

**MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN THE PUNJAB,
1937—47**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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1987

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July 13, 1987



C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled,
" MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN THE PUNJAB, 1937-47" submitted
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PHILOSOPHY DEGREE, has not been previously submitted
for any degree of this or any other University.
This is her own work.

We recommend that the dissertation be placed before
the examiners for evaluation.


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P R E F A C E
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The research work for this M.Phil dissertation was undertaken both in India and in Pakistan between May 1986 and July 1987. During the whole period of my M.Phil in JNU, including the previous one year for the course work, I was supported by Japanese Ministry of Education Scholarship for Asian Studies. I feel very happy that the opportunity to work on this subject was given me under this scheme. Especially in this connection, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Matsuo Ara and Professor Hideo Yamada in Tsudajuku University, who not only gave me their willing cooperation for the realization of my desire to study in JNU but also encouraged me so often during these two years.

My largest debt of gratitude in JNU is to Professor Bipan Chandra, my Supervisor. I have profited greatly from his invaluable guidance and advice, without which it would have been impossible for me to finish my dissertation.

In pursuance of this work, I have made use of the documents and material available at the National Archives of India and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi. I would like to thank many librarians who assisted me in various ways, both great and small.

In addition to this, I made research trips to Pakistan to consult primary sources on the Pakistan movement. There also, I owe debts of gratitude to many. I am obliged to Mr. Ashraf Ali and Mr. Sheikh Muhammad Ikram of the National Archives of Pakistan in Islamabad; the former provided me complete access to the Quaid-i-Azam papers, and the latter was particularly helpful in procuring photostat copies. In Lahore, most of my time was spent at Quaid-i-Azam Library, Punjab Public Library, and Lahore Museum Library. I am grateful to the Librarians of those Libraries for their gracious cooperation. It is impossible to list every one by name. In Karachi, I am much indebted to Professor Sharif-al-Mujahid, director of the Quaid-i-Azam Academy, especially for allowing me the extensive use of the documents at the Academy, and bringing me into contact

with Mr. Khalid Shamsul Hasan, son of the late Mr. Syed Shamsul Hasan (honorary secretary of the All-India Mu-slim League), who kindly provided me many photostat copies from his father's collection.

Furthermore, I wish to extend a special word of thanks to those persons who talked to me about the times and the events of my concern, and gave generously of their time for interviews. This method of study, which was quite new for me, gave me a vivid insight into the Punjab situation in those days. Particularly in this connection, Professor Bimal Prasad of JNU, Mr. Asghar Ali Engineer of Bombay, and Dr. Shakoor Ahsan, director of Research Society of Pakistan, were helpful in introducing many Pakistanis to me.

Because of somewhat abnormal condition in the post service between India and Pakistan, though both countries adjoin each other in a geographical sense, I troubled and relied on the help of the following three Japanese diplomats : Mr. Nakano and Mr. Isomura in Islamabad and Mr. Taga in New Delhi. I am very thankful for their timely cooperation on the mailing of the material of my study.

I wish to thank Mr. Anwar Alam, my Urdu teacher, doing Ph.D in JNU, for the special intensive Urdu class before my visit to Pakistan. I am also very much in the debt to one of my Pakistani friends, Mr. Ayub Khan, who enabled me to get access to some rare material, including a part of his family collection.

I have also to record my indebtedness to those authors whose passages I have quoted in this study.

Finally, I acknowledge my gratitude to my mother, whose support and understanding has been an invaluable source of strength for me.

As a foreigner from a non-English speaking country, I have written this dissertation in English, which is neither my mother tongue nor tool as a medium of education. Any errors of grammar or style in English are due to my immaturity in the language.

Keiko Sugiyama

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi, 7 July, 1987

A B B R E V I A T I O N S
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FMA	Freedom Movement Archives
FR	Fortnightly Reports of the Punjab Governor
IAR	<u>Indian Annual Register</u> Series
QAP	Quaid-i-Azam Papers
SHC	Syed Shamsul Husan Collection
TOP	<u>Transfer of Power</u> Series

I N T R O D U C T I O N

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Among a series of studies on the Partition of India that have been done during the last decade, the specific topic of the development of the Muslim League in the Punjab seems to be gaining a new direction. Because in terms of the growth of Muslim separatism in a Muslim majority area, the Province had been so far neglected in spite of holding a key to the successful creation of Pakistan.

The Muslim League, which became an heir to state power in Pakistan immediately after the end of the British Raj, was not a political party in the strict sense of the term. Rather it was a movement in which there was room for various shades of opinions. The cause of the League's rise to power should not therefore be sought only in a survey of the organizational growth behind all-India politics. The concrete process of how the League's demand gained prominence

within a certain context of problems awaiting solution has also to be traced. The real motive for the League's separate territorial demand can be partly traced to the dissatisfaction resulting from the introduction of the provincial autonomy under the Government of India Act of 1935. This was the turning point, and League's phenomenal development in strength and popularity characterized the decade before the Partition. But, simultaneously, this period also saw the survival of various then political groups and organizations among the Muslims of India.¹ This indicates clearly that the League's claim to be the only organization of Indian Muslims requires careful consideration for a proper examination of the position and concern of the Muslims in those days.

1. Kabir, Humayun, Muslim Politics, 1906-47 and Other Essays, Calcutta, 1969, pp.36-39.

Before getting down to Muslim politics in India, we have to note that there was a sharp difference in orientation in politics between the Muslim majority provinces of India and the Muslim minority provinces. A most salient feature was that it was the Muslim minority provinces, especially the U.P., which witnessed from the beginning development of various Islamic ideological movements and conscious efforts of the Muslims to acquire a clear political identification. Here, they were a minority, but on the whole they were better-off than the Hindu majority.² Their particular concern was for the full maintenance of the status quo vis-à-vis the Hindus. Under this need, the League politics, which was closely connected with the groups representing vested interests, could provide a certain protection to them as a separate entity.

2. Ibid., p.25.

On the other hand, the Muslims of the Muslim majority provinces did not, until the very final phase of the British Raj, evince quite the same interest in communal politics and they strove to break away from the control of the All-India Muslim League. In these areas, generally speaking, any special emphasis on a religious category as a political entity was not particularly needed. Rather, that kind of approach was in some cases considered harmful. Because of this, ironically, the appeasement of the Governments in the Muslim majority provinces was to become a big problem for the League, which had to lead the battle for Pakistan as the sole representative of the Muslims of India, in particular after the Lahore Resolution of 1940. It was only after this that Jinnah's task was defined as a series of separate maneuvering arrangements for each province to secure at least the formal position of the Muslim League as a nominally 'ruling party' in Muslim majority province.

As far as the Punjab was concerned, it was the most important province in the block of the Muslim majority provinces in north-western India in terms of both population and economic strength. Prior to the period under study, the peculiar colonial experience under British rule, which existed in the form of the Unionist Party, built an entrenched power structure in the Province. A national scene of Muslim politics, especially after the failure of Non-Cooperation and the collapse of the Khilafat took a favourable turn for development of the Unionist Party.³ There was a vacuum in so far as there was no longer any all-India party whose leaders could define Muslim demands at all-India level. Moreover, the Unionist Party was not a party of the Muslims alone. In this respect, the tradition of the so-called cross-communal linkage have been often emphasized as a basis of the Unionists' strategy.

3. Jalal, Ayesha, and Seal, Anil,
" Muslim Politics Between the Wars",
Modern Asian Studies (15.3), 1981, p.429.

From among the Western scholars, we may mention the work done by I.A. Talbot,⁴ who has analysed in his series of studies on the decline of the Unionist party and the growth of the Muslim League in the Punjab, how the League politics reached down to the mass level and embraced the rural voters who were to control the future of the 'Pakistan issue'. Putting much importance on the role of the 'traditional' social and religious networks, he has concluded that the landlords' and pirs' command of the rural population's votes was far more decisive in mobilising support for the League than the popularity of its demand for Pakistan. Furthermore, his attempt to reconsider the way of the League's penetration into the masses, which historians had not so far explained deeply, has been strengthened by his final emphasis on the League's timely

4. See Bibliography.

strategy of the linking of the 'Pakistan' scheme to the solution of the villagers' economic difficulties in war time.

On the other hand, a Pakistani scholar, Imran Ali, has discussed the same topic by directing his attention to the leadership level.⁵ His concern on the interaction between the Unionist Party as a strong regional party and the League as an All-India Organization has been focussed on the fact that the Muslim League's gains in the Punjab were the direct result of its 'successful' use of the existing power structure which had supported the Unionist regime. The young rural-based leaders deviated from the Unionist wing, where their fathers had belonged, skillfully shifted their support from the Unionist Party to the League in view of the changing political situation.

5. See Bibliography.

Through this new finding, which by nature closely links 'non-communal' factor with the 'economic structure' of the Province, he also seems to have further developed the concept of 'non-communal' linkage of the Unionists.

Another study which has traced the crucial years leading to the Partition by an Indian scholar, Satya M. Rai, has thrown light on the writing of politics inside Punjab, including the aspects of the Sikh and Hindu movements. Her basic understanding of the Pakistan movement has been founded on a premise that it was based on the interest of Muslim bourgeoisie, who at the same time fanned communalism. Probably this seems to be due to her clear-cut insistence on the League as a 'party'. This attitude has naturally led her to overcharacterize the League's political activities in a lopsided direction. In a wider sense, the League as a

movement', not merely as a 'party', included many phases, not only the so-called League campaign but also the political dealings of the High Command, the rise of the support of the people for separatism based on various aspirations, etc.

Ayesha Jalal from Pakistan has tried in her latest study to search for an answer to her own question—— how Pakistan failed to satisfy the interests of the very Muslims who are supposed to have demanded its creation.⁶ Identifying the factors in detail which led to the creation of Pakistan, she has shown us a 'daring' conclusion that Jinnah did not want Pakistan and that 'Pakistan' was a bargaining counter to be exchanged for the real goal of equality in status, not of India's being sliced in two. Probably her greatest contribution to the Partition studies is that she has strictly separated and examined the role

6. See Bibliography.

of Jinnah, the Muslim League politics, and the nature of the demand for Pakistan. In fact, each category seems to have been indispensable to her attempt to make clear how Jinnah, the sole spokesman for 'Pakistan', was in a dilemma, in the midst of the Pakistan movement, to resolve the contradiction between a demand for a separate Muslim state and the need for a strategy which could safeguard the interests of all the Indian Muslims.

Her position of being a Pakistani and the strong critical mind evolved from within the current Pakistani society have actually become big factors that brought a new direction to the study of Pakistan movement. If we borrow her logic, the next stage of the study will have to be focussed on the mechanism of the movement which progressed too much 'against' the will of the Supreme Commander. What I earlier emphasized — the League as a 'movement' — will be perhaps contextualized in this aspect.

The present study is mainly concerned with the political climate peculiar to a region, the Punjab in the most crucial years before the Partition, to develop an understanding of the situation imposed on the Muslim majority provinces, where the League had to strain every nerve to capture power. Later, we focus on the concurrent growth of the League demand as a 'movement' in the Punjab.

The writing is organized into three chapters. The first chapter deals with Punjab politics before the Partition, especially examining the League position under the provincial autonomy, and the conflict with the Unionists. This covers the period from the 1937 elections to the Simla Conference. We discuss in the second chapter the political atmosphere just prior to the League's movement for 'Pakistan', and the local development of the 'Pakistan' demand in the Province. The last chapter is about the final phase towards the Partition. Especially, in its

first section, we try to approach the various responses to the ideology of separatism among the Muslims in the Punjab. Here we have selected three standpoints ——— the business circle, the left wing, and the religious leadership. The second section of this chapter deals in particular with the position of the 'Pakistan' demand after the 1946 elections. We keep our distance somewhat off the Punjab on purpose so that we are able to survey the concern of the Punjab more clearly in contrast with other Muslims' concerns. The last section makes an attempt to show the role of the League in the Punjab in connection with the negotiated result, which was to lead to the division of the Province.

Chapter 1: The Punjab Politics before Partition

Section 1: Punjab Provincial Autonomy and the Muslim League

It must remain one of the freedom struggle's ironies that genesis of the idea of Pakistan sprang not from the Muslim majority provinces but from those in which the Muslims were in a minority. It was a case of artificial insemination in the political sphere, the idea fertilised in one place and grafted subsequently in another. In this it owed much to the skill, courage and determination of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Ayaz Amir, " Thoughts on Pakistan's Independence Day", Viewpoint (August 14, 1986).

The Civil Disobedience movement in early 1930s was an all-India movement with regional variations. Unlike the upsurge of the Non-Cooperation a decade earlier, what was the most salient feature in the scene was that the stirring Hindu-Muslim Unity of 1919-20 was obviously a thing of the past. In the Punjab, where the Congress reputation of being a predominantly Hindu trader party made mobilization of Muslim and Sikh peasants difficult

now that there was no issues like Khilafat or purification of Gurdwara management,¹ the Movement was not necessarily accompanied by unqualified advance in every respect over the Non-Cooperation. In the beginning of the constitutional talks which came in the form of the Round Table Conference in London after this upsurge, the Congress leaders had naturally kept away; but Muslim politicians were there in strength from the outset (Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Shafi, Aga Khan, Fazlul Huq, Jinnah ——— while Fazl-i-Husain was an important behind-the-scenes influences as a member of the Viceroy's Executive), along with Hindu Mahasabha leaders, Liberals, and a big princely contingent.²

1. Sarkar, Summit, Modern India, 1885-1947, Delhi, 1983, p.303.

2. Ibid., p.308.

The deliberations of the Round Table Conference resulted in 1932 in what is called the Communal Award as part of 'constitutional progress', and finally in the Government of India Act, 1935, which provided for a Scheme of "Federation of India". Under the Award, Muslims were allocated the following percentage of seats in various provincial legislatures on the basis of separate electorates.³

Province	Muslim Percentage of population	Percentage of seats reserved for Muslims
The Punjab	57	49
Bengal	55	48
Sind	71	57
North-West Frontier Province	92	72
Assam	34	31
The United Provinces	15	29
Bihar & Orissa	11	24
Bombay	9	17
Madras	8	13
The Central Provinces	5	14

3. Ali, Chaudhri Muhammad, The Emergence of Pakistan, Lahore, 1985 (First edition, 1967), p.26.

As the percentage of the Punjab and Bengal shows clearly, the Award reduced the two key Muslim majority provinces into minority provinces, though in exchange for this, the Muslim demands had been partly met to some extent.⁴ By the summer of 1933, it had become clear that the Congress after the collapse of the Civil Disobedience would turn its attention to constitutional battle.⁵ With this as a momentum, the Muslim circles needed a leader to give them a proper guide for the coming political tide, because the parties which represented the 'Muslims' and their demands at the time of the Round Table Conference were organizationally hollow shells.⁶ Especially, the All-India Muslim League provided a

4. Ahmad, Syed Nur, From Martial Law to Martial Law: Politics in the Punjab 1919-1958 (translated by Mahumud Ali, and edited by Craig Baxter with notes), Lahore, 1985, p.104. The Muslim demands which had been

met can be summarized as follows :

1. the principle of separate electorate
2. the fixed ratio in the cen^{tr}al legislature and
3. the concession for the Muslim Minority provinces, which was the same as that in the Lucknow pact.

5. Ibid., p.106.

6. Ibid., p.100 & p.106.

clear example of this. The choice fell upon Jinnah, who was then in London as a legal practitioner in self-imposed exile, but remained in touch with political developments at home. His basic attitude towards the Indian situation was that Hindus and Muslims must wage a joint struggle if the new constitution were to be amended to give full freedom.⁷ As regards the recent Award, it had, he thought, provided a basis for Hindu-Muslim compromise provided the Congress accepted it and worked in its framework.⁸

His first task after returning home was to bring the Muslim League together into a single League and to prepare for the elections to be held. The All-India Muslim League, which took part in the elections of 1937, was, however, by no means a well-organized body. In addition to this, it had little power over the Muslim majority provinces. As far as the results of Muslim seats for Provincial Assembly were concerned, out of 489 seats for Muslims, the League

7. Ibid., p.106.

8. -do-

captured only 104 seats; it won a substantial number of seats in the Hindu majority provinces, but in the Muslim majority provinces it did not create much of an impression.⁹ In the Punjab, the League won only 1 out of 86 Muslim seats, whereas a local dominant group, the Unionist Party — a Muslim-Hindu-Sikh coalition—— won not only the majority of the seats in the provincial Assembly (96 out of 175) but also the bulk of the Muslim seats.¹⁰ The key to the Unionists' success in this elections was mainly the enormous support from local associates who were able to influence provincial affairs because of their great mobilizing ability.

The strength of such support for the Unionist Party was closely connected with the development of the special arrangement, under the 1919

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9. Sayeed, Khalid Bin, Pakistan: the Formative Phase, Karachi, 1978, p.83.
10. -do- & Jalal, Ayesha, The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan, Cambridge, 1985, pp.22-23.

Reforms, which had been consciously used by the Government to favour the rural areas.¹¹ Under the separate electorates based on the residing area, those who did well out of the reforms were landlords and the agriculturists within the 'statutory' protection, especially in those districts of the Western Punjab where Muslims happened to be in a strong majority and where Muslims owned many of the larger estates.¹² The statutory protection under the Land Alienation Act of 1901 was in -----

11. Under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, separate electorates for seats of the Legislative council were created for the rural and urban areas with each having a total number of seats proportionate to their population. This meant that only four of the 34 Muslims elected to the council would come from the towns. Further, for the rural seats, only the members of the agricultural tribes defined under the 1901 Land Alienation Act (to be discussed later) were allowed to stand (Talbot, I.A., "Deserted Collaborators: The political Background to the Rise and Fall of the Punjab Unionist Party, 1923-1947", The Journal of Imperial & Commonwealth History (XI, I), 1982, pp. 77-78).

12. Jalal and Seal, op.cit., p.425.

the Punjab not merely a solution prepared by the British to mitigate the circumstances prevalent in the rural areas around the end of the 19th century but the culmination of the policies which they had pursued since its annexation. The Act had tried to eliminate, but with only partial success, the influence of the moneylender in the rural areas and reduce peasants' indebtedness; but at the same time it created not only a new problem of the "Zamindar" moneylender but also a new division of the population into agriculturist and non-agriculturist in every sphere of the provincial life.¹³ In the Punjab, the British did choose the rural allies quite positively. In exchange for large scale investment in the Canal Colony, they had already succeeded in gaining from the landlords and the local leaders an endless patronage, which was indispensable to their rule. The Act was, therefore, designed to secure their interests continuously against threatening situations under the pretext of the protection of all agriculturists. But, later, the ostensible protection was to allow the big landowners to grab the land of those who had to be primarily protected by the Act but remained outside its benefits, because of the half way measures. Despite the widening of the franchise under the Reforms, virtually all those

13. Darling. M.L., Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt, New Delhi, 1977, (First edition, 1925), especially Chaps. X, XI, & XII.

who achieved the designation of eligible voters did so through the property ownership qualification, and from the lower percentage of the Muslim population meeting the standard.¹⁴ Many of those elected were from among those families listed in the compilation of The Punjab Chief sanctioned by the Provincial Government, and many were included among such categories of notables as provincial and divisional darbaris .¹⁵

14. Baxter, Craig, "The People's Party vs the Punjab 'Feudalist'", in Contemporary Problems of Pakistan, ed. by Korsen, J. Henry, Leiden, 1974, p.8. As far as the 1926 election was concerned, the number of the eligible voters in the general constituencies was only 3.4% of the population (1921 census). Baxter discusses primarily the Muhammadan rural constituencies in the territory which was to become Pakistan. He says that the land holdings of these constituencies were perhaps larger than in other districts.
15. Ibid., The Punjab Chief is compiled by Griffin, Lepel H., which is now available only in India Office Library (London) and the Punjab Public Library (Lahore).

The Punjab National Unionist Party, established in 1923 under Fazl-i-Husain, was the embodiment of this rural interest. Because of the protection for the privileged classes, doubtlessly the Party had no mass basis, as far as its development as a party was concerned, it needed a stronger political theory to attract the mass of the rural population in order to sweep over the land of the Punjab. Consequently, it was the "Zamindar theory" of Chhotu Ram that helped it to extend its organization and support to the deep rural areas. Actually, the Unionist Party's success as a powerful local interest body can not be traced without mentioning the alliance between the large landowners of the West Punjab and another body which represented the voice of the peasant proprietors as well as the landlords of the East Punjab under this "Zamindar theory". With the help of the 1901 Act, Chhotu Ram, who founded the Zamindar League in 1924, aimed at rejecting all socio-economic differences within the category of "Zamindar" under the slogan of raising the "backward classes" and "backward areas".¹⁶ He refused to use

16. As regards the detailed study on the ideology of Chhotu Ram, see Punjab Politics : the Role of Sir Chhotu Ram by Choudhry, Prem, Delhi, 1984, especially Chap.8.

the word "Zamindar", because of the limited effect of its connotations.¹⁷ An ideology based on "Zamindar interests" in the Punjab had necessarily to assume the character of being non-communal, for the zamindars belonged to all castes and religions complexions, and undisputably this fact gave an outwardly wider dimension to the ideology.¹⁸ Actually what Fazl-i-Husain saw in the strategy of taking in Chhotu Ram's Zamindar League was this deep significance, and he was later to become the central leader to push forward "Unionism", adding the essence of "Zamindar theory". His ideology of "Unionism" implied the unity of all those who believed in a common politico-economic programme irrespective of the religion or community to which they belonged. This dynamic as well as careful balancing of the interests of landlord and peasant blocks based on a kind of rhetoric was in fact powerful enough to draw out a series of concessions from the British to the united actions for the rural economy.

