

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

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Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a dynamic leader and had the charisma of Churchill, dignity of De Gaule, greatness of Gandhiji and rationality of Roosevelt.

The landmarks in the political life of Quaid-i-Azam are: from Lucknow Pact to Lahore Resolution and from Fourteen Points to fourteenth August 1947.

Two great leaders, Gokhle and Tilak highly appreciated the role of Mr. Jinnah. Gokhle described him as “Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity”. Tilak extended his full support to Mr. Jinnah at Lucknow.

It is well known that a farewell meeting was organized by a section of reactionary group for Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay. When Mr. and Mrs. Jinnah, alongwith their followers entered the hall and occupied front seats to lodge strong protest. The police, in a high handed manner, escorted them out of hall. The citizens of Bombay condemned the police action and hailed Mr. Jinnah as the un-crowned king of Bombay. About 65, 000 admirers of Mr. Jinnah donated one rupee each which culminated in the construction of Peoples Jinnah Hall to commemorate the great event. Mrs. Annie Basant inaugurated the historic Hall.

On 13 April 1919, Brig. Dyer ordered shooting of peaceful people who had gathered in Jallianwal Bagh in Amratsar, Hundreds were killed and thousand were wounded. In British India,

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meetings for protest were banned. Mr. Jinnah rushed to Hyderabad to conduct a case and organized a meeting. However, the Political Agent to the Viceroy asked the State Authorities to ban Mr. Jinnah's entry in Hyderabad. Mr. Jinnah alongwith Mr. C.R. Das and other leading lawyers wanted to go to Lahore to defend the political leaders but the Governor of the Punjab banned their entry in the province. It may be added that ban on Mr. Jinnah's entry into Hyderabad continued in force for ten years.

When the ban on the meetings in British India was lifted, a huge meeting was organized in Bombay on 13 April 1920, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Jinnah. The great poet Dr. Rabindar Nath Tigore sent a moving message. Mahatma Gandhi moved the Resolution of condemnation. Mr. Jinnah said that the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh would move even the stones and described Dyer as a butcher.

In the meantime, the new Governor of Bombay George Lloyed approached the Viceroy for externment of Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi to Burma but the Secretary of State, Mr. Montagu intervened. The correspondence between the Governor and the Viceroy speaks volumes about their anti Jinnah attitude.

It is unnecessary to refer to session of the Congress in December 1920 when Mr. Jinnah opposed Gandhiji's proposal for non-cooperation. Gandhiji later acknowledged that it was a Himalayan miscalculation on his part. Mr. Jinnah attended the Congress session at Ahmedabad in 1921, when Maulana Hassrat Mohani moved the Resolution about Independence of India which was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi. It may be mentioned that at the Muslim League Session Mr. Abbas Tayyabji, Chairman of the Reception Committee, irresponsibly suggested dissolution of the Muslim League. Fortunately, nobody agreed. Mr. Jinnah organized the Muslim League session in Lahore in May 1924 and then in Bombay in December 1924. This impressed his critics. Maulana Muhammad A was convinced so much that he "garlanded Mr. Jinnah at the conclusion of proceedings, embraced him and kissed him on both cheeks amidst loud outbursts of applause from the audience".¹

1 *Daily Gazette*, 31 December 1924.

I will now deal with two points. I) The Islamic Ideology and the Quaid-i-Azam speech on 11 August 1947.

Islamic Ideology

It has been suggested by certain quarters that reference to Islamic Ideology was first made in Yaya's Legal Frame Work Order of 1970. The fact is: Islamic Ideology was emphasized by the Quaid-i-Azam on 12 June 1945, in his message to the Muslim Student Federation Conference in Peshawar.

I have often made it clear that if the Musalmans wish to live as honourable and free people, there is only one course open to them, to fight for Pakistan, to live for Pakistan and, if necessary, to die for the achievement of Pakistan. There is no royal road for any nation but there is one and only course open to us, to organize our nation and it is only your own dint of arduous and sustained determined efforts that we can create the strength and the support of our people to not only achieve our freedom and independence but be able to maintain it and live according to Islamic ideals and principles. Pakistan not only means freedom and independence but Islamic ideology which has to be preserved, which has come to us as a precious gift and a treasure, which, we hope, others will share with us.”²

Speech of 11 August 1947

Reference may also be made to the speech of Quaid-i-Azam on 11 August 1947 wherein he said:

You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the State.³

The power was transferred by the British Government to its Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 14 August 1947. The Viceroy Lord Mountbatten in his statement referred to the liberal policy followed by Emperor Akbar. Quaid-i-Azam's response was spontaneous:

The tolerance and goodwill that great Emperor Akbar showed to all the non-Muslims is not of recent origin. It dates back thirteen centuries ago when our Prophet (Peace be upon him) not only by words but by deeds treated the Jews and Christians, after he had conquered them, with the utmost tolerance and regard and respect for their faith and belief. The

2 *Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, File No.1020/6-7; also *Star of India*, 19 June 1945.

