeless place".⁷⁴ In other provinces too Jinnah did not succeed in organising the Muslims under the League Parliamentary Board.⁷⁵

After Fazl-i Husain's death in 9th July 1936,⁷⁶ Dr. Muhammad Iqbal could persuade Sikandar Hayat to enter into a compromise with Jinnah but Sikandar was not ready to take the risk of abandoning the non-communal policy of his predecessor. In the Punjab, about eight parties took part in provincial elections. Quaid-i Azam tried his best to strengthen the League's position in the Punjab but he did not succeed to achieve it. In fact Punjab Provincial Muslim League had no well-established organisation, therefore, only seven tickets were issued and only two candidates, Malik Barkat Ali and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan could be elected. The latter, immediately, after elections, resigned from the League and joined the Unionist Party with the hope to obtain a parliamentary secretaryship in the Punjab Assembly. The Unionists secured 88 out of 175 seats, while the Congress managed to get only 18 seats, 36 seats went to the non-Congressite Hindus and Sikhs. It shows that Fazl-i Husain, a staunch believer in his party programme, stood firm against the persuasion of men like Quaid-i Azam, seeking his cooperation for joining the League Parliamentary Board. Actually, Fazl-i Husain and other Muslim Unionists chose not to read the sign of time and failed to recognise the need of an all-India organisation which would serve better the interests of the Muslims. They decided to confine their leadership to the Punjab. However, despite his differences and disagreement with Jinnah, one might credit him for having the potentials of a provincial leader but he could not show the vision of a national leader and the far-sightedness of a statesmen like Quaid-i Azam, in his dealings with the Muslim League. In more clear words it showed Fazl-i Husain's inability to read correctly the implications of the principle of separate electorates on an all-India level. In short the over-all estimate of Jinnah's achievements during this period shows that in spite of Congress' clever attitude, unionists' dominance over Punjab and splits in the Muslim League, he pursued a course in politics, guided by reason and moderation. After 1924 he devoted all his attention

74. Azim Husain, 311.

75. *Fazl-i Husain to Aga Khan*, 22 June 1936, in Waheed Ahmad, 597.

76. *Inqilab*, 11 July 1936.

to the organisation of the Muslims as a united community under the banner of Muslim League. He aimed at gaining sufficient strength to speak with authority on behalf of the Muslims so that he could arrive at a settlement with the Congress on the communal issue.