17. Ibid., pp.204-205.

18. Ibid., p.200.

However, by the beginning of 1930s, when the most years of the agricultural depression affected the province, the party had become subject to serious factionalism. Efforts to replace Fazl-i-Husain with Sikandar Hayat Khan was being made at this time. The effective political role of Sikandar Hayat, who got elected to the Punjab Legislative Council from landholders constituency at Attock in the early nineteen twenties, began around the time when the Unionist Party emerged as a main political power in the province. The frequent attempts of the provincial Government to appoint these two leaders to separate positions showed their full consideration of the critical situation of the factional tendency.¹⁹ Sikandar's political ability was proved

19. In 1930 when Fazl-i-Husain was appointed a permanent member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Sikandar's temporary appointment as Revenue Member in the Punjab Government was put on a permanent basis. Moreover, in 1932, Sikandar became acting Chief Executive, because of the illness of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Differences between the two became quite obvious in 1935 when Sikandar was seconded to Bombay as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, in Sikandar Hayat Khan: A Political Biography by Malik, Iftikhar Haider, Islamabad, 1985, pp. 44-46.

to be genuine, especially during the depression. Besides the impact from the outside world, the natural calamity which hit the Province very severely put pressure on the provincial economy as well as Government treasury. In these circumstances his experience of private enterprise proved invaluable in dealing with the financial problems.²⁰ His efforts at reducing rural tension covered not only help for landlords regarding remission and concessions in the payment of revenue, but also arrangements of loans scheme for the peasants or a bill to resolve disputes between moneylenders and borrowers.²¹ Furthermore, he received great support from his earlier comrades, especially his close relationship with Raja Narendra Nath

20. Ibid., p.44.

21. Ibid., p.45.

the leader of the urban Hindus, Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana, who entered the politics in the late twenties with the background of the Daultana family at Multan District, and his cousin Nawab Muzaffar Khan²² proved useful in his political activities and indirectly helped him to later emerge as a leader of the Unionist Party. Malik analyses the mutual dissensions of top-brass Unionists as follows :

It was not merely a personality-clash cliché, rather more or less an anti-intellectualism of its own type. Moreover, it was a protestation against the leadership of the old-timers by the "Junior" group²³

22. He was in government service for over twenty years till his retirement in 1934. Later, he was elected to the Assembly in 1937 from Attock North, but resigned in 1943 to permit the election of Shankat Hayat Khan, son of Sikandar. Among his children is Mazhar Ali Khan, now editor of the weekly Viewpoint (Lahore), who is married to a daughter of Sikandar. Mazhar Ali and his wife have been active in leftist causes (Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.180).

23. Malik, I.H., op.cit., p.47.

However, this split-tendency of the Unionist Party in the early thirties had simultaneously another important effect, for it provided a rare opportunity for other political groups to grow in the Punjab. Especially, the urban areas of the Province saw the emergence of such groups, which tried to challenge the interest of what may be called "Punjab Ruralism!"²⁴ Among such groups was the Muslims League. The influence of the League in those days, however, remained confined to Lahore, where a small group led by the poet Iqbal was opposed to the dominance of Muslim politics by the pro-British Unionist landlords.²⁵ Jinnah came down to the Punjab in the mid nineteen thirties in an uncertain atmosphere caused by the internal trouble within

24. Jalal, and Seal, op.cit., p.439.

25. In addition to the League, some of these groups were led by ulama (learned authorities of Islam) with a view to spreading a movement that would enforce the shariat (Islamic Law) and developed pro-Congress sympathies, who had enjoyed the maximum benefit from customary law (Sayeed, Khalid B., Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change, New York, 1980, p.9). The Punjab Muslim League had been established in 1907.

party in power, and by clashes between different classes whose interest were extremely antagonistic to each other.

With the announcement of the provincial elections under the 1935 Act, Jinnah decided to fight the elections in all provinces through the Muslim League. In the Punjab, however, his attempt to approach Fazl-i-Husain ended in a rapture, leaving a sharp difference of opinion. On the surface the dispute appeared to be on the question as to whether the Punjabi Muslims, who constituted the important wing of the Unionist 'non-communal' Party, should accept the offer of the All-India organization of the Muslim community independent of their local affairs. But, before everything else, Fazl-i-Husain of the Unionist Party had a basic difference with Jinnah's programme. Contrary to the political attitude of Jinnah, who emphasized, during the campaign, the need for full protection for a minority during the fight for freedom. Fazl-i-Husain did not think of any steps to form a political front against the British.²⁶ Moreover, considering that Jinnah

26. As regards Jinnah's speech at a meeting of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema in Hind (April/1936) see Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.139.

was basically a staunch supporter, at least till this election, of Indian nationalism based on an "honourable" settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims,²⁷ it was almost fated that they failed to reach an agreement on the issue at this time, because even in regard to an understanding on the Hindu-Muslim issue, they had clearly different views.

Prior to the Award, the semi-communal attitude of Fazl-i-Husain against his political creed had already secured a foothold in the context of constitutional talks at all-India

27. Rao, B.Shiva, "India 1935-47", and Kabir, Humayun," Muslim Politics 1942-7", in The Partition of India: Policies and Perspective, eds., by Philips, C.H., and Wainwright, Mary Doreen, London, 1970, p.392 and p.418.

level. . . . Because of his influential position, diplomatic skill, and the weight of his office, the 'battle' for Muslim demands in the Round Table Conference was, Ahmed says, being fought in London by the Muslim delegates and in New Delhi by Fazl.²⁸ According to Fazl, nationalism was to be fostered through diversity within unity, and not through a unity to be attained by suppression of all diversity.²⁹ Therefore the Muslims were struggling against absorption, and for this purpose they needed constitutional safeguards. In order to ensure the acceptance of this claim, the Round Table Conference was a golden opportunity for him. In view of this it was imperative

28. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.80.

29. Husain, Azim, Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography, Bombay, 1946, p.249.

that Muslim representatives to the Conference should have identical views,³⁰ He accordingly used all his influence and power of persuasion in the selection of a Muslim Delegation consisting of members in accord with the policy of the All-India Muslim Conference.³¹ Out of sixteen members of the Muslims Delegation, Jinnah, a nationalist, was the only member who was likely to oppose the demands of the Muslim Conference. Fazl, therefore, wrote to Malcolm Hailey:

Jinnah starts upon expressing his views when those views are not acceptable to the Indian Muslims. I want someone who would frankly say that it is not the Indian Muslim view. It is a difficult thing to say that and an unpleasant one, and the higher the position of a representative, the more difficult it is for him to say so in a conference.³²

30. Ibid., p.250.

31. -do-

32. Ibid., p.251.

Soon after the elections, this Unionist-League dissension in the Punjab was continued under a new leader, Sikandar Hayat, though in a different ideological dimension. Sikandar took the oath of the new Unionist Ministry in April 1937, because of the sudden death of Fazl-i-Husain just before the elections. Facing the League's regular attack on the Unionists, Sikandar soon adopted a certain measure of compromise. The best of this attitude soon came out in the form of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact in October 1937. The final draft of the Pact is as follows :-

- (a) That upon his return to the Punjab (because he attended the meeting of the Muslim League Council as a special invitee) Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan will convene a special meeting of his party and advise all Muslim members of the party who are not members of the Muslim League already to sign its creed and join it. As such, they will be subject to the rules and regulations of the central and provincial bounds of the All-India Muslim League. This will not affect the continuance of the present coalition Unionist Party.



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- (a) That in future elections and by elections for the legislature, after the adoption of this agreement, the groups constituting the present Unionist Party will jointly support candidates put up by their respective groups.
- (c) That the Muslim members of the legislature who are elected on or accept the League ticket will constitute the Muslim League party within the Legislature. It shall be open to the Muslim League party so formed to maintain or enter into coalition or alliance with any other party consistent with fundamental principles, policy and programme of the League. Such an alliance may be evolved before or after the elections. The existing combination shall maintain its present name, Unionist Party.
- (d) In view of the aforesaid agreement, the Provincial League parliamentary board shall be reconstituted.³³

33. Ibid., p.147.

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Ostensibly, it appeared to be obvious that Sikandar's joining the Muslim League would not bring any advantage to the Unionists. According to a British ICS Officer's recollection, even the British hesitated to accept his "submission" to Jinnah, because it showed that he underrated the strength of his position in the Punjab and his hold on the Muslim.³⁴ On the other hand, some have put an interpretation on it that it was not out of his deep conviction but merely as a matter of necessity, in order to strengthen his Ministry in the face of the threat from the Congress mass contact movement, which was launched in this Province in April 1937.³⁵ But this observation seems to exaggerate not only the "threat" of the Congress but also the "influence" of the League in the Punjab in those days. Taking both his subsequent attitude (to be discussed later) and the above quoted ICS Officer's recollection into consideration, this interpretation does not explain his motive. Further, it even fails to show how Jinnah was glad to get Sikandar's support after the All-India Muslim

34. Moon, Penderel, Divide and Quite, London, 1964, p.38.

35. Ispahani, M.A.H., Quaid-e-Azam as I knew him, Karachi, 1966, pp.54-55. Besides Ispahani, Khalid B. Sayeed Nature, has also stood by the above observation.

League's poor showing in the 1937 elections. Malik Shoukat Ali, son of an ardent Muslim Leaguer, has also indicated that Jinnah wanted to show the British that most of the Muslim Premiers and notables were with him in the Muslim League.³⁶ Without question, there is no denying that the effect of the Pact was to strengthen the League's position. But even Sikandar did not lose anything as a result of this Pact.

Sikandar's maneuver lay, most probably, in reserving the complete control of the Province to himself as well as in rejecting any interference of the League in the local affairs. In fact, it was after the Pact that Sikandar was entrusted with the power, at the Calcutta Muslim League Session in April 1938, to form a new provincial League organization of his Province. Regardless of the efforts made by the 'faithful' provincial Leaguers, all the credit

36. Malik, I.H., op.cit., p.139 (the author's interview at Lahore in May 12, 1983).

for the Punjab Muslim League's affiliation to the All-India Muslim League, which had not materialized (before the elections) under the current reorganized provincial League of Iqbal group³⁷, went to Sikandar alone.

In September 1939, Britains declaration of War on Germany was followed by the Viceroy's

37. Following Jinnah's visit to Lahore in April 1936, and the failure of talks with the Unionists, the Punjab Muslim League was reorganized, with Allama Iqbal as the President, Malik Barkat Ali and Khalifa Shuja-ud-Din as Vice Presidents, Ghulam Rasul Khan as the Secretary, and Mian Abdul Majid and Ashiq Husain Batalvi as Joint Secretary, and as in other provinces, a Parliamentary Board was also set up. But it had not been affiliated into the All-India League on account of some "technical grounds". In January 1940, the new Punjab Muslim League and Muslim League Assembly Party were elected under the leaders of Nawab Shah Nawaz Mamdot and Sikandar respectively. (Ibid., p.75,p.79 and p.83).

announcement that India was also at war. Simultaneously British urgently asked the people of India to support them extensively. The Unionist Party showed their loyal response quickly with full preparation of the War. But the Unionists' expression of loyalty without consulting the League, caused resentment amongst the Leaguers of the Province. Their dissatisfaction at the leadership of Sikandar was, later, to be gradually changed into deep doubts about his sincerity in regard to the Pact.³⁸ Contrary to their expectation of approval from the leaders of the Central Working Committee, however, these loyalists in the Provincial League were strongly reprovved for opposing Sikandar, who had by this time become an important representative of the 'League'.³⁹ The effect of its association with the Unionist Party was, for the League, advantageous in its dealings in regard to the all-India politics at this juncture. Actually, during the period

38. GAP, File No.215 (Malik Balkat Ali). File No. 236 (A.H.Batalvi).

39. Talbot, I.A., op.cit., p.82., Malik, I.H. op.cit., pp.84-85.

from the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact to the Lahore Session of the All-India Muslim League in 1940, when his political creed as a Unionist got a severe tryout, Sikandar succeeded in using the dual mask of the two parties quite properly, and indisputably this performance exhibited his dominant position among the leaders of the all-India Muslim politics.

As the war developed, the course of the official talks on the future of India between the British, who wanted a constant war support from India, and the Indian political leaders, assumed an air of liveliness, especially centering around the final political status for the "minority". By this time various alternative constitutional schemes to the one embodied in the Government of India Act 1935 had been devised as a future solution to the Muslim issue. Among these was Sikandar's scheme, as outlined in A Scheme of Indian Federation, to which much political importance was attached by the Anglo-Indian and Hindu Press in

those days.⁴⁰ In March 1940, Sikandar, who was to play an important rôle in the handling of the Lahore Session, got a chance to present his scheme of zonal idea apart from the clear advocacy of a separate state for Muslims, to the Working Committee Meeting just before the opening day. But the final draft of the 'historical' Lahore Resolution as his own Resolution, was ironically,

40. "A Punjabi", Sir Sikander's Regional Scheme under Searchlight, Lahore, 1942, p.6. As to Sikandar Hayat-Khan, Outlines of A Scheme of Indian Federation, Lahore, n.d. Besides his scheme, another by Dr. S.A. Latif of Hyderabad. Still another was published by Professors of Aligarh University Confederacy of India published by "a Punjabi" was a scheme of Mian Kifayat Ali. "A Punjabi" rumored to have been Shah Namaz Khan of Mamdot. The most controversial one among them was, however, a pamphlet as "Pakistan" by Chaudhury Rahmat Ali, a Punjab student at Cambridge University. For the details, see Pirzadd, Syed Sharifuddin, Evolution of Pakistan, Lahore, 1963 and Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.150.

after the Meeting's ignorance of the scheme, substituted for the official resolution ratified by the All-India Muslim League,⁴¹ which contained a sort of aspiration towards the idea of separatism. Soon he found himself under the imperative necessity of defining his attitude towards the resolution as a Unionist, and later expressed himself at a debate in the Punjab Legislative Assembly in March 1941. According to him, "freedom" through fight with a communal oligarchy in power lay in the sense that they would have full control of their own affairs as an equal and autonomous unit within the British Commonwealth.⁴² Further, as far as Punjab was concerned, it had to be attained, only by avoiding Muslim Raj, in the formation of every community with due share in the economic and administrative fields as partners in a common concern.⁴³ Therefore, he said with a special emphasis :

Punjab will not be Pakistan, but just Punjab.⁴⁴

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41. Malik, I.H., op.cit., pp.86-87, and p.177
(Appendix, IX, Sikandar Hayat-Response to Questions on His Affiliations with the Pakistan-Resolution in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on March 11, 1941).
42. Ibid., p.178.
43. Ibid., p.179.
44. -do-

For Sikandar, the so-called Muslim issue was capable of a solution as long as the spirit of Unionism worked properly, and prevailed in the Province much more than now. In this sense, he persisted in accomplishing the objective of the League in terms of the best form of the current provincial autonomy, which also meant his strong justification of the Raj. But, for the League, the same issue was something related with "a right of self determination", which was expressed as a Muslim "national" demand in its extremist meaning, and at the same time, as complete as well as "practical protection" for a minority in its most moderate meaning. In addition to the recent setback on account of his mishandling of the Khaksar situation,⁴⁵ Sikandar gradually found himself in a difficult phase. The rapid change in the internal affairs caused by the development of the War also brought a change in the political situation, showing the British the difficulty of maintaining their prestige, which was closely connected with the position of the loyal Unionists in those days.

45. Ibid., pp.85-87.

Section 2: The League-Unionist
Conflict of 1943-44

After the arrest of the Congress leaders in August 1942, the political activity in India came almost to a standstill. Although it was true that the League had hardly any major influence on the course of political events so long as the Congress Ministries were in office, the fortunes of the League had, in spite of the resignation of those Ministries, appeared very sluggish since 1939, and remained the same at this critical time. Throughout the war the provinces with the Congress majority were under Governor's rule. Meanwhile, in the Muslim majority provinces, the Ministries continued to function and in every one there was ministerial wrangling, except the Punjab.

The Muslim League managed to form governments at this time largely because of the support it received from the Europeans,¹

1. Sayeed, K.B., Formative, p.213.

but only with partial as well as transient success in spite of the helps and the manipulation of the bureaucracy. Fazl-ul-Haq of Bengal had broken away from the League over the issue of his joining the National Defence Council. Protesting against the League's interference in Bengal, he retaliated, after the expulsion from the League, by forming a new Ministry with the support of Hindu groups in the Assembly. Aslo Sind and the North West Frontier Province, where earlier elections were contested entirely on the basis of individual influence, had never been the League bastion. The Frontier, with its overwhelmingly Muslim population, affiliated itself to the Congress, while the Allah Baksh Soomro Ministry in Sind, which was once kept away from office, throughout showed its loyalty to the Congress.² In the Punjab, as we have seen, Sikandar Hayat took the nominal oath of allegiance to Jinnah that he was advising the Muslims members of his party to join the League under the 'Pact'. But on the whole, Sikandar faithfully followed the so-called "Unionism" that we may understand in the most strict sense of the term,

2. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.141 and p.165.

The Cripps' offer of 1942, born of a series of British attempts to cope with the grave situation after the resignation of the Congress Ministries, however, brought the League an unexpected chance to become tactical enough to stand with the Congress in the negotiations from this time onwards. Britain's main concern was how to step up the war effort in India and to win the war, and hence the British Government did not commit itself to any clear policy in regard to the separate home-land issue, though the offer gave the provinces the opportunity to opt out if they so desired.³ This time the League worked out a strategy to wait and see as to what move the Congress would make. Therefore they prepared two draft resolutions depending upon the Congress decision. Since Jinnah understood that the British would not part with power so easily, and that the League was not in a very strong position, the success of

33. TOP, Vol.1, No.457 (Broadcast by Cripps), 30/3/42, pp.566-571.

strengthening the Muslim League case for Pakistan depended on adoption of subtle tactics, including maintaining equal distance with the Congress and the British so as not to weaken his bargaining stand. The development of the negotiation, however, saw the Congress' move further away from the British, which meant in fact a favourable turn for the League, in spite of its rejection of the offer. It became clear that the British was not prepared to concede transfer of power. The demand of the League was still within the scope of gaining time; the vagueness of the provincial option in the offer, which fairly left the door open for further negotiation, had a great deal to do with it. In the process of this development, the 'League' as a counterpoise to the Congress was well placed in a political sketch map drawn by the British, who made no secret of their preference for the League. The League's emergence into transient prominence in forming Ministries in Sind, Bengal, N.W.F.P. after the abandonment of office by the Congress Ministries could be traced in

this context.⁴ But, in the Punjab, where the key to the League's future lay, it could hardly exert any decisive power.

The position of the Punjab among the Muslim majority provinces held distinct features at this time. Here, Jinnah's exhortation was not a defeat of the Congress or Hindu "machinations" against the League but of the Unionist Party. Moreover, not only the Punjab was the exceptional Province in which the reformed Constitution had been effectively worked ever since 1937 but also it was the sword arm of India, which had carried through the major remarkable parts of the actual war efforts for the British as a backbone of the Imperial defence system. This made the British particularly keen on keeping the Punjab isolated from any politics which would threaten unity of India. Therefore, in the Punjab, the presence of the League was rather hard for the British to deal with in terms of continuation of the Raj. This was the exact

4. See FR for the first half of May and for the second half of August 1943.

background which led the Supreme Commander of the League, Jinnah, to set himself against slow progress of the League in the Punjab and bring it into line with other Muslim majority areas through a series of local and tactical arrangements, which were later to prepare a complicated development of the local politics. But it can only be fully understood in the light of examining the "myth of stability" that had been woven around the Unionist politics and of tracing the unavoidable change of leadership.

With the progress of the War accompanied by deterioration in the conditions of life, it did not take much to prove that the League's hope of a windfall in some provinces was gradually withering away. In particular, the failure of the League in Bengal to cope with the critical famine situation caused resentment among the people very rapidly. It was not, however, in Bengal alone that the League was losing ground. It goes without

saying that Jinnah was eager to make up for the loss. Furthermore, the League's unfavourable state of progress out of proportion to its increasing activities during this time seemed to take a concrete shape at its best in Jinnah's impatience at capturing the Punjab. Since 1940, the Punjab had seen the passing away of several prominent leaders of the Unionist coalition;⁵ Ahmed Yar Khan Daultana, Chief Parliamentary Secretary, Sunder Singh Majithia, Revenue Minister, Shahnawaz Khan of Mamdot, President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the doyen of the Unionist Party, and Sikandar Hayat, Premier of the Punjab died in August 1940, April 1941, March 1942 and December of the same year

5. Sikandar's coalition cabinet included three Muslims, two Hindus and one Sikh. Majithia as a non-Muslim Cabinet member was one of them, and he was from the Khalsa National Party (Malik, I.H., op.cit., p.49).

respectively,⁶ Although only Chhotu Ram among the old leaders of the province was still alive, the vacuum caused by the loss became an extremely significant factor in bringing the Punjab politics to a new phase.

On the death of Majithia, who had been worried about the tide created by Sikandar's too generous concession to the Muslim League, especially, the 1937 Pact and his role in the holding of the League's 'historic' session at Lahore in 1940, the criticism from non-Muslim Punjabis against Sikandar was further strengthened.⁷ But Sikandar's quick understanding of the necessity of avoiding communal controversies in the Punjab resulted in Sikandar-Baldev Singh Pact, and Baldev Singh, the leading Sikh Industrialist and the spokesman of the Sikhs, was brought into the Cabinet on condition that he would help Sikandar turn in the pursuit of non-communal policies.⁸ During the hey-day

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6. IAR, Vol.II,1940,p.14/Vol.I,1941,p.57/Vol.II, 1942,p.64(c), and Ahmad, S.N.,op.cit., p.165.
7. Malik, I.H., op.cit.,p.53.
8. -do-

of the so-called Unionist period under consideration, there were three important families who were major centres of political power.⁹ These were the Hayats of Wah, the Noon-Tiwana groups of Sargodha and the Daultana of Multan District. With no exception at all, as we have noted, they were from among those families listed in The Punjab Chiefs of Griffin. It is no exaggeration to say that in this province the rich lineal continuation represented by leading rural families, like the three mentioned above took root deep into the soil of the provincial politics and had firm grip on it. When Sikandar Hayat set about organizing his new Cabinet in 1937, it is said that he had reconciliated the Noon-Tiwana group by taking Khair Hayat Khan Tiwana into a ministerial position, whilst Ahmad Yar (Daultana) became Chief Parliamentary Secretary and Chaudhury Shahbuddin (a member of the Daultana family) became

9. Baxter, op.cit., p.10.

speaker of the Assembly.¹⁰ Along with the vulnerability of these factional as well as communal consideration, he had to control the politics of the Punjab throughout the period of his office.