3 Khurshid Ahmad Khan Yusufi, ed, *Speeches Statements and Messages of the Quaid-i-Azam*, Vol.IV (Lahore: Bazm-i-Iqbal, 1996), p.2604.

whole history of Muslims, wherever they ruled, is replete with those humane and great principles which should be followed and practised.⁴

According to Professor Akbar S. Ahmed the two speeches of the Quaid must be read together.

Justice Munir's Comments

Mr. Justice Muhammad Munir, former Chief Justice of Pakistan in his book "From Jinnah to Zia"⁵ has observed that Quaid-i-Azam's speech of 11 August 1947 indicated that he visualized Pakistan to be a secular State. However, in the well prepared address in the seminar held under the auspicious of the Punjab University, Lahore on 23 March 1976, Justice Munir said:-

But to some, the most puzzling enigma that has presented itself and left them guessing is his speech as President of the Constituent Assembly on 11 August, 1947, just three days before Pakistan came into being. This was a considered speech and undoubtedly was in the nature of an announcement to his countrymen and the world what the future constitution of Pakistan would be. Two or three facts have to be mentioned so as to enable you to comprehend its full implications. The boundary award had not yet been announced, not even signed. The indiscriminate killings, except those of Rawalpindi and Calcutta, had not yet commenced nor the vast cross- migration of 6 to 8 million people. He expected that a substantial number of minorities will remain citizens of Pakistan.

The speech was intended to allay the fears of minorities. That such fear did exist will appear from an incident I may mention. A representative of Lever Brothers asked for an interview with me and I wondered what business an industrialist could have with a judge. During the interview he told me that he had come to me to ask only one question. I asked him what that question was and he informed me that his concern was thinking of investing in Pakistan a large amount of capital but only if the judiciary of Pakistan will retain its present form and powers and judicial power will not pass on to the Qazis. I told him that he knew nothing about the Qazis of Islam who were specimen of fearlessness, independence, and integrity but that if he wanted further assurance, I asked him to read this speech of the Quaid-i-Azam.

It is quite clear from this speech that the Quaid spoke with conviction and from his heart. This speech was loudly and repeatedly cheered during its delivery. There is a tendency to suppress or ignore this historic statement. But twist it how you will, suppress or ignore it as you like, future historians will not omit to notice it or to explain its true purport. The question

4 *Ibid.*, p.2610.

5 Muhammad Munir, *From Jinnah to Zia*, (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., n.d).

however still remains whether this speech was a volute face or a contradiction of his two-nation theory which was the main plank in the demand for Pakistan or whether that theory was just a convenient, expedient and temporary means for the attainment of a homeland for the Muslim majority regions. By taking that view we will be attributing hypocrisy, insincerity and dishonesty to the father of Pakistan and I cannot possibly conceive of any such thing. He was a man of scrupulous honour and mental integrity. He was not thoroughly conversant with the intricacies of Islamic doctrines but he was fully aware of the broad principles of Islam democracy, equality, tolerance, freedom of religion subject to law and conscience, justice between man and man, particularly social justice. More than once he had said that these concepts were not borrowed from the west but had been revealed some 1400 years earlier in a divine message to the Holy Prophet and were actually practised during the first half century of Islam. I, therefore, believe that the speech of 11 August, 1947 was not a contradiction or repudiation of two-nation theory, it was just an enunciation of the principles by which a society in which the Muslims were in a majority and the Government of the territory was in their hands would be governed.

The above views of Justice Munir are more persuasive and cogent than his subsequent opinion in the book *From Jinnah to Zia*.

Quaid-i-Azam's Reaffirmation

Let me refer to Quaid-i-Azam's own views. In an interview with Reuter's Correspondent Mr. Duncan Hooper on October 25 1947 Quaid said:

As for the two-nation theory, it is not a theory but a fact. The division of India is based on that fact. Minorities belonging to different faiths living in Pakistan or Hindustan do not cease to be citizens of the respective States by virtue of their belonging to a particular faith, religion or race. I have repeatedly made it clear, especially in my opening speech to the Constituent Assembly that the minorities in Pakistan would be treated as our citizens and will enjoy all the rights and privileges that any other community gets. Pakistan shall pursue that policy and do all it can to create a sense of security and confidence in the non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan.

It may be mentioned that in the famous Gandhi — Jinnah talks, held in September 1944. The Quaid had clarified the position about the minorities. Gandhiji has recorded as under: "Jinnah drew a very alluring picture of the Government of Pakistan. It would be a perfect democracy. I asked him what would happen to the other minorities in Pakistan: Sikhs, Christians, etc. He said they would

be part of Pakistan. I asked him if he meant joint electorates. He said, yes, he would like them to be part of the whole.⁶

Let me conclude that Quaid-i-Azam was always clear, consistent and candid.

⁶ *The Collected Works of Mahatama Gandhi*, Volume-78, 23 February 1940 – 15 July 1940 (Government of India: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2000), p.96.