After the death of Sikandar, the heir-selection was a problem. In January 1943, Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana's selection met on the whole, according to the fortnightly report of the Punjab Governor, with a "favourable reception".¹¹ But, later, Khizr's anxiety about the future unity of the Unionist Party did not allow him to be indifferent to the tactics of appeasement for the chairs in his Ministry. Because of the Noon-Tiwana group by origin,¹² Khizr, a follower of the

10. Ali, Imran, Punjab Politics in the Decade before Partition (Research Monograph Series No.8/South Asian Institute, University of the Punjab), Lahore, 1975, p.36. Ahmad Yar and Sahbuddin were married to sisters. (Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.111).
11. FR for the first half of February 1943.
12. Jalal, op.cit., p.85 (f.n.10).

Fazl-i-Husain—Sikandar line but not of their scale, was forced to consider the choice of Shaukat Hayat Khan, son of Sikandar. Therefore, Shaukat, who was in the Army at the time, was released from active duty and added to the Cabinet.¹³ His appointment was really unprecedented as he was not a member of the Unionist Party, though he was later elected on a Muslim League ticket. In the meantime, the Assembly seat left vacant by Sikandar's death was filled by Mian Mumtaz Daultana, son of Ahmad Yar through a by-election.¹⁴ Thanks to the close relationship to his uncle, Chaudhuri Shahabuddin, Mumtaz gained a range of contacts of prominent political leaders after his return from England.¹⁵ By this time, with Nawab Iftiakhar Husain Khan of Mamdot who succeeded his father,

13. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.166 & p.188.

14. -do-

15. Childless, Shahabuddin 'adopted' Mumtaz in a sense, and met all the expenses for Mumtaz during his study at Oxford (Baxter, op.cit., p.15 and Ahmad, S.N., p.189).

Shahnawaz Khan, both as President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and as Assembly member from Ferozpur Central,¹⁶ the so-called three "musketeers" had mustered in the scene of the Punjab politics, which was now entering a new phase under the intensification of the League activities. These young musketeers, with no experience of sharing the spirit of "Unionism", were however no longer 'soldiers' armed with the theory of communal harmony for the province.

The trial of the new premier, Khizr, was only a question of time. As soon as he took office, one of the first things he had to do was to show his clear political attitude in the midst of the rapid change in the situation. He chose to be conservative to the best of his ability through thick and thin without compromise, rather than to be a pragmatist with flexibility in thought like Sikandar. His political creed was loyal to the tradition of the predecessor and he himself seemed

16. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.188.

17. Tribune, 9 September 1944.

to feel responsible for the maintenance of the best form of the Unionists' inheritance. It was the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact by which he acknowledged his allegiance to the Muslim League as well as to the Unionist Party. In fact, how far this contradictory but rigid 'traditionist-policy' could cope with the changing political situation was questionable. Meanwhile, Jinnah of the League, now that Sikandar was dead, probably was feeling very strongly that the Pact had also expired with him, and consequently he would be able to make a bid to transform the Unionist Party into a League ministry.

There were often certain problems which could not be solved, within the arrangements of the Pact, even during the period of Sikandar's office. For instance, some of the correspondence of Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot with Jinnah contains not only the ample evidence of this fundamental question

but also reveals the awkward position of the provincial Muslim League at that time.¹⁸ After the Pact, a special arrangement was made to give Sikandar's colleagues a majority in the leadership of the Provincial League, and Mamdot became President of the League unit while he was still a Unionist.¹⁹ His personal relationship with Sikandar was, of course, always cordial. soon after the War, Jinnah demanded in connection with the war efforts that the Punjab Provincial Muslim League should dissociate itself from the War Committee according to the resolution of the All-India Muslim League Working Committee and share with the League the authority and control in the Government

18. Ed. by Jafri, S. Qaim Hussain, Quaid-i-Azam Correspondence with Punjab Muslim Leaders, Lahore, 1977, pp.340-356 (Letters of Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot).

19. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.166.

at the centre and in all the provinces.²⁰ But in reply to this letter, Mamdot said that conditions in the Punjab were very different from those in other provinces and had never been propitious for the independent development of the Muslim League interests.²¹ Insisting that himself and a number of other prominent members of the Punjab League agreed to serve on the War Committee long before the resolution of the All-India Muslim League was passed, Mamdot suggested that the Working Committee of the Punjab might pass a resolution that the President of the All-India Muslim League be requested to allow them to continue to serve on the War-Committee.²² It is evident from the following conclusion of Mamdot that he fully recognized the difficulty of reconciling his dual roles :

20. Jafri, op.cit., p.392.

21. Ibid., p.344.

22. Ibid., pp.345-346.

I am not writing this to say that I do not wish to follow the instructions contained in the resolution of the All-India Muslims League. I am doing as in order to approach you with a request to kindly find a way and guide us to get out of the difficulties in a way which may not in the least damage the prestige of the League.²³

Despite Khizr's early declaration that he would stand by the commitment made by Sikandar,²⁴ his bold step to manage the situation got off to a shaky start. As early as mid year 1943, the League's attempt to capture the Punjab was gradually becoming a serious threat in the form of the hot controversy over the degree to which the Unionist Ministry should be subjected to the control of the All-India Muslim League. Reflecting the complicated situation of the typical communal

23. -do-

24. IAR, Vol.I&II,1943,p.44.

formation in this province, the tone of the press was now diverse enough to show the intricacy of various interests. Although the question of the Unionist Party's remaining in power hinged upon the help of the Chhotu Ram group representing the Jats, and the Baldev Singh group of Sikhs, it was fairly obvious that even Jinnah and the League had learnt from the experience of the Unionists, and did not think that the Muslim-members alone could be able to manage the provincial affairs, In this sense if he was thoughtful enough to stick to this line, it rested with Jinnah to decide whether the maintenance of the Pact was likely to be more beneficial to the League fortunes than a Muslim League government with a strong Hindu-Sikh opposition.²⁵

During the year 1943 the League activity in the Punjab, though of little importance, but showed signs of increase with the possibility of organizational growth with the establishment

of new branches, elections, of office bearers, dissemination of "Pakistan" propaganda through meetings and provincial tour by the League workers and students.²⁶ In this atmosphere, a small group of the Muslim members of the Punjab Assembly actively began to gather around the new League President, Nawab Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot for more vital efficiency in the League Assembly Party in rivalry with the party of Khizr, who tried to avoid any change in this field. So there was a tug of war between the Unionists and the 'Muslim League group' with the result that complaints were sent to Jinnah. Actually, this was to add fresh fuel to the changing phase of the 'League politics' of this year. As a result of this protest, Jinnah decided to jump at this positive response, which bore fruit in February 1944 with

26. FR for the first half of July 1943.

his appointment to the two League committees²⁷ For Jinnah, in the opinion of the Governor, this chance provided a convenient excuse to send high powered enquiry-agents into the Punjab in order to ascertain his chance of forming a Muslim League ministry.²⁸ Finally, Jinnah himself arrived at Lahore in March and set about the work of bringing the Punjab Ministry under his influence. To achieve this objective, immense pressure was put on the Muslim members of the Ministry. The personal ambitions of disgruntled members of the Assembly and Provincial League, and sometimes even Muslim communalists were exploited.²⁹ Yet, Jinnah's intrigues to overthrow the Unionist Ministry made no decisive hit at this stage.

27. These two Committees were the League Election Enquiry Committee to enquire into a petition objecting to the election of Mamdot as President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, and the Committee of Action to discuss the reorganization of provincial activities (FR for the first half of February 1944

28 -do-

29. FR for the second half of March 1944.

However, the time was soon ripe for talks between two leaders Jinnah and Khizr at the end of the April 1944. The League's overpowering stance at this time can be traced in the following three demands:

- (1) That every member of the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly should declare that he owes his allegiance solely to the Muslim League Party in the Assembly and not to the Unionist Party or any other political party;
- (2) That the present label of the coalition should be dropped, namely the "Unionist Party";
- (3) That the name of the proposed coalition party should be Muslim League coalition party.³⁰

In addition, Jinnah wanted to find out as to what extent Chhotu Ram and Baldev Singh would

30. IAR, Vol.I,1944,p.218.

agree to all these three proposals. There was a demand from Jinnah's side for the final reply in writing, not verbally, so that there should be not room for any misunderstanding. While not complying with the demand for a reply in writing, Khizr insisted on the non-communal nature of the Unionist Party and the maintenance of complete unity within the Muslim community under the terms of Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, letting fall a hint of a principle—non-intervention in the provincial affairs.³¹ The sequence to this meeting that reached no agreement came before long. The open session of the Punjab Muslim League met at Salkot on the 30th April. Addressing this session, Jinnah emphasized in an extraordinary way that under the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact no secret commitment was made or any assurance about non-interference in the internal affairs of the Punjab given and that the pact was after all only a record of what Sikandar had said he would

31. IAR, Vol.I, 1944, pp.218-220.

carry out.³² Furthermore, he even confessed that he wanted to kill the very name "Unionist" and see its funeral. The dismissal of Shaukat Hayat Khan from the Cabinet by order of the Governor of the Punjab in April that almost coincided with this complete break down of Jinnah's attempt to approach Khizr was also evidently responsible for the current serious deterioration of the provincial political atmosphere.³³ Although the charges made against related to Shaukat's illegal use of official power, the circumstances at this juncture easily led to the interpretation that he had been dismissed because of his disloyalty to the Unionist Ministry.³⁴ For Shaukat, who

32. Ibid., pp.221-222, in this connection, while interviewing Mr. K.H. Khurshid, former personal secretary to Jinnah, I asked some questions about the character of the Pact, but on the contrary, he asked me whether I had seen any 'printed' terms of the pact which were left now, stressing that it was a mere verbal contract, not based on facts(Sic.). He joined Jinnah in 1944 (from my interview at Lahore on July 20,1986).

33. IAR, Vol.I.,1944,pp.223-229.

34. FR for the second half of April 1944.

had just joined the Muslim League through his earlier election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly after getting out of considerable difficulties in obtaining the League ticket, it was in a sense quite timely in order to gain a sort of sympathy and confidence from the League High Command for having made the sacrifice of his position in the interest of the Provincial League.³⁵ The question of

35. Because of the League's reluctance to offer the ticket, Shaukat was disgruntled with the League (IAR, Vol. I, 1944, p. 224). A. Jalal has discussed the League's attitude for the reason of his impertinence, which Jinnah could not accept, while analysing that Shaukat calculated that the League might serve his purpose better than the Unionist Party since it had fewer plausible leaders to do down (Jalal, op.cit., p. 86. f.n. 16).

'rebel' Muslim members of the Legislative Assembly, who might go into opposition, was more and more serious. But on May 28th, this controversy was put to an end with Khizr's expulsion from the membership of the All-India Muslim League.³⁶ Also, the All-India Committee of Action, which at last adopted the resolution endorsing this action of Khizr, made clear their attitude towards the assurance in the Pact of 1937 as a one-sided understanding of Sikandar. Simultaneously, this action led to the setting of the 'genuine' Muslim League Party in the Provincial Assembly, which would sit in opposition to the ruling Unionist coalition. One of the High Commanders of the All-India Muslim League, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan (General Secretary) expressed, in the course of his speech, his great satisfaction at " the end of the seven years of camouflage in the Punjab".³⁷

36. IAR, Vol.I,1944,pp.232-235.

37. Ibid., p.233.

However, the grave state involved in the Unionist-League conflict was not simple an indication of the victory or defeat of one party or another. Essentially, the Leagues' efforts for a short cut to power by ousting Khizr was nothing more than a swell run of their luck, which enabled them to take advantage of the devouring ambition of politically-inexperienced fledgelings representing a new generation of the Unionist wing, and the factionalism within the party. In connection with this, Ali has analysed as follows:-

It is almost certain that Mamdot and his followers gave Jinnah a misleading impression of the amount of support they had.³⁸

38. Ali, op.cit., p.42.

In this context, it may be pointed out that the League was not a party very different from the Unionists whom it replaced. The new Muslim League Parliamentary Party, with the firm class basis of the 'converted Unionists', tried to lay foundation of the organizational advance which were anything but a thorough attempt at undermining the cause of the landed elite in the Punjab. After all they depended on the very same power derived from the economic alignment which had so far supported the provincial politics for decades.

Throughout 1944, even after the breach of May, the struggle between the Leaguers and the Unionists in the Punjab continued on much the same lines as before.³⁹ As things were, the League had not yet made much headway, especially in the rural side, where their attempts to patch up the

39. TOP, Vol. II, No, 671 (Punjab Governor to Wavell), 23/8/44, p.1224.

gap were mainly confined to, according to the Governor's report, "somewhat disjoined" tours by field workers of the Punjab Muslim Student Federation, the distribution of propaganda pamphlets and approaches to the village officials. In so far as the Muslim masses were concerned, they seemed to have little interest of party politics and were more worried about the deterioration in their economic conditions caused by the War.⁴⁰ In order to make the people of the Punjab agitate on religious lines, the League even started at this time to send a number of Maulvis from the United Provinces.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Unionists who took a countermeasure, especially for rural propaganda, with the help of the Zamindar League, appeared to be still in more advantageous position than the League. Because of the unconditional support for the war effort, the Zamindar

40. FR for the first half of July 1944, and TOP, Vol. IV, No. 619 (Punjab Governor to Wavell), 2/8/44, p. 1148.

41. TOP, Vol. IV, No. 541 (Wavell to Amery), 20/7/44, p. 1035.

League could make the best use of National War Front meetings in different districts, where Khizr himself and his colleagues addressed the people with stress on the benefits conferred on the rural population by the legislative and administrative efforts of the Unionist Party.⁴² Also, utilising this opportunity, the Unionists still collected large sums in the cause of the Zamindar League.⁴³

42. FR. for the first half of July 1944.

43. TOP, Vol.IV, No.619, p.1148.

Section 3: New Turn for the Muslim League
and the Simla Conference

The Political situation after the release of Mahatma Gandhi in the summer of 1944 acted as an impetus to lead the League, which had just got some achievement in the Punjab, to a new phase. The Gandhi-Jinnah talks which took place during the month of September 1944 revealed this tendency very clearly. The 'talks' were brought about largely as a result of the continuous efforts of the C. Rajagoparachari, the former Congress Premier of Madras, Rajaji, who did not join the Civil Disobedience movement of the Congress, had been trying to break the deadlock between the Congress and the League over since 1942, by preparing a settlement within the framework of the Lahore Resolution.¹ Although his first resolution to this effect was moved before the All-India Congress Committee during April-May 1942, it was rejected. But he did not give up his idea. It was only after his success in meeting Gandhi, who was released from jail in February 1944 due to his

1. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.169.

fast, that he gave, with Gandhi's endorsement, what is called the Rajaji formula, to Jinnah (April 1944), and the steps for "a final settlement of the most unfortunate impasse"— Rajaji's word—were taken up.² The formula approved by Gandhi had remained with his collaborator for more than a year like a dead secret before it was sent to Jinnah.³ Therefore, Rajaji's contact with Jinnah in the hope that Jinnah would individually take the responsibility of accepting or rejecting it without placing it before the Working Committee of the Muslim League was to be a quite

2. Rajaji discussed with Gandhi in March 1944, and at this time he got Gandhi's blessing to his plans. (Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.169/Ed. by Sherwani, Latif Ahmed, Pakistan Resolution to Pakistan 1940-1947, Karachi, 1969, p.82). As for the quotation from Rajaji's word, see Jafri, op.cit., p.23.
3. Sherwani, op.cit., pp.82-83.

personal negotiation.⁴ Meanwhile, there was another move. This was mainly due to a change in the Indian situation brought about by the final phase of the War. Certain new political and economic developments forced the British to make an almost accurate estimation about the end of the Raj. In this situation, Wavell, who succeeded the former Viceroy in October 1943, came to India with the firm objective that the British should withdraw from India as soon as possible.⁵ But this soldier-Viceroy was simultaneously obsessed with the idea that the importance of India's military affairs would be damaged by 'partition' of the country - and it was this strong desire for a united India that made him prepare a new deal for the Muslim League. As early as July 1944, Gandhi, who got unconditional release from jail on the ostensible grounds of illness, was busy in arranging a favourable

4. Jafri, op.cit., pp.24-26.

5. TOP, Vol.V, Enclosure to No.64, pp.130-133.

situation for indirect edification of wavell, who badly needed the cooperation of the Congress. Although Gandhi's keen approach to Wavell through an intermediary was a move behind Jinnah, he and Wavell failed to reach an agreement in terms of a future national government.⁶ It was during this period of his private contact with the Viceroy that Gandhi expressed a desire for a talk with Jinnah directly.⁷

The political interest of the voiceless public opinion was soon focussed on the new statement of this coming talks between Gandhi and Jinnah for Hindu-Muslim issues. A sort of despair or rage that had been produced as a reaction in the mass mind by Gandhi's acceptance of the Rajaji formula, which by Gandhi's admission and the admission of its author had conceded the substance

6. Sherwani, op.cit., p.83.

7. -do-

of the Lahore Resolution, was now almost turned adrift. Especially, 'nationalist' forces among the Muslims were everywhere becoming stronger when Gandhi's decision to deal with Jinnah on equal terms transformed the scene.⁸ Prior to these talks, the British official side had already forecast with full assurance that nothing tangible was likely to emerge from the negotiations, and they seemed to be rather concerned with the situation that would follow.⁹ A series of meetings and exchange of correspondence under the so-called Gandhi-Jinnah talks began in Bombay on September 9 and lasted until the end of the month. The basis for the talks with the Rajaji formula. The text was as follows :

- (1) Subject to the terms set out as regards the constitution for free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence and will cooperate with the Congress in the formation of a

8. Kabir, op.cit., p.394.

9. TOP. Vol.IV, No.671, p.1233.

provisional interim Government
for the transitional period.

- (2) After the termination of the war, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the North-West and East of India, wherein the Muslim population in the absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants, held on the basis of adults franchise or other practicable Franchise, shall ultimately decide the issue of separation of a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decisions shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of the districts on the border to choose to join either State.
- (3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

- (4) In the event of separation, a mutual agreement shall be entered into for safeguarding Defence, Commerce and Communications and other essential purposes.
- (5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.
- (6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.¹⁰

A close examination of the documents reveals that Gandhi, who claimed to have accepted the basis for the idea of separatism which was contained in the Muslim League Resolution of 1940, did not share the view that the step between what he was prepared to do and what Jinnah wanted him to

10. Sherwani, op.cit., p.74.

do was at all a short one. Also, for Jinnah, who expressed his dissatisfaction against the inconclusive idea of the Rajaji formula, Gandhi could not be a negotiator within his approach. At this stage. Jinnah's difficulties in understanding the formula and Gandhi's similar trouble in regard to the Lahore Resolution came to surface, showing some intricacy.¹¹ For Gandhi, who had already seen that the Lahore Resolution made no reference either to the "two nation theory" or even to "Pakistan", it was impossible to satisfy the 'essential' demand in the Resolution without conceding the truth of the theory or the justification of an entirely separate state. Moreover, as another pitfall, the Resolution did not contain any mention to the process by which the change in the Constitution was to be brought about.¹² After all, the essential demand in the Lahore Resolution was at best that geographically contiguous areas where the Muslims were in a majority should be so grouped together as to constitute

11. As for the letters exchanged between the two leaders, see Jafri, op.cit., pp.52-110.

12. Tribune, 4 October 1944.

independent and autonomous units. There was actually no inconsistency between Gandhi's acceptance of the Rajaji formula, which was said to have contained the substance of the Lahore Resolution, and his refusal to accept the same Resolution in the light of the necessity "to make the arrangement acceptable to the country".¹³ In this context, Gandhi's own formula developed from the Rajaji's added two conditions to the original formula. One is the priority of the complete attainment of India's freedom and the necessity of getting the result of a plebiscite of the entire population of the areas concerned, and the other, the continuation of the matters of common interest between the contracting parties.¹⁴

Meanwhile, it was around this time that the argument was advanced that the so-called Pakistan

13. Jafri, op.cit., pp.109-110.

14. Ibid., pp.94-96.

demand was not without ambiguity. For instance, prior to the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, the Punjab Governor, B. Glancy, hinted at the purpose of the coming talks as relating to this aspect. While reporting the general belief in the Punjab that Gandhi's main idea was to extract from Jinnah a definition of Pakistan, he talked of the effect of the 'vague' Resolution as follows :

It would not seem easy for Jinnah to persuade his followers that any solution would amount to fulfilment of the Pakistan doctrine as commonly preached; the attraction of Pakistan to the uninformed Muslims lies largely in the belief that within a given area it will place him at an advantage as against his non-Muslim neighbour in the matter of personal preferment and material welfare.¹⁵

Other indications are gathered from the Press and even the Gandhi-Jinnah talks (Gandhi's comment). But, what is most noticeable is the

15. TOP, Vol.IV, No.671, p.1224.

attitude of the Muslim League on this matter especially what Jinnah had in mind about this Resolution. According to his Presidential Address to the 30th Session of the Muslim League which met in April 1943, the word 'Pakistan', which was put quite popularly before this resolution was not originally used by the League intentionally, Jinnah said:

I think you will bear me out that when we passed the Lahore Resolution, we had not used the word 'Pakistan'. Who gave us this word? (cries of Hindus) let me tell you it is their fault. They started damning the resolution on the ground that it was Pakistan. They are really ignorant of the Muslim movement. They fathered this word upon us----- The word 'Pakistan' has come to mean the Lahore Resolution. We wanted a word and it was foisted on us.¹⁶

His speech itself did not help to satisfy

16. Ed. by Pirzada, Syed Sharifuddin, Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906-1947 (Vol.II), Karachi, 1970, pp.425-426.

one's desire for an answer to "what is Pakistan", except that Jinnah probably fought shy of explaining it in clear terms. If it be allowed to say that it was circumstances that gave the direction to their demand, the following question would naturally arise; what was the reality of the Hindu-Muslim relations that Jinnah grasped originally, to what extent he thought it possible to influence these, and for that purpose what goal was in his mind. At least, from his above address, it seems without any doubt, that 'Pakistan' had emerged as a definite demand of the League before a clear definition was formed. What must be clearly distinguished is the difference between the demand for 'Pakistan' and the demand for a separate state. Would it be too much to say that the former did not necessarily mean the latter? What Jinnah saw in the use of 'Pakistan' was a kind of convenience to camouflange an unforeseen phase in the development of the League politics, leaving it to the people's upsurge to grow. Also, through the persistent use of this word and without actually saying anything concrete, he seemed to find it convenient to adjust

twelve districts of the Punjab (the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Division, which had no single district with a Muslim Majority, plus the district of Amritsar) would have to be excluded from 'a separate Muslim state' scheme.¹⁸ But, since the Gandhi-Jinnah talks failed to result in an agreement, such a 'threat' receded now. At this stage, what probably happened was that Jinnah used great prudence in selecting a direction out of the two choices, namely 'crude Pakistan' or 'a saner solution'.

A saner solution differed in form. For instance, in the Punjab, the British found that the demand for a separate state did not have much support amongst the Muslim intelligentsia, who might be satisfied with a united India provided that Muslim representation at the Centre was satisfactory increased.¹⁹ Further, we see a similar concern

18. Ibid., p.189.

19. TOP, Vol. IV, No. 671, pp. 1223-1224.

about a 'United India' in the movement of the so-called nationalist Muslims. But in contrast with these 'direct' demands, Jinnah's tactics, probably set in the same direction, had to avoid alluding to a saner essence on purpose in order to heighten his bargaining position. The method he had selected was not a mere compromise through talks, but to have a direct dealing so as to obtain a definite gain in target. In view of this, the dynamism behind a saner solution seems to be the very thing that held the key to the understanding of Jinnah with 'Muslim demand'. This also explains his decision to hold the talks with Gandhi, which had from the outset a poor chance of resulting in an agreement. Perhaps he himself knew that nothing concrete would emerge from them. But, it was Jinnah who snatched something from this opportunity. Gandhi's attempt to try to solve the deadlock with Jinnah itself helped Jinnah to improve his own image and make the Muslim League much more authoritative as a partner of the All-India Party, the Congress.²⁰ All that can be said is that it showed the great tactical and practical judgement of Jinnah. Later,

20. Kabir, op.cit., p.394 and Sayeed, K.B., Formative, p.126.

this 'established' authority was no doubt to enhance the possibility of giving growing shape to the notion of the League as a body representing the Muslim politics at all-India level.

After the failure of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, an attempt for a saner solution found its way under the agreement in the Desai-Liaquat Pact. Keeping up with the opportune step taken by the Viceroy, Wavell, who decided to expand the Executive Council by giving membership to representatives of India's political parties,²¹ the Pact started taking shape towards the end of 1944. The Pact between Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress in the Central Legislature, and Liaquat Ali Khan, the deputy leader of the Muslim League in the Central Legislature, saw the final agreement on the following main lines :

21. The Viceroy's new step towards the independence of India had been already embodied in his correspondence with Gandhi before the talks of September , in TOP, Vol. IV, No. 659 (Wavell to Gandhi), 15/8/44. pp. 1197-99.

- 1) An equal number of persons nominated by the Congress and the League in the Central Executive.
- 2) Representatives of minorities with a view to including them in the coming government.²²

Desai obtained Gandhi's approval for this attempt, Wavell was also in favour of such a plan as it would encourage an interim arrangement in the light of the maintenance of the present united administration and defence system, and got in touch with the British Government. But the failure of Liaquat Ali Khan to have kept Jinnah informed of such an important proposal finally led to abandonment of this approach. According to the verbal evidence of several members of the then Muslim League Working Committee as well as of persons who were very close to Jinnah, at this time, Jinnah expressed his strong dissatisfaction against Liaquat's conduct to try to reduce the power of the President, Jinnah himself,

22. Sherwani, op.cit., pp.84-85.

and disapproved of this attempt by posing to be ignorant about the talks.²³ He further stated that the proposals had been made without any authority from the League. Therefore, Wavell, who was to leave for London in connection with the interim arrangements prepared by the "Indians", was forced to depart without having any endorsement from Jinnah.

The Punjab political situation in the latter half of 1944, after the expulsion of Khizr from the All-India Muslim League was gradually assuming a serious turn but no clear picture of the situation had yet emerged so far as the future of India was concerned, the importance of the Punjab political issue lay in the apprehension that the falling of the province to Jinnah completely, with a breakdown of the Unionist Party, would make 'Pakistan' inevitable. The continuation of the

23. These interviews were conducted by Khalid B. Sayeed, see Sayeed, Formative, p.128.

Unionist Party was, however, not solely a problem of the relative balance of power between the League and the Unionists; it also depended on the understanding of the British officials. Doubtlessly, Khizr's last prop was their remaining support. His strong asset was that the Unionists were the loaylist classes, who had so far helped the war effort for the Government. ²⁴ Therefore, he was confident that the Unionist Party would be able to match all the other parties. But he was at this time quite impatient for the assurance, because of the rapid changing political atmosphere around him. Khizr wrote :-

I ask for the British Government to make a declaration that in deciding the future of India, the enlisted and loyalist classes who have supported the war effort of the United Nations so faithfully and well shall be given an independent voice

24. TOP, Vol.V, Annex (Khizr to James Grigg) to No.108, 18/9/44, p.223.

and that due weight will be given to the views that they express.²⁵

But the preoccupation of the British with the final phase of the war did not allow them to occupy their mind with this affair. Questioning even the claim of the landowners, country gentlemen, and the local leaders of the people to represent by themselves the views of the "loyalists" in the field, who had been an important prop of the power structure of the Raj, the Viceroy's letter addressed to the Governor of the Punjab concluded that :

The real need for Khizr is not to expect his Majesty's Government to do everything for them we obviously cannot at this stage go back on our premises on the excuse that we must fulfil an obligation to "our friends".²⁶

25. Ibid.,p.224.

26. TOP,Vol.V,No.22,20/9/44,pp.44-45.

Early January 1945, the central pillar of the Zamindar League as well as the powerful doyen of the Unionist Party, Chhotu Ram, died. His death at this critical phase was undoubtedly a very severe blow to the Unionist Party. "Blessed" with incompatible political gifts, Chhotu Ram had held the eastern districts of the Punjab against the Congress for many years. Further, the Jats who gathered around him under the Zamindar theory formed an important Eastern Punjab wing of the Unionist Party. But their sharp difference on the selection of their new leader was an indication of a thorny path the Unionists would have to tread during the new year.²⁷

As early as June 1945, the Viceroy's earnest desire for a quick final settlement of the Indo-British relations led the British Government to agree to the release of the Congress leaders, and enabled leaders of all important political

27. TOP, Vol. V, No. 240 (Wavell to Amery), 30/1/45, p. 489. After Chhotu Ram's death, Tikka Ram Chaudhuri of the Rohtak District, who had served as a Parliamentary Secretary in the Unionist Party, became his successor. On this selection, the Jats showed their difference and even the Governor was not enthusiastic about him.

parties in the country to get together in Simla. This conference was to deal with the current dead-lock over the proposal framed by Wavell, who borrowed the idea from the Desai-Liaquat Ali formula. The new proposal provided for equal representation of the Congress and the League on the Viceroy's Executive Council with some seats added to represent the other minorities. The scheme was generally acceptable but soon difficulties arose over the League's claim to nominate all the Muslim members of the proposed government. In fact the attitude of Jinnah representing the League became the main stumbling-block and soon resulted in a dead-end. According to the plan, Wavell was prepared to accept four Muslim Leaguers nominated by Jinnah in the proposed executive council, in addition to the quota of five allotted to the Congress, and one more Muslim as the fifth member outside the League. Wavell's special consideration for Khizr's nominee as the fifth Muslim member was regarded in the Punjab as a safeguard of the loyalist interest, which "was being overlooked in the attempt to reconcile the Congress and the Muslim League, neither of which had contributed to India's war effort".²⁹ As we have already

29. FR for the second half of June 1945.

indicated in connection with wavell's view of the Unionist allies, it was an eventual breakdown of the traditional political system, or we may call it a collapse of a typical local formation of the Raj, though so much effort had been carefully made to sustain the British rule in the Province. Wavell's insistence on the inclusion of a Punjabi Muslim, independent of the League, was a final attempt to make the Raj consistent with a minimum diaster.

As regards Jinnah's insistence on his own claim in the Simla Conference, Hodson says with some sort of irritating feeling :

It is arguable that if the Viceroy had been as adamant as Mr. Jinnah, the latter would have been obliged himself to give in, that the destruction of the Unionist Party, which paved the way for partition of Punjab would have been averted.³⁰

Meanwhile, a contemporary politician, Humayun

30. Hodson, G.V., The Great Divide, London, 1969, p.125.

Kabir, recalls as follows in connection with this problem :

The ~~like~~ likelihood is that if he (wavel) had appointed a central government according to his formula, some of the more moderate in the Muslim League would have challenged Jinnah's leadership and accepted the offer. Jinnah himself may have relented as he was realist and knew when his bluff was called. It is likely that Churchill government was not willing to disappoint Jinnah who had proved an extremely useful ally in the past. It is known that the Conservative party of England had at that time a special liking for the Muslim League and did everything possible to strengthen it, vis-à-vis the Congress.³¹

It would be worth considering from these recollections as regard the truth of the 'unity' of the League under the leadership of Jinnah, and

31. Kabir, op.cit., pp.395-396.

and the national political structure with the growing phase of such a 'unity'. Apart from the goal of Pakistan, which was beyond the scope of the Simla Conference, even in the League Working Committee, there was a minority which was keen to come to an understanding with the Congress.³² Despite their opposition to Khizr's arrangement, it was not averse to the idea of the Congress nominating a Muslim in their quota. The League had so far claimed to be representative of the Muslim community, and in fact grown popular, but in spite of outward appearances and mushroom growth at this stage, its failure to grasp the Muslim majority provinces firmly by forming a League provincial government caused Jinnah's impatience, which later on made him pitch his demands for parity for Muslims.³³ In contrast to the growing separatist tendency sweeping the country, a local press of nationalistic wing was expressing day after day an

32. Menon, V.P., The Transfer of Power in India, Calcutta, 1957, p.214.

33. As to the local Government of the Muslim majority provinces at this time, N.W.R.F. was under a Congress Ministry, Bengal was under section 93, Punjab was still under the Unionist Party, and Sind depended on the Congress support.

uncompromising opposition to the idea of 'Pakistan' state with a strong warning for the Unionists not to ally with a "purely" communal Party.³⁴ Because of being brought upon the principles of the Unionist Party, based on the idea of a balanced link with non-Muslim groups, the Punjabi Muslims, due to withering Unionism, now found themselves forced to decide whether they should have a separate 'Muslim state' in exchange for the 'stability' from the present allies, or as the lesser of the two evils, whether they should actively choose to remain in the same umbrella by denying the possibility of a new state.

34. Tribune, see the editorial column by Kali Nath Roy of 26 September 1945, 28 September 1945 and 3 October 1945.

Chapter II: The Pakistan Demand and the Punjab

Section 1: The Shahidganji Incident and
the Punjab in 1930s

The Punjab in the colonial period was the bureaucracy's stronghold, where big landlords, retired officers, village administrators and rich moneylenders were circumspectly organized through the agency of the Unionist Ministry. But the development of this structure with a large number of the so-called reactionary elements was not directly linked to the absence of the spirit of anti-imperialism or progressive thinking in the Province. The rich tradition which had taken the form of a movement in modern times for social as well as educational reform became later development of the political consciousness of the Punjabis. This political consciousness had interesting sub-regional variations. For example, the influence of the left wing inspired by the Ghadar and the Communist Party, remained confined to the Sikh middle peasantry, specially in the countryside of the Central Punjab and in the towns to the Hindu and Sikh lower middle classes including a small fringe of the industrial working class. On the other hand, the national movement led by the Congress was

essentially confined to the towns and dominated by the Hindu middle classes of East Punjab. But since Punjab was a Muslim majority province, its political fortunes were affected by the disarray in Muslim politics. But even in this division, the radical trend vis-à-vis a reactionary dominance existed with the peculiar shades of the times. Before getting down to an analysis of the development of the Pakistan demand in the Punjab, we will first focus on this aspect for a better understanding of the nature of the provincial politics of 1930s.

The ideological background of the emergence of radical thinking was, roughly speaking, a result of the double reaction against the slack atmosphere of the local politics in the late 1920s and the elite Unionist hegemony over the Province. Here we must take note of the movement of the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam or the Ahrar Party, established in 1929 at Lahore. This was a local Muslim party which gave expression to the feelings of those who had lost hope in both the Congress and the Muslim League, and were radically

opposed to British policies. Although the Ahrar Party, to borrow the words of S.N. Ahmad, disappeared from the Punjab politics as suddenly as it emerged,¹ its popularity among the Muslims in the Punjab had grown tremendously, particularly in the period 1930-35. Because of its short political life, neither the significance of its historical position preceding the movement for Pakistan in the Province, nor the impact it left on the later development of the local politics has been given the importance it deserves. The Ahrar party was an off-shoot of the Non-Cooperation and the Khilafat movements. Its leadership—— Maulana Habibul Rahman, Syed Ataulloh Shah Bukhari, Chaudhry Afzal Haq —— were all Congressmen and Khilafatists. It should be remembered that this movement was basically an urban movement, drawing its support from the lower middle class of the Punjab Muslims including the impoverished artisan

1. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.128.

class.² Because of their strong feelings against the brutal exploitation of alien rule, the Ahrars carried on their work of agitation and propaganda with a remarkable tone of radical socialism.³

The first proof of their claim to be a mass movement was shown through their active participation in the civil disobedience movement in Kashmir in 1931 for the restoration of Muslim rights restricted by the Maharaja. From this point onwards, the popularity of the Ahrars grew gradually among the Muslims. The Ahrars had no lack of speakers, whose oratory influenced many a Muslim youth.⁴ The cities of Rawalpindi and

2. My personal interview with Mr. Safdar Mir, currently a columnist of Dawn (Interview, at Lahore on 19 February, 1987). He was in the left wing prior to the partition, but put a complete stop to his party activity in 1947. He migrated to Pakistan in 1948.

3. -do-

4. Malik, op.cit., p.56.

Sialkot became centres of this movement, and Allama Iqbal and many other Muslim intellectuals wholeheartedly supported its efforts to safeguard the interest of Kashmiri Muslims.⁵

Therefore, in 1935 when Fazl-i-Husain came back to the Punjab on his retirement from a senior Government post to busy himself with organizing the election campaign of the Unionist Party, he had to contend with the rapid growth of the Ahrars among the Muslims. By this time, the Ahrars had began to influence the rural population even in the Muslim belt of the Western Punjab, like Multan, Muzaffargarh, Mianwali, Campbellpur, Gujarat which was traditionally the stronghold of the Unionists.⁶

5. Ibid., pp.56-57.

6. Zaheer, Sajjad, Lights on League-Unionist, Bombay, n.d. (Pakistan Literature Series No.5, Freedom Movement Archives of Karachi University)p.16.

Knowledge of the covert relations between his trustworthy colleagues and the Ahrars disturbed Fazl-i-Husain considerably.⁷ In fact, Muslim political leaders vied with each other in taking off their hats to the Ahrars to make use of their popularity among the Muslim masses.⁸ Furthermore, the loss of the official and nominated block on which the Unionist Party had depended before the new Constitution of 1935 put Fazl-i-Husain to a severe test in the forthcoming elections. Although he was still the most prominent Muslim member of the Party, and was accepted as a leader of the Muslims within the Party, he felt very nervous about the future of the Unionist Party all the more because he was in such a

7. Fazl-i-Husain's Diary dated 1 July 1935, in Diary and Notes of Mian Fazl-i-Husain, ed. by Ahmad, Waheed, Lahore, 1977, p.141.

8. I.H.Malik's interview with A.S. Khurshid at Lahore on May 4, 1983. (Malik, op.cit., p.132).

position. The Ahrars' strength was much talked about in the streets before the elections. This was naturally not liked by Fazl-i-Husain.

The Ahrars gathered strength with one rush in such a short time. On the eve of the elections, the Punjabis were quite confident that the Ahrars, not the Unionists, would lead it.⁹

Consequently the Ahrars became the target of a harsh campaign started by Fazl-i-Husain. Actually, the influence of the Ahrars among the urban Muslims had been already proved in the elections for the Central Legislative Assembly held in 1934.¹⁰ In the case of the Lahore Constituency, Ahrars gained support not only from a large majority for its nomination,

9. My interview with Mr. Safdar Mir.

10. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.129.

but also got help from some dissidents in the Unionist Party who were secretly opposed to FAZl-i-Husain.¹¹

The Shahidganji incident in July 1935 offered a good opportunity to Fazl-i-Husain, who was busy finding fault with his rivals to change the tide which was in favour of the Ahrars. In those days, the Shahidganji Gurdwara near the Lahore station had in the same compound another building which was once a mosque before the construction of the Gurdwara. During the Sikh rule, the Sikhs seized it and built a Gurdwara near it. One day, suddenly the dispute concerning the possession created tension between the Sikhs and the Muslims. According to a former leading member of the Ahrar Party,

11. Ibid., pp.129-130.

The entire trouble was a pre-planned conspiracy of the Unionists against the Ahrars to suppress the movement.¹²

Riots broke out in Lahore and the situation developed to extent to the extent that the Government called out the army. With the provincial elections in sight, the Ahrars were put in a dilemma. They finally decided to hold aloof from the agitation on the basis of the belief that there would be blood-shed if the Muslims and the Sikhs fought over the issue.¹³ But most people thought that the

12. My personal interview with Mr. Mirza Ghulam Nabi Janbaz, a former Ahrar, at Lahore, on 11 March, 1987. Mr. Janbaz, known as a Urdu revolutionary poet, visited India in 1986 for the first time after the partition to receive the honour from the Freedom Fighters' Committee of Delhi. Speaking at the reception, he said, "In my own way I am protesting against the rewriting of history in Pakistan." This remarks is sufficiently revealing of his current attitude against the Government of Pakistan.

Ahrars did not participate in the agitation for fear of an upset of the election plans, likely to be caused by arrest of their leaders.¹⁴

On the other hand, the advantageous position of the Unionist Party, with some of the members victimised in jail, was quite striking at this time. It had succeeded in lowering the prestige of the Majlis-i-Ahrar in the eyes of the public. Speaking at the public meeting held on July 14 outside Mochi Gate of Lahore, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, later sent to jail himself, said that despite great efforts to bring the Ahrar leaders to the assemblage because of the solidarity of Muslims, they had refused to come.¹⁵ Some other Unionist leaders associated with him also made fiery speeches from the same platform to incite the crowd, but all of them were soon detained and disappeared

14. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.134.

from the scene. Their accusation that the Ahrars had deserted the 'Muslim cause' was, however, very effective. It was only after this incident that strong communal trend emerged in Punjab politics. Simultaneously,

..... the sentiment of the people were left to the slogan-mongering of irresponsible people. The result was that Muslims laid their chests bare to receive the bullets of the British army. They received these bullets but to no avail as they retreated to defeat.¹⁶

The Shahidganji judgement day dawned at Lahore on 25 May, 1936 with batches of policemen moving out of the police stations to take up duties as pickets in the dangerous

zones of the city.¹⁷ The Muslim case for the 'mosque' was rejected by the Lahore District Judge and the decision against the Muslims was greatly resented by them. The agitation continued, and the Government refused to release the detainees. Fazl-i-Husain of the Unionist Party asked the Government to resume the policy of holding the balance even, and not showing favour to one community at the expense of the other.¹⁸ Also he asked the Government to repudiate unequivocally the rumours that communal trouble was not unwelcome to the official world.¹⁹ Prior to this judgement, while analysing the political situation which had culminated in the Shahidganji affair, Fazl-i-Husain wrote to Nawab Muzaffar Khan:

17. IAR, Vol.I,1936,pp.337-340 (see the judgement also in this part).

18. Husain, op.cit.,p.293.

19. -do-

The position was, though one of the tension, still quite sound up till 1932. The Communal Award was taken up by the Hindus and the Sikhs in the Punjab for agitation against the Muslims and the Government. This agitation was allowed to proceed and became intense and in the course of it threats of defiance of law, breach of peace and bloods shed were hurled about. The Muslims were on the defensive and during the last three years it appears that the policy of Government had been to do everything appease the Hindus and the Sikhs, probably because Government felt that, as the Hindus and Sikhs were already very sore on account of the Communal Award, every effort should be made to please them; in keeping with this policy the treatment meted out to Muslims was one of indifference and possibly, in some cases, of

injustice.²⁰

Fazl-i-Husain expired in 1937 without seeing the settlement of the dispute, which continued till 1940. Through this incident his protest apparently meant a fight for the Muslims. As long as his political approach originated in this line, the issue of the Muslim community was not seriously actualized as a cause of communal disharmony, ironically in the very context of the Unionist politics. Pressure from the Muslims as a majority community played a certain role in sustaining the 'defense mechanism' for the community. Besides this, Fazl's skillful tactics camouflaged many contradictions in the 'Unionism' told of his politics. It was only after Fazl-i-Husain's death that a complicated confrontation regarding the position of the

20. Fazl-i-Husain's letter dated September 21, 1935, in Ibid., p.292.

'Muslims' took place. This was not due to a recession of the Party spirit caused by the death of Fazl, but rather, we may say, due to his successor's strong support of the 'orthodox' Unionism and his excessive loyalty to the original principle which went beyond the founder's intention. Sikandar's term of office, in which he got involved in all-India politics, willingly or not, has to be analysed from this angle.

As soon as Sikandar assumed office, what became dominant in the provincial politics was the clash between this new Unionist leader and the so-called veteran Muslim Leaguers in the Province like Iqbal, Barkat Ali, and Ghazanfar Ali Khan. In addition to this, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League reorganised by Iqbal had been strained since May 1936, when the difference between the All-India League and this provincial counterpart emerged in connection with the latter's affiliation to

the former (to be discussed in the next section in detail). Although the Provincial League was to be reorganized again under Sikandar (for the details, see Section 1 of Chapter 1), it was during this critical period that the Shahidganji dispute came to have a link with all-India Muslim Politics beyond the Punjab. Even after the judgement in 1936, the provincial Leaguers, who did not agree with the Ahrar stand, got continuously involved in the movement for the restoration of the 'mosque'. Barkat Ali's extraordinary efforts to take up the issue in the Provincial Assembly, commonly known as the Punjab Mosque Protection Bill, which had been already brought up when Iqbal was alive, had a double meaning in the context of the provincial politics in those days.²¹

21. Ikram, S.M., Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan, Lahore, 1970, pp.255-258.

Faced with Sikandar's persistent efforts, unlike Fazl-i-Husain's stand, to avoid friction with other communities of the Province, Barkat Ali was to have a long history of personal animosity with Sikandar.²² Basically, the crisis lay in Barkat Ali's intense hatred against the elite leadership of the Unionists which dominated in the Province. Therefore, as S.M. Ikram observes, Barkat Ali's attempt to secure the restoration of the 'mosque' at Shahidganji could be interpreted in a different light, that is, his highest priority in the motion was in the dislodgement of the Unionist Ministry from power.²³ Had he succeeded in getting the Punjab Mosque Protection Bill passed, naturally the position of Sikandar, who was fighting shy of the apparent protection in favour of one community, would have been weakened.

22. Among the Barkat Ali's Files (mainly F.No.215&F.No.1091) of QAP are a number of letters addressed to Jinnah which reveal this.

23. Ikram, op.cit., p.256.

In January 1938, Barkat Ali, who attended a meeting of the Muslim League Council held at New Delhi, made clear this attitude by emphasizing the nuisance of the thick and uncomfortable ' Unionist Veil' which covered the Punjab Provincial Muslim League.²⁴

A month later, however, the special Shahidganji Session of the All-India Muslim League held at Calcutta expressed great sympathy with Sikandar, who firmly then believed that the repossession of the 'mosque' was possible only through a mutual compromise between the Sikhs and the Muslims.²⁵ Meanwhile, Sikandar, who was at that time almost ready to resign, was induced to stay in office with grant of full power directly from the

24. Ed. by Afzal, M. Rafique, Malik Barkat Ali His Life and Writings, Lahore, 1969, pp.87-90.

25. My interview with Mr. Janbaz.

All-India Muslim League to settle the problem.²⁶ Most probably the provincial Leaguers led by Barkat Ali must have been disappointed at this resolution. The great consideration of the All-India Muslim League for the position of Sikandar revealed that the Punjab politics reached a new stage where the provincial affairs came within a strategic range of all-India politics.

A few years after the sudden occurrence of the incident, the Ahrars had already got split up into two sections — one led by Maulana Habib-ur-Rahman and M. Daud Ghaznavi, who decided to offer civil disobedience from the Congress platform (Congress sympathizers), and the other led by M. Mazhar Ali Azhar and Chaudhuri Afzal Huq, who supported the view that Muslims should retain their separate entity and manifested pro-Muslim League

26. Pirzada, op.cit., pp.296-299.

sympathies (League sympathizers).²⁷ It is not clear what course the latter section was later to choose in the face of the Pakistan demand. According to Mr. Janbaz,

The Ahrars did not believe in the division of the Nation from the beginning.²⁸

As for the League sympathizers' response to Muslim separatism, Mathur has deduced from the remark of Mazhar Ali Azhar at the All-India Ahrar Conference in August 1941 that it basically originated in a simple demand for full protection of the rights of the Muslims in the future constitution of India, and that only in this respect they must have shared something in common

27. Mathur, Y.B., Muslims and Changing India, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 116-117.

28. My interview.

with the Muslim Leaguers.²⁹

Here we notice that Fazl-i-Husain, who had a similar political position fought the battle for the 'Muslim' demand in the context of Unionist politics. Under his programme, adequate Muslim protection in the Muslim majority province could be secured only by gaining the confidence and faith of other non-Muslim communities.³⁰ Meanwhile, combining economic grievances with religious passion, the Ahrars' militant policy, akin to some sort of radical socialism, attracted the finest fighters among the Muslim political workers. Their original message was that economic and social inequalities of the Muslims could be removed only after they had attained independence, but with the cooperation of the Hindus. Deeply suspicious of the League as an organization of the reactionaries and the bourgeoisie,³¹ they sought the

29. Mathur, op.cit., p.117.

30. Husain, op.cit., pp.272-273.

31. Kabir, 1906-47, p.36.

substance of the 'Muslim' demand in the battle for freedom with further economic implications. In the early 1940s, the Muslim League of Jinnah succeeded in this battle for the minds of 'Muslims'. It decided to serve the Muslims of the Sub-continent by showing them quite openly the trump card of an 'independent nation' and started the 'Pakistan movement' which soon swept this Province. At this stage, the solution of the so-called 'Muslim issue', which was partly out of Indians' hands; the League brought a new technique in politics to obtain a maximum gain for the Muslims by a single effort of bargaining with the British and the Congress. If the substance of the 'Pakistan demand' could be defined in a certain tradition of the Muslim politics of the Province, the position of Jinnah as a sole spokesman of 'Pakistan' does not seem to be so unique. In this context, the battle for the 'substance' appears to have already got to the heart of the provincial politics under another form even before the Pakistan movement.

Because of the absence of most of the Congress sympathizers in the later stage of the political development by reason of their imprisonment, the majority of the Ahrars were, by the close of 1941, forced to swing over to the 'Muslim side', with no leaders to guide them.³² In the Shahidganji incident, the Ahrars tried to avoid the communal issue. But, ironically, this choice terminated their political influence over the Punjab Muslims. Consequently, the semi-communal attitude represented by Fazl-i-Husain gained a chance of ephemeral survival, and the later development of the dispute paved the way for the strategy of Jinnah quite advantageously, in the growing communal atmosphere.

The Ahrars have been criticized on various grounds. " Because of their inability to organize the Punjabi Muslims on the basis

32. Mathur, op.cit., p.117.

of any definite democratic programme containing their positive demands; because of their use of religion as a demagogic weapon; because of the rank opportunism of some of its leaders," said Sajjad Zaheer, a well known left leader, "this party containing some of the bravest anti-imperialist Muslim workers of the Punjab, could not perform the task of uniting the Muslim people on a progressive basis, could not achieve the unity of the Muslim and non-Muslim Punjabis, could not withstand the onslaught of imperialist bureaucracy and its Unionist henchmen."³³ But because of their strong stand for complete independence, they showed the people a particular style of political activity. To be anti-government, to sing songs and shout slogans of sedition and rebellion was the remarkable fashion of their young party-men.³⁴

33. Zaheer, op.cit., p.17. The author became the first Central Secretary of the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP).

34. Mathur, op.cit., p.118.

Furthermore, to threaten the Government was the great ambition of their children.³⁵ The spirit of the Ahrars, once admired by the masses but now ridiculed and abused in the streets, was however later to come to life again. Mr. Mir recollects that :

The youth or sons of the members of the Ahrars did not find it difficult to get a way out even after the disruption of the Party. Later, among the student forces which came to respond to the 'call' of the Muslim League we saw many Ahrar ranks who were cut off from the former Majlis-i-Ahrar.³⁶

Why was the student wing in the Punjab so active in the movement for the Pakistan demand? The above recollection provides at least one answer to this question.

35. -do-

36. My interview.

After the Ahrars' exist the political situation in Punjab reverted to what it was before their emergence—— the dominance of the feudal force in every sphere of life, the chronic disarray in the political field and the limited effect of the politically radical trends, accompanies by the existence of an immense bulk of the people who remained untouched by the wave.

Section 2: The Provincial League,
Student Federation, and
'Pakistan'

When Jinnah started revitalizing and reorganizing the Muslim League in early 1936, in the Punjab the general mood of the people was not in favour of allowing an urban politician like Jinnah to disturb provincial affairs. In addition to this, it was quite well known that the Muslim League's performance in the Punjab in the provincial elections of 1937 was extremely poor. But on the eve of the Lucknow Session of the All-India Muslim League in October 1937, Jinnah succeeded in taking some initial steps to make the best of these adverse circumstances. By this time, the Unionist politics of the Punjab had reached a new stage with the termination of the founder's period, as we have already seen. The Sikandar-Jinnah Pact was no doubt part of Jinnah's overall strategy. The Pact and its follow-up generated keen controversy. In exchange

for his generous consideration in this matter, Sikandar was authorised by the All-India Muslim League to reorganize the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, which had been already 'reorganised' in 1936 under Iqbal. But, the provincial Muslim Leaguers, who saw the Unionists' uncooperative attitude towards the League very closely at hand, these special concessions to Sikandar were a cause of annoyance. Therefore lots of complaints were continually sent to the office of the Central League in connection with the Pact.¹ It was coincidentally around this period that the Shahidganji controversy began to grow rapidly and Barkat Ali, a leading figure of Iqbal's group, showed his eagerness for restoration of the 'mosque' by introducing a Bill in the Assembly.

1. See Rasul, Ghulam, The Punjab Provincial Muslim League Its Past and Present, n.d. and QAP, F.No.215, pp.16-19 & pp.34-39, F.No.865, p.342 etc.

According to Ghulam Rasul, Honorary Secretary of the Provincial Muslim League (Iqbal group), the League High Commands, especially Jinnah, while knowing that the dissension between the Iqbal wing and the Unionists was getting serious, tried to request those who were opposed to the "bogus" representatives of the Provincial League not to make it open to the public.² Jinnah was no doubt in a hurry but simultaneously with great patience, to take firm hold in the Punjab. He was after all a strategist in view of his political choice. Jinnah's emergence on the national scene of the Muslim politics was apparently the result of two major conditions; that is, the atmosphere of heightened communal antagonism and the imminent implementation of the federal part of the Government of India Act 1935. Under these circumstances, the various political concerns among the Indian Muslims made the emergence of this politician,

2. Rasul, op.cit., pp.17-18.

in each political context, inevitable.

Some were eager to obtain a national affiliation through the special measures of the Act to fight effectively against the politics of the Congress. Therefore, they ventured on the chance of a 'League' with a complete change under a new Commander. The others began to look for a leader who could guide them independent of the class interest in the region for the sake of the 'fair' communal gains. The former reaction was typical of the leaders of the Muslim minority provinces, and the latter, of the leaders of the 'non-dominant' Muslim groups in the Muslim majority provinces.

This latter's case was to trace a somewhat complicated course in the face of the challenge from the dominant groups. The leaders of the 'dominant' Muslim groups, in Muslim majority provinces like Punjab came humbly to Jinnah and unwillingly acknowledged the League's hegemony over them. Despite the oft-repeated

protests from the provincial Leaguers, Jinnah guessed their confidence in him, and probably his own importance in the new turn of the Muslim politics in India.

For Jinnah, who wanted total support of Muslims from this Province, the support he could muster at first was, in spite of the enthusiasm, still limited to a handful of urban intellectuals, whose interest was completely in opposition to that of the rural magnates. In this situation, real cooperation between the two was hardly possible, but a facade of a common political organization was kept up thanks to the Pact. While commanding the Unionist Party, Sikandar under the Pact also had to represent the interest of the League quite ingeniously on the important scene of the All-India Muslim League Meetins, including Lahore Session of the League in 1940. Although no solid strength of the Muslim League was built up in the Province, Sikandar's double play saved the appearance of

some importance of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League in the all-India sphere. But this condition did not last long. As we have seen in the earlier chapter, as soon as Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana took the position of the Punjab Premier in 1943, he overtly put an end to the notorious game of being nominally a member of the Muslim League. From this stage started a direct clash between the Punjab Muslim League and the Khizr regime. It was only after this stage that the 'Pakistan movement' in the Punjab, conducted by the League alone, came to the surface. But by this time the nature of the Provincial League had totally changed with the 'voluntary' shifting of the prominent members from the Unionist wing.

In this Province, even before the serious confrontation between the League and the Unionists took place, another organization

of considerable importance for the cause of 'Pakistan' besides the League, had come into existence. Amongst the first to welcome the formation of this body, namely the Punjab Muslim Student Federation (hereafter, the PMSF) were those who loathed the Unionists-dominated platform of the Provincial League. The Federation born in the autumn of 1937 was a Muslim students' organisation which purposely broke away from the All-India Student's Federation as an ally of the Congress.³ Similar bodies were formed simultaneously in Bengal, the U.P., and Bihar.⁴ In the case of the Punjab, first a provincial body named the Punjab Students' Union, and its Lahore branches, the Lahore Students' Union had very few Muslims on their rolls, most of whom owed allegiance to the Communist-Party of India.⁵ After the lapse of a few years which saw the formation of an Inter

3. Zaman, Mukhtar, Students' Role in the Pakistan Movement, Karachi, 1978, p.193.

4. Ibid., p.59.

5. Ibid., pp.193-194.

Collegiate of Muslim Brotherhood with still limited membership, the proposal for the establishment of the Federation was mooted in August 1937.⁶ In this connection the daily Inqilab played an important role by publishing some articles written by Muslim students.⁷ Despite active opposition from their Hindu counterparts, the response from the Muslim students was so overwhelming that the Federation came into existence earlier than the scheduled date, in September 1937.⁸ Although the PMSF was to later play a primary role in the Muslim League politics in the Province, it was originally a separate body, as the above process of its emergence shows, which officially joined the League only some months prior to the Lahore Session (1940).⁹ The Federation inspired by the ideal of Iqbal, and taking note of the pamphlets of Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, was later to decide to incorporate in the first Constitution

7. Ikram, op.cit., pp.261-262.

8. Ibid., p.262.

9. Zaman, op.cit., p.203.

some very significant provisions; " the establishment of a Muslim National State in the North-West of India comprising Punjab, N.W.F.P., Sind, Baluchistan and Kashmir.. " became henceforth the Federation's goal.¹⁰ The association of Hameed Nizami, President of the newly founded Federation, was an important source of strength in this student movement, for he was Secretary of the Islamia College (Lohore) Union, and the Federation was not only established but also sustained, mainly by the students from the College.¹¹

The Federation supported the League, but here in the Punjab, as the League was politically ineffective for a considerable period due to the inner confrontation,

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10. Compiled and edited by Mirza, Sarfaraz Hussain, The Punjab Muslim Students Federation An Annotated Documentary Survey 1937-1947, Lahore, 1978, p. Fix.
11. Ikram, op.cit., p. 262.

especially after the Pact, the PMSF, which could provide an 'asylum' for those who were severely against the Unionists' hegemony, unintentionally performed the functions of the League free from the Unionist influence. But from the outset the PMSF was not necessarily a mouthpiece of the Provincial League. Rather it seems to have approached Punjab Politics by and large critically. The most deplorable stage of provincial politics at this time is conveyed in the letter addressed to Jinnah by a member of the Federation as follows :-

...We have no political body at our back. Even the Provincial Muslim League does not exist. If there were strong Provincial League in our Provincial, it would have been a source of great support for us. We have great respect for Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, President of the

Organisizing Committee,¹² but with great request we beg to say that he has not taken any step to organize League in the Punjab.

Now let me tell you something about the other groups of Muslim League led by Malik Barkat Ali, M.L.A. , Mr Ghulam Rasu, Barrister (Secretary of Organising Committee), a member of Barkat Ali's group is a very irresponsible man. In fact he does not like the League to exist..... I should quote his words.

" We don't want to support that League consist of Jinnah and Sikandar. In fact we don't like to support Sectarian Organization. If Mr. Jinnah decides against me (in Patna), we shall all resign and join Congress",

I am a no-party man, but I have the liberty to ask you whether such men can run

12. This was appointed by Jinnah in April, 1938 for the reorganization of the Provincial Muslim League.

Muslim League. I have also to blame Sir Sikandar for his indifference to the League organisational work.



Under such circumstances, to support the cause of League is very difficult.¹³

The role of the PMSF was a many sided one. Especially, after the 1940 Lahore Session, a number of Conferences arranged by PMST took up the problems relating to the safeguard of the rights and interests of the student community, together with the popularizing the 'Pakistan' scheme. The Federation made a good beginning with provincial tours conducted by some dedicated leaders during 1937-1938.¹⁴ Next year, some of the workers, among whom

13. Letter of Abduls Salam Khurshid, General Secretary of the PMSF, dated 3 February, 1937, in Mirza, op.cit., pp.8-9.

14. Ikram, op.cit., p.262.

Mohammad Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi was prominent, took up the propagation of the Khilafat-i- Pakistan ideal, which revealed the expansion of the original 'Muslim Home Land' scheme into the other area of Northern-India, and gave an impetus to the youth movement.¹⁵ The special Pakistan session, held in Islamia College grounds in March 1941, marked an epoch in the history of the Federation. It was not only because Jinnah, who had so far had a formal soft corner for them, presided over the session, but because he began to see in this students' body, and set about reorganising the body into more broad based one. When viewed in a long perspective, it seem to have meant that Jinnah had found through this special consideration a way out of the Unionists' game by this time. Probably he must have reached the conclusion that the problem would not work by itself. Consequently, he decided non-student President for the Federation. For this post, Jinnah named Mian Bashir

15. Ibid., pp.262-263.

Ahmad, a devoted Muslim Leaguer, who had commanded general respect in the Province for his literary achievements.¹⁶ In fact, from this time to 1944 when Khizr was ousted from the All-India Muslim League, Jinnah was to provide the Federation special care in the battle for the cause of 'Pakistan.

16. He became the fourth President after Hameed Nizami (1937), Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi(1938-39) and Mirza Abdul Hamid (1940-41). He belonged to the well-known Baghbanpura family of Lahore, specially made a notable contribution to the growth and development of Urdu literature and journalism. Later, he was appointed a member of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League in 1942, which office he continued to hold till 1947 (see, compiled by Ahmad, Jamil-ud-Din, Quaid-e-Azam as seen by His Contemporaries, Lahore, 1996, p.13).

Moreover, this special session passed an important resolution for the establishment of a Pakistan Rural Propaganda Committee for the rural areas of the Province.¹⁷ The Committee inaugurated its programme during the summer vacation of the year.¹⁸ It organised an extensive campaign in order to carry the message of the League to the masses in the rural areas. The Committee toured, particularly those district and towns where there was no branch of the Provincial League. They, thus, visited Sheikhupura, Rawalpindi, Jullundur, Sailkot, Gujarat, Rohtak, and Lyallpur for this purpose.¹⁹ Later, in Lyallpur, where we were to see one of the most active branches, two conferences—— the Punjab Muslim Educational Conference and the Lyallpur Pakistan Conference —— were presided over respectively by Haji Sir Abdullah

17. Mirza, op.cit., p.lxv.

18. Ibid.

19. -do-

Haroon and Barkat Ali during 1941-42.²⁰

In the former conference the Chairman drew a graphic picture of the circumstances in which the Muslim Youth were placed.²¹

Advising the students, Haroon emphasized the youngsters' future responsibilities:

During vacations, you should enter village on foot and carry to your people there the message of hope and courage. Remember that the Indian Moslems have now come to live in two water-tight compartments; there are those who live in cities and there are those who are scattered in the villages, both cut off and isolated from each other the two must now come together, and the only bond that can bring and tie them together is the bond of mutual intercourse, service, and sympathy. There are various ways in which you can serve them. Teach them the Rules of healthy living; help them if they are victims of the inequality of the village official, treat them if they are

20. Ibid., p. liv.

victims of the inequality of the village official, treat them if they are sick; impart to them first hand information regarding the changes which are setting into the world situation from time to time; give them hints as to how they should exercise their franchise; prepare a report about the affairs and problems of each village you visit and have it published in Press in order to attract great attention.²²

After five months, Lyallpur again saw a campaign organized by the Muslim Youth of the Lyallpur branch. But this time the meeting developed trouble at the outset. The League President, Sikandar called a meeting at the same venue immediately prior to the Federation's meeting, and posed the question—"which Pakistan you mean or want?"²³

22. ~~do-~~

23. IAR, Vol. II, 1941, pp. 232-233.

Later, Barkat Ali came to Lyallpur to preside over another meeting under the emergent decision of the Working Committee of the PMSF. On the subject of Pakistan he attacked Sikandar furiously :

The foes of Pakistan and some others amongst our own camp, who want to win cheap popularity at the hands of our Hindu countrymen to whom Pakistan is at the moment a sort of poison cup, have spread so many false-hoods about Pakistan that it is necessary at the outset to give a true historical retrospect of the events that have led to and have culminated in the demand for Pakistan...²⁴

He strongly denied any vagueness in the demand for 'Pakistan'. Iqbal had put forward

24. Ibid., p.225.

a scheme in 1930 and also expressed his view at the Third Round Table Conference. Rehmat Ali, a follower and ardent admirer of Iqbal, further elaborated his plan. But Barkat Ali said :

(It was) the Pakistan as envisaged in the League resolution... And if Sir Sikandar wants an answer to his posers I can tell him that the only Pakistan now before us is the League Pakistan and that Pakistan alone.²⁵

The working of the PMSF was not without bitter internal conflicts, troubles, and long periods of inactivity (its members were most active during summer vacation and other holidays.²⁶ But till the Provincial

25. Ibid., p.233.

26. Ikram, op.cit., p.264.

Muslim League became active in 1944, it was the Federation which was in the forefront of provincial politics. This did not necessarily became clear to the public. Because of the presence of the Unionist elements in the provincial League for reasons carefully calculated by Jinnah, ironically the League could not function under the very name of it. On the other hand, the Student Federation could hurry on their way, rather more freely and thoroughly than the League, without any restrictions. Ameen Tareen, a prominent leader of the PMSF, recalls :

Although we had very good relations and understnading with Muslim League leaders in the Punjab, we did not feel happy over the slow speed of their work and it was a cause of constant irritation and frustration for us.²⁷

27. Zaman, op.cit., p.66.

The nicknames "Pantaloons" and "Pajamas" represented two types of workers distinguished by their manner of work and approach and also by their dress.²⁸ The "Pantaloon" group was considered more progressive while the "Pajama" group was presumably old fashioned.²⁹

An extremely arduous task confronted Bashir Ahmad, a Leaguer and President of the PMSF during 1941-42. Faced with an enthusiastic Muslim Youth, the President who had to play both ends from the particular angle found great difficulty in supervising the organisation. Through out his term as the President, Bashir Ahmad took a prudent attitude in the Federation with the basic intention of making the students League-minded, not political minded.³⁰ It is, however, fair to say that the youth wing gradually acquired excessive strength beyond his control.³¹ As a provincial Leaguer, who

28. -do-

29. -do-

30. QAP, F.No.197, p.44. Bashir Ahmad's letter to Jinnah (18/12/41).

31. QAP, F.No.197, pp.49-50, Bashir Ahmad's letter to Jinnah (12/1/42).

was indignant at the then Working Committee of the 'League', he strongly believed that the primary work of the League had to be rooted in tearing down the whole structure which enabled the feudal lords to dominate provincial affairs. Bashir Ahmad wrote to Jinnah :

What a laughing stock of every body the Muslim league has become as far as this Province is concerned. All the gallant Knights and Nawabs and Khan Bahadurs of its Working Committee seem to think that their very existence in the world of politics depends upon their hanging on the lapel of Sir Sikandar's coat for all they are worth..³²

The dimension of the so-called Pakistan movement in this Province could be attributed

32. QAP, F.No.197, p.3, Bashir Ahmad's letter to Jinnah (24/6/40).

to its centrifugal force. It could simultaneously indicate some solutions for the various provincial issues. The League in this Province, which mainly consisted of the urban intellectuals, was certainly given a chance to silence the Unionist guns by this movement. On the other hand, the PMSF, which came out as a response to the communal crack in the all-India as well as provincial politics, and most of the whose members were from urban middle class families, established a foothold in the movement by diffusing ideas of Muslim nationalism. The two political aspirations were a lethal combination in the peculiar circumstances of the Province. The reactionary element too hurriedly prepared for the change around them, which was not inconsistent with the external appearances of the movement. Talking of the rich Zamindars in the League, Ameen Tareen of the PMSF says:

They were rather hesitant to move around, because the weather for them was either too cold or to hot! ... ultimately the student

readers took it upon themselves
to move around the Province
individually or in groups.³³

This recollection evidences the complicated character of this movement.

Looking back at the second half of the decade of the 1930s, Shabbir Hussain says that it was during those five or six years that some of the finest poets, writers, orators, and freedom fighters were produced by "an institution which was considered by moneyed and west-oriented dandyish people as a dumping place of mediocres, both financially as well as intellectually, and not wholly unjustifiably."³⁴ Islamia College Lahore provided the right climate for the new force to bloom in full as its relation to the youth movement shown.

33. Zaman, op.cit., p.66.

34. The Nation (Lahore), February 27, 1987,

In those later years of the 1930s there were already students who worked for the Khaksar and Ahrar movements. But the PMSF was later to get more powerful, especially after 1940, by developing close links with Muslim politics at all-India level. The year 1942 was something of land-mark in the life of a student from this College——Hameed Nizami, who had been connected with the Federation from its inception. Not only was he elected President again after Bashir Ahmad withdrew in favour of Nizami, but he was also able to convert into a weekly the newspaper with which his name was associated.³⁵ The weekly Nawa-i-Waqt, whose editorial responsibility was basically Nizami's, had two objectives——promotion of Urdu and popularization of the message of Iqbal.³⁶ The latter objective made the newspaper a doughty champion for the cause of Pakistan.

35. Ikram, op.cit., pp.264-265.

36. Ibid., p.266.

As early as November 1942, when the paper became a weekly, youngmen were already applying pressure on Sikandar Hayat through the paper.³⁷ Hameed Nizami was barely twenty-nine when he became the editor of the daily Nawa-i-Waqt. The story of how it became a daily was quite significantly connected with the political scene of the Province in those days. In the Punjab, the movement in favour of the Muslim League and 'Pakistan' was given an impetus in 1944 with the expulsion of Khizr from the All-India Muslim League. It was only on the morning following the night when Khizr was expelled that Jinnah sent for Nizami, the then editor of the weekly Nawa-i-Waqt.³⁸ Jinnah, who strongly desired a daily to project the view point of the Muslim League, asked Nizami to change his paper into a daily for this work.³⁹

37. -do-

38. -do-

39. -do-

It is often said that Nizami's greatest contribution came through the newspaper, which became the spokesman of the All-India Muslim League. But his commitment to the Pakistan movement can not be so easily simplified.

In the middle of the year 1943, the PMSF under Nizami was given an extraordinary boost by Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, who generously took into account the work done by the Student Federation. Out of the Punjab League's quota, 12 nominees to the All-India Muslim League Council seats, became members of the Federation.⁴⁰ It was the Council meeting of the All-India Muslim League that Nizami, on behalf of the Federation

40. Mirza, op.cit., psviii, Those nominated to represent the Student Federation were Abdul Hameed Nizami, Sayyid Qasim Rizvi, Raja Iftikhar-ullah, Yahya Bakhtiar, Shiekh Hamid Mahmud, Ilyas Masood, Zia-ul-Islam, Ameen Tareen and others.

expressed disenchantment with the Muslim League leadership. His attack was directed against the nomination of Liaquat Ali Khan to the office of the General Secretary of the League. In this connection, he later confessed to Jinnah that his outburst was the result of a desire to seek guidance in field of action.⁴¹ He strongly condemned the "masterly inactivity and in-action" as a short-coming of Liaquat for nearly thirty minutes in spite of the awe of Jinnah's personality.

Having enjoyed the fullest confidence of Jinnah from an early stage, he was actually an active helpmate of Jinnah.⁴³ But in contrast

41. Hameed Nizami's letter to Jinnah(2/12/43), in Ibid., pp.89-90.

42. Ibid., p.six, and p 90.

43. The Nation(=op.cit.), see "Nizami-an evaluation" by Mohammad Shafi.

to Jinnah, who was basically a calculating political strategist to the extent that he could even make a compromise with any wing and probably any situation if there is a need, Nizami was inspired by Iqbal's idealism. (as regards Iqbal's idea, see Chap.III, Section 1-c-), under which he seemed to try to approach the movement as perfectly as possible, eliminating anything incoherent in his own creed.⁴⁴ Here we see another form of battle for 'Pakistan'. His indignation at the Provincial League leaders also continued in this context.⁴⁵ After Nazami's critical remark at the Council meeting, Jinnah could not tell this comrade anything more than that everyone had the right to express his views on the question.⁴⁶ Presumably in such a short period of time which saw the upsurge of the Pakistan demand,

44. cf. Ikram's analysis in his book, op.cit.

45. See Nizami's criticism against Mamdot, in Mirza, op.cit., pp.90-92.

46. Ibid., p.six.

The different motivations of those who took part in the movement were subtly intricate in a single blueprint for 'Pakistan'. One slogan could simultaneously share some idea whose inspiration was indispensable to the vitality of other slogans. Pakistan or what they took Pakistan to be depended upon each goal set separately, rather than something concrete aimed at unanimously.

With the successful expulsion of Khizr, mainly due to the factionalism among the Unionists, the League was firmly brought under the control of the new generation of the rural magnates who had, by this time, completely thrown off the Unionist label. But till the latter half of 1944, a series of letters which contained the dissatisfaction at the noble brand 'Unionist-cum-Leaguers' were sent to Jinnah from the various district leaders of the Punjab Muslim

League.⁴⁷ In this connection, Jinnah, making ambiguous statements about landlords, did not committ himself. In fact, while saying that landlords had to adjust themselves to the new conditions, and that there was something profoundly immoral about landlordism,⁴⁸ he told the people that the League was not against any

47 QAP,F.No.1101,pp.156-160,Two Letters of Hameed Ahmad to Jinnah from Sargodha (18/7/43,14/8/43),QAP,F.No.579,pp.46-49 and pp64-65,Two letters of Khan Rabb Navaz Khan to Jinnah from Kasur (25/3/44, 7/12/43), and QAP,F.No.1092,pp.251-254, Letter of Khan Bahadur Nawab Sir Makhdum Murid Hussain Qureshi to Jinnah from Multan (16/7/44).

48. The Eastern Times, April 28,1943 and July 9, 1943, in The Eastern Times of Quaid-i-Azam, compiled by Saeed, Ahmad, Islamabad, 1983,pp.57-59 and p.91.

interests among the Muslims.⁴⁹ According to the Provincial League Report submitted to the All-India Muslim League in July 1944, the organizational scaffolding in districts was, in contrast to the description of the Government report at this time (see chap.1,Section 2), sufficient for them to organize agitations by this time.⁵⁰ Extensive tours made by Nawab Mamdot, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan and Mian Mumtaz Daultana, who became loyal Leaguers and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, who had once turned against the League, held meetings in many small rural places. Their work in Sargodha, home of the Tiwanas (Khizr's place) was specially commended in the report.⁵¹ Although the bureaucracy was still the most powerful grip in the Province committed to fight against the League, they found the whole machinery of the Government breaking down. For example , many Zamindars, notably

49. Ahmad, Jamil-ud-Din, Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah (Vol.II), Lahore, 1964, p.46 (Speech at the Punjab League Conference, Sialkot, 30/4/44).

50. SHC, Punjab, Vol.I, material No.6, p.1.

51. Ibid.

in the entire district of Jhang, which was the stronghold of the Khizr regime, began to refuse to have anything to do with the Zamindar League. Intensive training for agitations by the PMSF was also provided to create new cadres of workers.⁵² Though the tide was gradually turning in their favour, what was noticeable at this stage is that they began to perceive that apart from the appeal of Pakistan the League must formulate a more concrete and immediate programme which was suited to the local needs of the Province.⁵³

Meanwhile, the League Speaker's Tour Report of Montgomery District which came out in January 1945 showed further expansion of the 'League' movement.⁵⁴ Starting with Shergarh tour (30 December, 1944) the party saw some

52. Ibid., p.3.

53. Ibid., p.4.

54. SHC, Punjab, Vol.I, material No.30.

notable features in each gathering through the four day tour. Besides the presence of a large section of the village administrative officers under the Unionist thumb, what pleased them most was the attendance of the Communists, who were "with the absorbing interest" in good numbers.⁵⁵ At the meeting in Okara, the Party appreciated the feature wholeheartedly, for :

(The Communist members and Congressmen--- writer) showed unmistakably that there was a strong bond of sympathy between them and the League, because all these three parties (The Communist party, the Congress, and the League----- writer) are

- (a) peoples parties and
- (b) are genuinely striving for the independence of India.⁵⁶

55. Ibid., p.2.

56. -do-

Moreover, "as a very welcome sign of Muslim political solidarity",⁵⁷ the party saw the active co-operation of Ahrar workers both at Montgomery and at Chichawatni.⁵⁸ The report, also noted that a really effective orators' inclusion from the religious circle for the party would be of great assistance and fulfil a pressing need.⁵⁹ Throughout whole tour, the party travelled in a lorry fitted with loud speakers and decorated with Muslim League flags, mottos, and slogans, which, according to the report, evoked considerable "interest" everywhere.⁶⁰

57. Ibid., p.3.

58. -do-

59. -do-

60. -do-

Chapter III : The Last Phase towards
the Partition

Section 1: Responses to the Ideology
of Separatism

The Muslim League's call based on the notion that Muslims of India constituted a nation was a premise, from which the League put forward the demand that the Muslim majority provinces of North-West and North-East India should be constituted into a separate and independent state. Muslim separatism to which some people committed themselves expressed itself in many forms. In this section an attempt will be made to analyse the basis of Muslim separatism with particular reference first, to the economic argument of separatism, second, to the response of the left wing to the Muslim issue, and third, to the attitude of the religious leaders towards the "Pakistan demand".

-a- The Economic Argument behind
Separatism

The ideology of the separatism, with its culmination in the creation of a separate state was supported by the rising bourgeoisie represented by Muslim businessmen. W.Cantwell Smith has pointed out that the change in the Indian economy caused by the outbreak of the War favourably affected the relative position of the Muslims' economic activities vis-à-vis their Hindu counterparts.¹ The creation of a totally independent area free from Hindu influence was in this sense seen as a better opportunity for their future economic prospects.

Although the League's main ostensible objective was the mobilization of the entire groups of the Muslim population which it claimed

1. Smith, Wilfred Cantwell, Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis, Lahore, 1969 (first edition, in 1943)pp.332-333.

to represent , its approach to economic questions was based on a certain strategic consideration. The Muslim League as a political organisation was basically a body which represented landlords as the largest single groups. K.B. Sayeed has revealed that out of a total membership of 503 members in the Muslim League Council for the year 1942 there were as many as 163 landlords, the highest number (51) belonging to Punjab, followed by the U.P., and Bengal.² Proportionately, the share of Sind was the highest in the sense that out of 25 in the Council, 15 were landlords.³ In view of this background, it was almost inconceivable that apart from the direction of the separatist appeal there would be any common tendency against orthodox and conservative elements especially on economic issues. Naturally the League was not prepared to accept any doctrinaire treatment

2. Sayeed, Formative, p.207.

3. Ibid.

for the solution of the problems. In this connection, Hanna Papanek has given a quite interesting analysis :

In the case of the Muslim League, its claim to represent all of India's Muslims tended to foreclose its ability to make more specific class-based appeals and perhaps also to minimize the importance of specific economic and social plans for the new state. The striking absence of well-developed economic plans by the Muslim League leadership — especially in comparison with Indian National Congress efforts in this respect — was probably one of the factors which later produced such a pronounced bias in favour of private enterprise by the early government of Pakistan.⁴

4. Papanek, Hanna, "Pakistan's Big Businessmen: Muslim Separatism, Entrepreneurship, and Partial Modernization", Economic Development and Cultural Change, 21 October, 1972, p.4.

Furthermore, one of the obvious reasons for the difference between the two parties, was the existence of both Gandhian and the explicitly socialist approach to economic problems in the ideological orientation of the Congress. Papanek notes :

On the other hand, the Muslim League, which was trying to develop a position of exclusively representing all Muslims, may have found it difficult to make specific pronouncements which might have emphasized class differences among Muslims.⁵

In 1943, the Muslim League authorized the President to appoint a planning committee to prepare comprehensive scheme for economic and social uplift which would cover the following areas : state industrialisation in

5. Ibid., pp.8-9.

Pakistan zones, introduction of free primary basic education, reform of land system, stabilization of rent, security of tenure, improvement in the condition of labour and agriculture, and control of money-lending.⁶ Following this, Jinnah admitted that the appointment of such a committee was of the utmost importance because the deplorable economic conditions of Indian Muslims.⁷ But, characteristically, he stated that the main aim of the committee would be to see what could be done under the present circumstances and what were the future prospects, and not plan out expensive schemes depending upon the release of Mr. Gandhi and establishment of a National government in India.⁸ The absence of any economic ideology or program, which could include Muslim of all sections, forged the alignment between the

6. IAR, Vol. II, 1943, pp. 293-294.

7. IAR, Vol. I, 1944, p. 211.

8. Ibid.

League's leadership and big Muslim businessman.

Jinnah's personal equation with leading business families or commercial houses played a great role in mobilizing Muslim businessmen through the organization of Muslim Chambers of Commerce and through the establishment of the so-called "nation-building" companies during the period of the Pakistan movement.⁹ Jinnah, who came from the Khoja trading community had formulated his political ideas concerning the diversities and particularism of regions, castes, communities and sects from Bombay's peculiar situation in this regard. This 'heritage' could not be easily rejected inspite of his later association with a Muslim League dominated by the reactionaries. His readiness to stand by the interests of the Muslim bourgeoisie was after all in this

9. Papanek, op.cit., pp.10-11.

political 'asset'. Actually in the area that was to become Pakistan, we see the relative scarcity of Muslim businessmen at this time. But by 1943, attempts were being made to organize a Pakistan-oriented national organization of Muslim businessmen by some of Jinnah's close associates, to be M.A.H. Ispahani, Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola, and Nurur Rehman at Calcutta.¹⁰ There was evidently some problems connected with the setting up of this new organization, which was completing with the Bombay-based group.¹¹ But Jinnah constantly pressed his followers and

10. Ibid., p.12.

11. Zaidi, Z.H., M.A. Jinnah—Ispahani Correspondence 1936-48, Karachi, 1976. Especially, see the papers for 1944 and 1945, see also Chap.X, Aiming at Economic Independence in Ispahani, op.cit.

commercial magnates for the formation of an All-India Muslim Chambers of Commerce with branches in different provinces, which finally held its first annual meeting in Delhi in 1945.¹² Although the federation itself was not particularly new in form, its significance lay in the fact that it was specifically comprised of and for Muslims.

The immediate pre-partition period saw the formation of new companies by a few Muslim big businessmen primarily to meet some of the economic needs of the new state.¹³ This time also Jinnah's encouragement was a great stimulus,¹⁴ and must have indicated that the new government could be expected to be favourable to private enterprise. The new

12. Ibid.

13. Papanek, op.cit., p.13.

14. Ispahani, op.cit., pp.130-133.

companies were engaged in vital sectors like banking (the Habib Bank, Muslim Commercial Bank), Shipping (Muhammadi Steamship Company), insurance (Eastern Federal Insurance), and airlines (Orient Airways). These were privately financed, owned, and managed by largely Muslim capitalists who came from the wealthiest Muslim families in undivided India: Adamjee, Ispahani, Rahimtoola, Dada, Habib and several others, the sole exception being the Karachi Parsi shipping magnate, Rustom Cowasjee.¹⁵ According to Papanek, most of the investors in the above firms were either personally close to Jinnah or had gradually started supporting the demand for the establishment of a Muslim state, whether or not they intended to migrate to 'Pakistan', themselves.¹⁶

15. Papanek, op.cit., pp.13-18.

16. Ibid., p.13.

At a personal level, however, all Leaguers were not unequivocally committed to the creation of 'Pakistan'. Ispahani, (who together with Liaquat Ali Khan and the Raja of Mahumuddbad, occupied a senior position in the League),¹⁷ when asked by Casey, Governor of Bengal in January 1946, whether the League was intent on 'Pakistan' replied that he was personally not very keen.¹⁸ He further added that :

he regarded the problem as an economic one—— in that it was essential for the Muslims to get opportunities for self-advancement, administratively, and otherwise.¹⁹

17. TOP, Vol. VII, No. 13 (28/3/46), p. 22.

18. TOP, Vol. VI, No. 329 (2/1/46), p. 732.

19. Ibid.

In this meeting Casey got the strong impression that adequate safeguards would be definitely acceptable to the Muslims, in place of Pakistan.²⁰ The meaning of the record is very suggestive. Although big businessmen clearly saw their future opportunities in the new homeland, it would be dangerous to consider this as the major causative factor for their participation in the Pakistan movement. We must simultaneously take note of other forces also, relating to social and economic discontent, which was originally rooted in the general economic position of the Muslim masses, and some particular sentiment belonging to the same community. These factors also influenced those who took part in the movement for Pakistan. Their strong desire for Hindu-Muslim parity which was a bone of contention in official negotiation

needs to be examined more from this point of view.

As far as the Punjab was concerned, wealthy Punjabi business families were very few, the major exceptions being Nashir Ahmad Sheikh of Colony, and the Muhammad Amin family (Amin Jute).²¹ They were without doubt leading figures associated with the Provincial Muslim League, and active in business as well as civic affairs. Although it is not easy now to trace the relationship between businessmen and the Punjab political movements, Jinnah's correspondence with Rafi Butt, a Punjabi businessman, during 1944-46 apparently reveals keen interest in the business opportunities underlying the political developments

21. Papanek, op.cit., p.16.

in those days.²² As for the organizational efforts of the Muslim business community, as early as 1944, the Punjab Muslim Chamber of Commerce had already enlisted 150 members.²³ They severely criticised the Government policy towards trade during the War. In the machinery set up to implement the food policy, and condition of a "virtual monopoly of the trade in the hands of a non-Muslim agency", they saw the indifference of the Government attitude.²⁴ They further saw the dominance of the Muslim rural elements in the Punjab Assembly as another cause for complaint.²⁵ Because of this, they felt that the Government had failed to respond to the representations of the Muslim businessmen. In this context, the 'political'

22. SHC, Punjab, Vol. IV, material No. 83-93.

23. Saeed, op.cit., p.134 (The Eastern Times, March 28, 1944).

24. Ibid., p.133.

25. Ibid.

motivation of Punjabi businessmen reflected not only the dissatisfaction with their non-Muslim counterpart, but also the particular structural issue of the 'Muslims' in the Province. Their support for Pakistan was not imposed on them by the organisation. It was a response to the concrete challenge they had to face in the existing situation.

-b- The Communist Party's Attitude
towards the Muslim Issue

Let us pause to see how the Left wing lined up on the question of 'Pakistan'. Here , we will focus on the Communist Party, since it was the only organized secular party which supported the demand for Pakistan justifying it on the basis of the right of self-determination. The anti-imperialist upsurge of the immediate post-War years partly owed its energy to the "new start" of this Party during the War. The "new start", namely its legalization (in July, 1942)

brought obvious organizational advantages, for Communists had been persecuted by the British Right from the formation of their first groups in the early 1920s, and the Party had been illegal since 1934. But their new slogan of anti-fascist 'People's War' during this War had certainly isolated the Party, because it did have a real appeal among intellectuals aware of world currents, while to most of the masses it was incomprehensible.¹

Moreover, they had added further ideological confusion to this mess by adopting the controversial Adhikari thesis—— "On Pakistan and National Unity"² in September 1942 as a resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India.

1. Sarkar, Sumit, Modern india 1885-1947, Delhi, p.413.

2. "On Pakistan and National Unity" is available in Appendix II (pp.252-254) of Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power (London,1970) by Taliz Ali.

All-in national unity based on communal harmony and Congress-League joint front is today an urgent and pressing necessity to solve the present national crisis, to win National Government from the hands of the British imperialist bureaucracy and to defend our Motherland against the fascist aggression.³

The Communist Party's stand brought the issue of 'Pakistan' vis-à-vis the unity of India into sharp focus. Although their thinking on the 'communal' question was closely related to the growing political importance of the Muslim League, their conception of the "National Unity" as one of the building a National Front for the current war effort was not fully and consistently perspicuous in a political strategic sense.

3. Ibid., p.252.

The Communist notion of self-determination of nationalities was at this time linked to the peculiar concept of "Muslim nationality". This was not only a crude application of the Russian case to the Indian context but also a distorted understanding of the current Indian situation. Their interpretation of the demand for Pakistan as the justified right of self-determination of "Muslim nationality" led to the Communist call for Congress-League unity to achieve freedom. This was theoretically inconsistent argument. But it acquired a apparent justification in certain local situation.

In the Punjab, the Communists' campaign took the form of overthrowing the Unionist Ministry by promoting the unity of the Muslim League, Akalis and the Congress.⁴

4. FR for the first half of September 1942.
See also Zaheer, op.cit., p.27 and pp.39-40.

Justifying the decision, Daniyal Latifi, a well-known Indian communist who gave up his lucrative job as a practitioner in Lahore to become a full-time worker of the Communist Party, expressed his views on the situation in a letter to Gandhi:

As you know well the Unionist Ministry is the last provincial stronghold of the British Bureaucracy in India. The Punjab of Sir Bertrand Glancy ably carries on the traditions in the Punjab of Sir Michael O'dwyer. Now when the League, as the representative of the Muslim majority population of the Punjab, is out of the battlefield storming this British stronghold no men or women who loves freedom and democracy can sit idle with folded hands.⁵

5. Rai, Satya M., Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab 1897-1947, New Delhi, 1984, p.302.

In spite of Jinnah's discouraging attitude to the Communist offer of cooperation in toppling the Unionist regime, they continued their attempts to penetrate the League.⁶ The official view was that " their objective is to prepare the masses to seize power once Fascism has been defected, and in their usual over-optimistic manner appear to be under the delusion that the Congress leaders on their release from jail will have no hesitation in accepting them as equals in working for India's independence irrespective of the fact that among themselves they admitted that their alliance with Congress is merely one of political expediency".⁷ By mid 1944 they began to take up issues which affected the people during the War. In addition to the organizational efforts for a food committee in Lahore, the introduction of rationing in several towns of

6. FR for the first half of April 1944.

7. FR for the second half of March 1944.

the Province gave them an opportunity to extend their influence in the Province.⁸

The slogan of Congress-League unity given by the Communist Party of India took a concrete shape. Muslim members were asked to enter the ranks of the Muslim League.⁹ Sajjad Zaheer headed this effort in the Punjab. Following this, a number of communists like Daniyal Latifi and progressives like Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din resigned from the Communist Party and the Congress respectively to join the League.¹⁰

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8. FR for the first half of April 1944
 9. Ali, op.cit.,p.31.
 10. Rai,op.cit.,p.301. As for Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, see his Selected Speeches and Statements, ed. by Malik, Abdullah in Bibliography. He was the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee till 1945, in which year he shifted to the League.

The Provincial Party also issued instructions to the district workers to cooperate with the League organization and enrol new members from them.¹¹ This resulted in many of the militant elements who were involved in working with the peasants joining their local League branches and rapidly becoming Branch Secretaries.¹² After initial hesitation, the Muslim League gradually welcomed the Communist decision. The League benefited considerably from this move because of its colour of the mass as well as progressive party.¹³ However, the entry of Communists created not a little problems. For instance, the President of the League branch

11. FR for the second half of June, 1944.

12. Ali, op.cit., pp.31-32.

13. My interview with Mr. Safdar Mir.

was usually the local landlord. This caused the peasants to look upon the relationship of the new 'Branch Secretaries' with this feudal force with suspicion.¹⁴

In the context of Punjab politics, the Central Party's equating the concept of 'religious community' with nationality gave a certain communal definition to the old rural order. Unlike the Unionist Party, the League also represented the new political ambitions of the rising Muslim bourgeoisie. Communists entered the League in order to strengthen this bourgeois faction, because they had been intent on liquidating the strong feudal base of the Province represented by the Unionists, to borrow Ali's words, "a plan perfectly in keeping with Stalin's theory of revolution by stages."¹⁵ Instead they lost some of their

14. Ali, op.cit., p.32.

15. -do-

cadres, who never came back from the League as they felt quite at home there.¹⁶ Their failure to perceive the class back-ground of the League which remained the vested interests meant that the Communist volunteer corps did not realise that they were functioning as leading forces of 'reaction'. Their weakness resulted from the inconsistency in their theory and behaviours reflected in the results of the 1946 elections in the Punjab, in which they failed to secure even a single seat.¹⁷

In contrast to the blind haste of the Communists, those around them appeared to be more realistic as well as less enthusiastic to their attitude. After this election, The Eastern Times, a pro-Muslim League paper of the Punjab, commented on them as follows :

16. -do-

17. TOP, Vol.VI, No.544, p.1232.

There is another question which demands the attention of the Quaid-i-Azam. The Provincial Muslim League Office appears to have become a regular headquarters of the Communist Party. The Muslim league's prestige, its name, platform and propaganda machinery are being employed for propagation of Communist theories. The use of the Muslim League's machinery and the Muslim League's funds for the propagation of Communism is very disturbing to Muslim sentiment in the province and is likely to have very far-reaching consequences for the Muslim League itself. We have been watching events, but had to keep silent on account of the Muslim League's election campaign. But now the elections are over, it is time that disciplinary action was taken and Communists were kicked out of the Muslim League bag and baggage.¹⁹

18. Saeed, op.cit., p.250 (The Eastern Times, March 22, 1946).

-c- The Pakistan Demand and
 Religious Leadership

The movement for 'Pakistan' was far more complex than it is usually realized. During a short period of swift development, many contradictory aspect emerged in all-India as well as local politics. One important feature was the attitude of the religious leadership toward the Pakistan demand in this Province. As far as the Muslim religious leaders were concerned, they were by and large opposed to the very idea of Pakistan. A majority of the ulama of Deoband shared the strong anti-British sentiment of the Congress and against the idea of Muslim separatism.¹

1. See Engineer, Asghar Ali, "The 'Ulema and the Freedom Struggle", in The Role of Minorities in Freedom Struggle, ed. by the same author, New Delhi, 1986.

In the Punjab, however, the situation was quite different. This difference was partly due to the nature of the Muslim religious leadership in the Province.

It is interesting to observe that prior to the League's initial contact with religious leaders in the Province for its political purpose, the relations between the Unionist Party and religious leaders in the 1920s and 1930s demonstrated that the political role of religious leaders were determined primarily by their structural position in the rural or urban areas. According to Gilmartin, the main division of the religious leaders in this Province into the sajjada nashins and the reformist ulama paralleled the most important 'political' cleavage between rural leaders and urban.² Because of their traditional position

2. Gilmartin, David, "Religious Leadership and the Pakistan Movement in the Punjab," Modern Asian Studies, 13,3(1979),p.504.

and power as guardians of the shrines of saints in the Province, sajjada nashins or the hereditary religious leaders had been already recognized by the British, who had moulded a system of rural administration, as part of a single ruling class of hereditary 'rural leaders'.³ Among the leaders in this ruling class, the most vital religious support for Pakistan in 1940s came from the sajjada nashins of the revival shrines, who had long sought an outlet for expressing their religious concerns in the political arena.⁴ Although they had never been satisfied with the secular basis of the political system developed by the Unionists, they had not actively opposed the Unionists due to the same structural grounding in the

3. Ibid., p.516.

4. -do-

rural political milieu. In the concept of "Pakistan" they saw the opportunity to put rural politics on a more solid religious foundation.⁵

On the other hand the urban leaders of the reformist ulama enthusiastically organized the League's "religious wing" in the battle for Pakistan. For the leaders of the League, "who had little experience in the past in the organization of religious leaders", to create some sort of organization like Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind (Jamiat), the strengthening of Deobandi reformist ulama, was becoming increasingly important.⁶ Because the Jamiat was the only existing model for the political organization of religious leaders in those days. Originally, the conception of Deobandi had been shaped deeply by the nature of their religious reforms. These reforms included developing

6. Ibid., p.511. Literally, ulama means person versed in Islamic religious sciences.

religious solidarity among Muslims by restoring the authority of ulama, whose dominant social and economic position during the Muslim rule in India was totally changed by the establishment of the British rule.⁷ When the League began to organize religious leaders behind its cause in 1945, they naturally turned first to the minority of Deobandi ulama who were sympathetic to the idea of separatism.⁸ Foremost among these was Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, who had once been an active member of the Jamiat, and who was now called upon to head the new wing, as a reformist ulama, 'pro-Pakistan' Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam. In the Punjab, with the inauguration of its branch at Lahore in December 1945, an attempt was made to expand the organization to include the 'rural' religious leaders who comprised the bulk of the League's religious support.⁹

7. Engineer, Asghar Ali, op.cit., p.3.

8. Gilmartin, op.cit., p.509 and p.511.

9. Ibid., p.511.

But the 'religious' position of reformist ulama cannot be generalized. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, head of the dar al-'ulum at Deoband, was a strong opponent of 'Muslim Nationalism' and the Pakistan movement. He advanced a theory of territorial nationhood for India, instead of appealing for safeguards and community confederation as the Jamiat was doing.¹⁰ Madani's ideas were expressed early in a debate with Iqbal, a poet philosopher and a prominent urban leader who had organized the Punjab Provincial Muslim League (before the Unionists' dominance over it), shortly before the latter's death in 1938. Madani pointed out that the concept of a 'nation' did not imply a common religion and culture. Geographical dimensions which defined countries, he felt, and included diverse religions and

10. Hardy, Peter, Partners in Freedom ———
and True Muslims, (Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series No.5), 1971, p.37.

cultures, did not hamper the co-operation and association of the inhabitants.¹¹ In this sense, he not only rejected the 'two nation theory' , but also found justification in Islam for 'composite nationalism', independent of the concept of the so-called nationalist Deobandi.

Iqbal opposed Madani's concept of composite nationalism or modern territorial nationalism and supported the organisation of a political group based on Muslim nationalism both as a high ideal and as a course of action to be followed by India Muslims in the practical politics of his time. Iqbal outlined his ideas quite clearly in his presidential address to the 1930 All-India Muslim League Session in Allahabad. It was on this occasion that he demanded the establishment of an autonomous Muslim state in North-Western India:

11. Ibid.,pp.37-38.

The nature of the Prophet's religious experience, as disclosed in the Quran, however, is wholly different. It is not mere experience in the sense of a purely biological event, happening inside the experiment and necessitating no reaction or its social environment. It is individual experience creative of a social order. Its immediate outcome in 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, the construction of a polity on national lines, if it means a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim.¹²

12. Pirzada, op.cit., p.157.

This clearly shows that, according to Iqbal, for the Muslim their polity is the outer growth of their inner spiritual experiences. A polity which is directly created along nationalist lines and rooted in the real political experience is meaningless for them. This further makes us notice how vastly different was his cause for a territorial demand from the essence of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. He did not go so far as to say in clear terms that the Muslims had a right to have a separate home-land. He only claimed that the innermost spiritual self of Muslims was so comprehensive that it naturally created a polity or socio-political order for their external life.

The sajjada nashins of many of the older shrines in this Province played, perhaps, an even more active role than the revivalists in factional 'politics'. But because of the strong Unionist base in the countryside, they were not able to match the revivalists in

using religion to undermine' the existing structure.¹³ In this sense, it was the revivalist sajjada nashins who injected a religious fervour into the politics of the Punjab and upset most of the traditional factional alignments. A an independent religious group not directly linked to the League, they proved to be a great asset for the League as the 1946 elections approached. A similar role was played by the pirs (spiritual guides) who had long been closely associated with the leaders of the Unionist Party at the local level. But they had been at the same time, like the revivalist sajjada nashins, very dissatisfied with the secular basis of Unionist politics.¹⁴ With the entry of an important section of the rural Muslim leadership in the Muslim League as a result of political realignments after

13 Gilmartin, op.cit.,p.512.

14. Ibid.,p.510.

1944, the pirs found in the Muslim League under Jinnah's leadership a political platform which allowed them to maintain their local political and religious connection and simultaneously to express their religious concerns in politics at the provincial and national level.¹⁵

The major role played by the revivalist sajjada nashins and pirs lay in the popularization of the Muslim League campaigns in the rural areas as a 'religious' movement. As rural leaders in the political structure their option was primarily influenced by their interest-oriented concerns. On the other hand, the Deobandi supporters of the Pakistan demand, radically deviated from the main 'nationalist' Deobandi wing, shouldered the cause of the League mainly in the urban area. In contrast to their rural counterparts, they always needed 'ideologies' to justify their 'political participation because of their non-provincial origin in the

15. Ibid., p.510 and 514.

absence of solid local political foundation. Commenting on the attitude of this religious leadership, Hardy says:

The 'ulama who supported the demand for Pakistan appear to have preferred a less remote hope, perhaps, of a fully Islamic order in a limited Muslim majority area, to the much more remote hope of a fully Islamic order in the whole of former British India.¹⁶

The energy and strength of the Pakistan movement cannot, however, be traced to a single factor. Although in the 1946 elections, these two wings in the urban and rural areas provided

16. Hardy, op.cit., pp.42-43.

the vanguard of religious support for Pakistan and played a decisive role in carrying the League to triumph over the Unionist Party, the battle was fought on multiple issues. These were apparently based on the religious, political, ideological and economic concerns, which formed a complex web of Muslim politics in the Punjab.

Section 2: The Pakistan Demand after
the 1946 Elections

Soon after the Simla Conference, general elections were held in Britain, and the Conservative Government suffered a crushing defeat. Clement Attlee, Prime Minister of the new Labour Government, declared soon after assuming office that he would make positive efforts to solve the constitutional tangle in India and evolve long term arrangements that were not partial to one side or the other. This declaration was before long followed by elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures. The results of the elections demonstrated the complete hold of the Congress and the League in their respective areas of influence. They set the scene for an exclusive combat between the two in the forthcoming negotiations for the transfer of power in India. Prior to the Provincial elections, Jinnah had forecast that the elections would simplify matters to a conflict between the Congress and the Muslim League.¹ In fact, the

1. TOP, Vol. VI, No. 332 (Note by Wavell), 5/1/46, p. 738.

relations of the Congress with the League had noticeably deteriorated in the last two years. The Rajagopalachari formula, which formed the basis of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks at Bombay in 1944, were perhaps the last chance for a mutual compromise. The responsibility for this failure, and the later failure of the Desai-Liaquat pact and the Simla Conference were all laid at the leaders' door.

The general elections of 1946 generated a heated contest in view of the constitutional changes that were likely to take place soon. Moreover, the life of the former Legislatures had been prolonged beyond its normal term of five years on account of the War and this fuelled interest in the elections. Besides the overwhelming victory of the Congress and the League both in the elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures, one of the most salient features of these elections was that the League made an impressive strides in the

Muslim - majority provinces— Bengal, Punjab, and Sind, where it had never secured a majority.² It was only in the Frontier that the League could not secure a majority of Muslim seats. In the Punjab the role of the youth force the Muslim League brought over from the Aligarh Muslim University cannot be overlooked. In the critical two-week period some 1500 students addressed an estimated 700,000 Punjabis.³

As far as this Province was concerned, a notable feature of the election results was the defeat of the Unionist Party which lost most of the Muslim seats to the Muslim League by very big

2. Kabir, "1942-7", p.397.

3. Sayeed, Nature, p.13.

majorities.⁴ In the Ambala Division, which was once a stronghold of Hindu Unionists, the party could secure only three seats, including one scheduled caste seat, and the Congress won the seat held by the late Chhotu Ram as also the seat of the Revenue Minister, Tika Ram.⁵ Although Khizr Hayat

4. TOP, Vol. VI, Enclosure to No. 544 (22/3/46), p.1231.

Party	No. of votes Polled.	% of votes Polled	Total no. of seats in the assembly
Congress	477,765	23.1	51
Unionists	419,231	20.2	21
Panthic Sikhs	160,763	7.8	21
MUSLIM LEAGUE	680,823	32.8	75
Communists	39,516	1.9	-
Others	295,238	14.2	7 (Independents)
TOTAL	2,073,336	100.0	175

Jalal, op.cit., p.150 (Original Source: Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-46, New Delhi, 1948, p.73.

5. TOP, Vol. VI, Enclosure to No. 544, p.1231.

himself had the unique distinction of being returned from three constituencies — one Muhammadan constituency and two landholders' constituencies — the elections, unlike previous ones, were clearly fought on party lines and not on personal, tribal or caste considerations.⁶ Party labels were to go a long way not only in ensuring the success of candidates but also in affecting the course of developments. When the election results were declared, it was clear that Congress ministries would come into power in all the provinces of India excepting four. Bengal and Sind formed League Ministries immediately. In the Frontier, the Congress again came into office. But in the Punjab, the League could not form a ministry in spite of being the largest single party and the Congress and the Akalis entered into a coalition with the Unionists. The Nawab of Mamdot, President of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League hoped to induce the Akalis to enter into a coalition.⁷ But the Akalis could

6. Ibid.,p.1232.

7. Ibid.,Enclosure to No.514(7/3/46),p.1136.

not reach agreement on the definition of the area to be set apart as "Khalistan" and the negotiations broke down.⁸

Although Khizr Hayat again became Chief Minister to command the Provincial Ministry, the solid block of Muslim Unionists which used to be distinctly anti-Jinnah had been seriously split by this time. As a result of the elections he was left with only a handful of Muslim followers. It was hardly likely that he would be able to form a stable Government. On the other hand, Jinnah, who had established his status as the Leader of an All-India Party through a series of abortive negotiations, was successful in his 'strategy'. In the current political atmosphere it was evident that talks could not succeed unless Jinnah's objective was conceded in advance. But the real crux of the matter had not yet been faced squarely in the discussion regarding the relative merits of Pakistan or United India. Continual efforts to

obtain Hindu-Muslim collaboration characterised the British programme for the future of India. One of the first steps that the British Government wished to take after these elections was to form a National government at the Centre to which in due course all power could be transferred. Naturally, Jinnah, who had built up his position through this election, began to exert all the pressure he could.

The League was from early on quite wary of any scheme of an Central government as an interim arrangement, likely to lead to the setting up of one Constitution-making body.⁹ Thus, "Pakistan" and "a separate Constitution-making body" became fighting slogans—two sides of the same demand. But, interestingly enough, the demand does not seem to have been received straight in

9. Ibid., Annexure I (9/2/46), II (6/12/45) & IV (28/1/46) to No.444, pp.1011-1013 and pp. 1015-1016.

the face in British circles. The phrase 'Pakistan principle which they had often used for a special consideration to break the dead-lock is significant.¹⁰ Jinnah himself seemed to share the usage of the the phrase to some extent with the British during this time.¹¹ What the 'Pakistan principle' meant was not new in itself. In the context of 'a saner solution' which came up for discussion around the time of the Rajaji formula, it meant an arrangement which would adequately secure the future of the Indian Muslims. In order to prevent a worse situation to be created by 'Pakistan', the British were very anxious to get down to the essence of the Pakistan demand. Significantly, at this juncture, the substance was seriously considered, especially with a view to having safeguards for the Muslim majority areas and a more liberal attitude towards the Muslims' rights to self-determination.¹²

10. Ibid., No.350 (11/1/46),p.773.

11. Ibid., Annexure to No.444,p.1011.

12. Ibid.,No.350 and No. 433(14/2/46),p.769 and p.978.

The hope was :

If the Pakistan principle is conceded, Jinnah is likely to be more reasonable than he has appeared hitherto...¹³

In fact, a fellow comrade of Jinnah in the League observed that Jinnah was presently in a very resonable frame of mind on this matter. Asked how he could possible claim Assam for Pakistan when it had a Hindu majority, he more or less agreed that he could not do so, but believed that he had to win acceptance of the principle of Pakistan before territorial adjustment could be discussed.¹⁴

13. Ibid., No.350 (Memorandum by Mr.E.P.Moon).

14. TOP, Vol.VII, No.13 (28/3/46), pp.22-33.

This is the recollection of Tarsi Shah Nawaz, a young Muslim League member, who travelled to Lahore with Jinnah around the middle of March (Note by Major Wyatt).

In March 1946, Attlee's Labour Government sent a Cabinet Mission to India under the leadership of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State, to discuss the future constitutional set up leading to the transfer of power. The Mission did not intend to give a verdict on whether there should be one or two Indias, but to set in motion the machinery whereby a Constitution could be framed by Indians themselves to determine how far the two rival standpoints could be reconciled. They held a series of discussions with the leaders of all political parties and the representatives of various communities, and finally presented a plan.¹⁵

The Mission plan skillfully offered a weak centre, and at the same time an opportunity for large Muslim majority provinces to decide their future in their respective sections through

15. Ibid., No. 303 (16/5/46). pp. 582-591.

a new grouping scheme. This was a device to meet the Congress demand for preserving the unity of India while conceding the League's claim for a separate homeland for the Muslims. According to the plan, if the majority of these two major communities so desired there could be some variation of the basic proposals in the future. The union of India which the proposals envisaged would deal with the subjects of foreign affairs, defence, and communications with the residuary subjects vesting in the provinces. The provinces could form groups which had both Executives and Legislatures and each group could determine which provincial subjects could be jointly administered. It is not necessary for the purpose of this study to go into the details of the negotiations. The talks had a rough passage from the beginning, because neither of the two rival groups — the Congress nor the League — gave any real chance of success to the Mission plan, insisting as they did on their own interpretations of it.

The Congress accepted the most important part of the plan, namely the grouping of provinces, believing that it was optional. On the other hand the League insisted that it was compulsory. In addition, whatever chance there was of a settlement was completely destroyed by the Calcutta riots of August 1946.

The series of the meetings between the Cabinet Delegation and the Indian representatives indicated the variety of concerns over 'Muslim issues' in future India. As a representative of Muslims in the Hindu-majority Provinces, Choudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman, a Muslim League leader in the U.P., was of the view that the separate Muslim state of Pakistan would have a large number of Hindu.¹⁶ When asked what benefits Muslims in Hindu-majority Provinces could expect to derive from the establishment of Pakistan, he replied that the advantages would be indirect.¹⁷

16. TOP, Vol. VI, No. 327 (2/1/46), p. 727.

17. TOP, Vol. VII, No. 68 (8/4/46), p. 166.

He felt that the presence of the British in India had restrained the Hindu majorities.¹⁸ He saw that 'Pakistan' would now ensure safety of minorities on both sides. Nevertheless he was worried about the future position of those Muslims who would stay on in India. The interests of their co-religionists in 'Hindustan' were for the time being perceived only in relation to an unforeseen retaliation which might be, he believed, taken recourse to by both governments.¹⁹ Some sort of 'balance of power' was therefore essential in his opinion. He certainly believed that the Muslims in Hindu majority Provinces would at least be somewhat better off, because of certain economic opportunities.²⁰ But after all this

18. -do-

19. TOP, Vol. VI, No. 327, p. 727. See also Singh, Amrik, "The Crisis of Hinduism: A Sikh Viewpoint", in Mainstream, 2 May, 1987, p. 7.

20. TOP, Vol. VII, No. 68, p. 169.

expectation could not override the fear regarding the ability to provide an insurance to the Muslims to be left behind.²¹ Through this meeting, the Governor of U.P. got the strong impression that he did not believe in Pakistan in a practical sense.²²

Khizr, a last defender of the Unionist Party, had already declared during the recent elections that he believed in a Pakistan, where Muslim interests were fully protected.²³ The opposition between the League and his own Party

21. TOP, Vol. VI, No. 327, p. 727. Concretely, he refers to the Muslims of Oudh.
22. Ibid. At the time of the Partition, Khaliq-uz-Zaman decided to stay on in India, though he later migrated to Pakistan.
23. TOP, Vol. VII, No. 59 (5/4/46), p. 148.

on the issue of Pakistan was intentionally obscured for the time being, and passed off as party friction at the provincial level. Khizr stated that the effect of the creation of Pakistan on Punjab would depend on what basis the new state was set up. He asserted that Jinnah should have been officially asked to define what he wanted.²⁴ Because the League had so far liked to keep the idea vague so that every Muslim might interpret it as a sort of Utopia where his own ambitions would be satisfied,²⁵ But, judging from the position of the Muslims in this Province, especially in connection with the contribution of the communities to the services, in particular the army, forecast that a reaction against an uncertain future, including problems with pensions, would no doubt set in.²⁶ Therefore,

24. -do-

25. -do-

26. Ibid., p.147.

if Jinnah had been required at an early stage to define Pakistan, and if its financial and other implication had been worked out, he thought that the demand for it would not have been so strong.²⁷

The similar point was raised in the same month during Gandhi's meeting with the Delegation. Ironically, it was not Jinnah but Gandhi who clarified what Jinnah perhaps meant as an ideal. The substance of Pakistan as Gandhi understood it was protection of Muslim culture and the Muslims' legitimate aspirations.²⁸ In this context, he claimed that in Rajagopalacharia's formula he had given concrete shape to a proposal to meet the demand.²⁹ As Jinnah had never given a definition of Pakistan in clear terms, Gandhi

27. -do-

28. Ibid., No.47(3/4/46), p.117.

29. -do-

could not go any further than Pakistan as he defined it. In Gandhi's view, the Pakistan demand beyond that was an untruth.³⁰

On the other hand, Mamdot's blueprint for the Pakistan of Jinnah's conception was still incomplete. The question of what boundaries would make for a viable Pakistan was keenly discussed at the time. Against the League's hope, the Delegation had already come to the conclusion by this time that the full and complete demand for Pakistan in the form Jinnah had put it forward — i.e. inclusive of territories inhabited by non-Muslims had little chance of acceptance.³¹ But as far as Jinnah was concerned, he said that once the principle of Pakistan was conceded he was quite willing to consider a mutual adjustment.³² Mamdot's statement took the same stand.³³ Jinnah's

30. -do-

31. Ibid., No. 116 (16/4/46), p. 281.

32. Ibid., p. 283.

33. Ibid., No. 41 (2/4/46), p. 91.

opposition to the reduction of the area which would constitute Pakistan below the point at which the new state could live economically "a live state economically" was also an attempt to define the principle of Pakistan. But even this was not a concrete definition based on any economic programme. It was forced out by the insistent demand that he clarify his position on Pakistan. In fact it was deduced that Jinnah's conception was a nucleus Muslim territory surrounded by sufficient additional territory to make it economically viable.³⁴

The phrase 'principle of Pakistan' appeared to concede nothing concrete but created an expectation in the people. People who had grouped for a better alternative to the 'crude' form of the demand of the League perceived it as a loaded phrase. And even Jinnah the sole spokesman for Muslims, saw a significance in it. 'The principle of Pakistan' was by itself neither an independent formula nor did it clear matters

34. Ibid., No.48(4/4/46),p.124.

for negotiation. But it always cast its shadow on the psychological position of the negotiators and urged them to get to its core.

Let us now turn to the stand taken by Nationalist Muslims on the issue of Pakistan. Hossenibhai Laljee of the All-Parties Shia Conference, which was the leading Shia Organization in India strongly opposed to the League demand for Pakistan at this time.³⁵ The Conference, which had clarified its position vis-à-vis the League prior to the coming of the Cabinet Mission was of the view that as a result of their long residence in India, the Muslims shared many

35. As for the population of the Community the survey of the Conference showed that there were 25 million Shias in British India, and 5 million in the Indian States. in TOP, Vol. VII, No. 117 (16/4/46), p. 286.

things with Hindus and therefore the two nation theory was impracticable.³⁶ Although the conference was in favour of the grant of the fullest possible Autonomy to the provinces, it strongly preferred an undivided India. Zahiruddin of the All-India Momin Conference had a similar view.³⁸ According to him, the real struggle was based on economics and had nothing to do with politics. He condemned the League as a party with vested interests, under which the Muslim masses had been economically and socially suppressed. Consequently, he observed,

36. Ibid., p.286.

37. -do-

38. Among those who were present at the interview with the Mission on April 16, 1946 were, besides Hossenibhai and Zahiruddin, Presidents of the All-India Muslim Conference, the All-India Ahrar, the All-India Muslim Majlis, who had been enrolled by this time in the wing of Nationalist Muslims in -do-.

the creation of Pakistan would not serve the larger interests of the Muslim masses.³⁹

The stand taken by G.M. Sayed⁴⁰ of Sind, a Muslim majority Province which was a part of the Missions grouping, is also worth considering. Although he accepted the position of the All-India Muslim League and generally

39. Ibid., pp.286-287.

40. Ghulam Murtaza Shah Mohammad Shah Syed(1904-) is a Sind politician. Though a Zamindar, he advocated the cause of the tenants from early on. After the independence he was one of the founders of the People's Party. Later, because of his strong opposition to the merge of Sind in the one unit West Pakistan, he was jailed for 14 months, in Muslims in India: A Biographical Dictionary (Vol.II), Lahore, 1985, pp.170-171.

agreed to Jinnah's aims, he condemned the proposals of the Mission especially on the ground that Sind should not be compelled to have anything to do with the Punjab and should have the right to "opt" out and become a separate sovereign state.⁴¹ This anti-Punjab sentiment resulted in his qualifying the formal support for Jinnah. According to him, his own group essentially differed from Jinnah on the question of tactics and economic organization. He held that not only the Congress, which had a strong base in Sind, but also the League were dominated by capitalists.⁴² He desired a socialist model of economic development for Sind, completely free from the influence of the reactionary elements.⁴³ Because of their strong independent

41. TOP, Vol.VII, No.42 (2/4/46), pp.92-93 and No.368 (24/5/46), p.678.

42. Ibid., p.93.

43. -do-

line, the position of the Punjab, particularly after the formation of the new League in 1944 in the Province, was of great concern to Sind. The bulk of the leadership in the Punjab which had a remarkably reactionary background was now dominant in the Pakistan movement as representatives of the North-West region. Even before the actual emergence of Pakistan, the issue of ethno-centricity, some sort of manifestation of a regional sentiment, appeared in the very land in which 'Pakistan' was to be formed on the ground of being the homeland of the Muslim nation. It was obvious that the 'Pakistan' of the League leaders did not carry any conviction with many leaders of different ethnic groups who would reside in Pakistan.

The fate of the Cabinet Mission plan was in fact sealed on the day the League's call for 'Direct Action' cropped up. But the efforts of the Viceroy to bring both the Congress and the League into the Interim government continued.

However, this was difficult because both sides charged that the others interpretation was a deviation from the original proposals. Moreover, the Viceroy's hasty steering created a skeptical atmosphere in both the parties. Soon after the Calcutta killings which followed Jinnah's protest against the Congress acceptance of the Mission plan 'on their own interpretation', the Viceroy made an offer to Nehru to form the Interim government. The Congress assumed office in the beginning of September 1946. The League, which decided to decline the indirect offer from the Congress at this time, was quite busy in active opposition to the Government. It was obvious that even the Viceroy was most unhappy at this outcome of his efforts because of its unrepresentative character. But at this time, Jinnah's reading of the situation was based on the practical consideration that if the League remained out of office for a long time, they would lose their support among the people.⁴⁴ This made him change his tactics,

44. Kabir, "1942-7", p.400.

and decide to continue his battle by taking up vantage positions in the Interim Government. But, in early October 1946, a new deadlock took place around the issue of the distribution of important portfolios.

The breakdown of the talks led to further bitterness. Simultaneously frequent outbreaks of communal frenzy disturbed the countryside. Even though the League had joined the Interim Government, for Jinnah, the larger issue of the battle for 'Pakistan' was to continue. The difference in interpretation regarding the grouping proposal persisted. The Interim Government muddled through, but the prevailing atmosphere did not allow them to carry on any constructive work. Meanwhile the Constituent Assembly met for the first time in early December 1946 without the League member. The recrimination between the two was soon to reach a new stage and get caught up in complications on the various provincial fronts.

Section 3 : The Punjab in 1947

From August 1946 onwards, communal riots rocked India on an unprecedented scale; it started in Calcutta in August and spread touching to Bombay by September and later to east Bengal and Bihar in October and U.P. in November. In the Punjab the situation came to a breaking point in the early months of 1947. The Coalition Ministry headed by Khizr Hayat Khan, the "General without an army"¹ had faced serious difficulties from the very beginning. Even Baldev Singh's manoeuvre of propping up Khizr's Ministry through Congress and Sikh support after elections had given the Unionists only 10 seats against the League's 79² merely demonstrated popularity of the League.

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1. TOP, Vol. VII, No. 112, p. 272.
 2. Sarkar, op.cit., p. 434. After the elections there was some accession of the strength both to the Unionists Party and to the League (for further details, see TOP, Vol. VI, No. 544, p. 1232). According to the Governor's letter to Viceroy, the position of Baldev Singh was regarded as the most important Minister after Khizr at this time (TOP, Vol. VII, No. 112, p. 273).

On January 24, 1947, a police party suddenly raided the headquarters of the Muslim League National Guards, a para-military wing of the Provincial League which consisted of the demobbed soldiers under the leadership of Shaukat Hayat³ Khizr was in Delhi at this time. Following the arrest of Mian Iftikharuddin, who came forward and blocked the police advance, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Shaukat Hayat Khan and another seven or eight persons offered themselves for arrest.⁴ On his return to Lahore, Khizr ordered their release and revoked the ban on the League National Guards.⁵ But the Muslims had meanwhile been holding protest demonstrations and processions which were in violation of the Punjab Safety Act.⁶ These protests initiated civil disobedience campaign to oust Khizr and the Unionist regime. The movement continued

3. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.224.

4. -do-

5. -do-

6. -do-

in this manner for more than a month.⁷ During this period, many local League branches all over the country passed resolutions strongly condemning the Punjab Government.⁸ Their timely show of sympathy strengthened the 'Pakistan' movement at this time.

On February 20, the British Government issued a statement expressing their intention to speedily withdraw from India. This created another problem for Khizr. What would be his position in the Punjab if the British left? Uptill now he had barely held office inspite of many antagonists all around. Soon Khizr decided to retreat from the scene, before any decision about steering the Province had been taken. Khizr's resignation undermined the possibility of any supra-communal alliance and only helped to inflame the threatening

7. -do-

8. FMA, F.No.346, pp.3-6, p.8, pp.15-17, p.20, and pp.28-30.

communal situation. In fact, the sudden resignation of Khizr was a great disappointment to the Congress and Akali leaders. They expected that even after the British announcement they would be able to continue in government, but with Khizr's resignation, their hope was dashed to the ground.⁹ On the morning of March 3, Lala Bhim Sen Sachar, the Congress Finance Minister, and Master Tara Singh, the leader of the Akali Dal, stood on the steps of the Punjab Assembly building, partly disappointed and partly infuriated, looking on a crowd of Muslims who gathered there shouting "Pakistan Zindabad".¹⁰ Master Tara Singh pulled his sword from its sheath and, swinging it in the air, said, "The sword will decide who will rule the Punjab".¹¹ This provocative statement resulted in large scale riots in Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, Attock and Rawalpindi, and even spread all over the rural areas of the Province.¹²

Mountbatten arrived at Delhi in March, 1947. In brief, he was told to exert full efforts towards the independence of India along the Cabinet Mission

9. Ahmad.S.N., op.cit., p.226.

10. -do-

11. -do-

plan and to form a government to which Britain could transfer power. Since he had been set a time limit for this task, he was given greater power than his predecessor, Wavell. In the event of his inability to secure any agreement between the Congress and the League on the basis of the Cabinet Mission, he could formulate an alternative plan. As suggested earlier, the Congress had never approved of the Cabinet Mission plan. Since the arrival of the Mission, the Congress had already gained a tactical advantage in driving Jinnah into a tight corner. In the fresh negotiations with Mountbatten, at first they argued for the cause of Assam being unwillingly dragged into Section C (North-Eastern Zone in the Plan), and later they played on the traditional Sikh hostility towards Muslim and said that Sikh would not agree to subjugation under Muslim rule in Section B, of the North-West Provinces. The justification of "Muslim majority areas" was strongly contested during the negotiations. The Mission's insistence on its inability to see any justification for

including, within a sovereign Pakistan which Jinnah wanted, those districts in which the population was predominantly non-Muslims became a dominant issue in the negotiation. Choudhri Muhammad Ali observed that :

The attitude of the Congress, in effect, was that it would rather concede a truncated Pakistan than work the Cabinet Mission plan as conceived by its authors. Some Congress leaders hoped that the League, confronted with a truncated Pakistan would accept the Cabinet Mission plan as modified by the Congress, but this was wishful thinking. If the choice were between a truncated Pakistan and a genuine Cabinet Mission plan, the League could choose the latter, but as the choice lay between a truncated Pakistan and the Congress' concept of a unitary India, a truncated Pakistan was preferable.

In short, as of March, 1947, a truncated Pakistan was mutually acceptable to the Congress and the League, although neither relished it.¹³

This line of argument was later confirmed by Mountbatten's strategy; Jinnah's 'sovereign Pakistan' could materialize only in a truncated form.¹⁴ Mountbatten now set about his task by confronting Jinnah with a clear two terms of choice: either the League had to accept the Mission's proposals or take its 'Pakistan' carved out of India by partitioning Punjab & Bengal.¹⁵

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13. Ali, C.M., op.cit., pp.121-122.
14. TOP, Vol.X, No.101 (Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Jinnah), 8/4/47, pp.158-160, and No.105 (Record of interview between Mountbatten and Jinnah), 9/4/47, pp.163-164.
15. Ibid., No.101, p.159.

Jinnah begged the Viceroy "not to destroy the unity of Bengal and the Punjab , which had national characteristics in common : common history, common ways of life, and where the Hindus have stronger feelings as Bengalis or Punjabis than they have as members of the Congress.¹⁶ For him, to keep the two undivided Muslim majority provinces had a crucial importance in the final arrangements at the Centre. The demand for partition did not at least in principle imply a curtailment of the rights of the Hindu or Muslims wherever they were in a minority.¹⁷ As long as the Pakistan conceived by the League contained substantial non-Muslim minorities , it could have a stronger bargaining hand with 'Hindustan'. Therefore, what Jinnah hoped at this stage of the battle was to force Congress to "meet him half way".¹⁸

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17. Ali, C.M., op.cit., p.122.

18. Jalal, op.cit., pp.250-253.

Mountbatten's record of his interview with Jinnah, shows that the latter was most upset at the possibility of a "moth eaten" Pakistan:

I (Mountbatten) said that I found that the present Interim Coalition Government was every day working better and in a more cooperative spirit; and it was a day dream of mine to be able to put the Central Government under the Prime Ministership of Mr. Jinnah himself.

He said that nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to have seen such unity, and he entirely agreed that it was indeed tragic that the behaviour of the Hindus had made it impossible for the Muslims to share in this.

Some 35 minutes later, Mr. Jinnah, who had not referred previously to my personal remark about him, suddenly made a reference out of the

blue to the fact that I had wanted him to be the Prime Minister. There is no doubt that it had greatly tickled his vanity , and that he had kept turning over the proposition in his mind.

Mr. Gandhi's famous scheme may yet go through on the pure vanity of Mr. Jinnah ! Nevertheless he gives me the impression of a man who has not thought out one single piece of the mechanics of his own great scheme, and he will have the shock of his life when he really has to come down to earth and try and make his vague idealistic proposals work on a concrete basis.¹⁹

The Viceroy decided to give the Provinces the right to decide their own future. His plan

19. TOP, Vol. X, No. 105, p. 164.

envisaged that representatives of predominantly Muslim and non-Muslim areas would meet separately in each of the Provinces; if it was found that both sections of these Provincial Assemblies were in favour of Partition, that Province would be partitioned. In both the Punjab and Bengal, with the European members abstaining, the Muslims commanded a majority, and by this time almost all Muslims were under the influence (if not control) of the League.²⁰ Hence the majority in the Assembly (minus the Europeans) in each Province could be expected to (and did) vote for the 'Pakistan' Federation to take over. As regards the extention of the principle of partition to the Provincial level, the second poll of those members of the Assemblies from those districts in which the Muslims

20. Ahmad, S.N., op.cit., p.274 (a note by Craig Baxter). As regards the Punjab, besides this source, IAR (Vol.I, 1947, pp.268-269) gives account on a joint session of the two sections of the Punjab Assembly—~~Western~~ and Eastern Punjab — held at Lahore for the decision of the provincial partition.

were not in a majority of the population. The "sub - assembly" by representatives from non-Muslim majority areas was, in both Provinces, in favour of the provincial partition. The opinion taking was ended at this "sub-assembly" level and the demarcation of precise borders was left to a Boundary Commission.

Jinnah was however very keen on Pakistan comprising of undivided Punjab and Bengal. He believed that the central government of India after independence would be dominated by the Hindus, and unless any pressure was exerted from outside , the Muslim majority in India would suffer. According to Usman Khalid :

The Muslim could only hope to form governments in provinces where they were a majority. Therefore, they naturally wanted the provincial governments to have adequate power guaranteed in a written constitution so that the lot of Muslims at least in provinces where

they were a majority could be improved.²¹

What had to be secured for the battle was the effect of the propaganda that Hindus and Muslims in India were so irrevocably divided that it was necessary for outsiders around them to prevent them from falling at each other's throats. Jinnah had to gain time for his tactics, therefore he did not put all his cards on the table at the outset. In a situation where the substance of the demand was kept undefined, may found it difficult to form anything like an intelligible picture of the state under the proposed "Pakistan scheme". The delay however played an important role in the game.

Jalal argues that the 'two nation' theory with which Jinnah had hoped to get the League a

21. Khalid, Usman, Foreword to Political Legacy of Jinnah by Yusuf, K.F., London, 1985, p.10.

share of power at the Centre was the sword which was now cutting his Pakistan down to size.²² Really, the concept of nationhood used in this battle was originally meant for the opponents and critics of the League. As the final phase of the battle approached, the stage was set for the creation of a separate homeland, although it fell far short of Jinnah's expectations. He hurriedly made desperate efforts to remove the misunderstanding of his conception on 'Pakistan'.

...I am fighting for Pakistan, which means I am fighting for the freedom of India, I appeal to Muslims and Hindus and others to examine the position. Do not be carried away by dreams. let us be practical...²³

It was nothing but an appeal for a truce on the basis of 'Pakistan'.

22. Jalal, op.cit., p.255.

23. Jinnah's speech on 27 March, 1947 in Bombay (TOP, Vol. X, No. 101, p. 159. f. n.).

C O N C L U S I O N
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- I -

This study has been concerned with the development of the Muslim League and the Pakistan demand in the Punjab in the decade before the Partition. At the outset the political position of the Punjab as a Muslim majority province was confirmed — a typical colonial legacy which existed in the form of the Unionist Party was by nature incompatible with a national strategy of the League, which did not take root in the Province. So far, the principle factors that worked to preclude the League's early establishment and the eventual capture of full ministerial power in the Punjab have been highly related to the discussion on the failure of a 'communal message' of the League vis-à-vis the Unionists' strategy based on the 'cross-communal' policy. But in this study, we have attempted to pay more attention

to the inherent situation created from within the society. Similarly, the League's ascension to power accompanied by the rise of support for Muslim separatism also could not be explained merely by setting counterposing the two theories — namely, the failure of the 'cross-communal' strategy of the Unionists vis-à-vis the League's 'communal message'

As was made clear in chapters One and Two, even before the League's intrusion into the Province, the direction of the Muslim politics in the Punjab was discernibly diversified. Apart from the party-oriented politics, various interests among the Muslims came out on the scene. In this atmosphere, the growth with 'stability' of the Unionist Party or the 'cross-communal' theory was never without disturbances. The point that weighed in the advance of the Muslim League in the Punjab was that it obtained a timely footing in the

aftermath of the Shahidganji incident, which changed the political atmosphere of the province completely into a communal tendency. The 'communal' demand for the Shahidganji mosque's restoration was deliberately chosen by the then various Muslim Leaders to consolidate Muslim support. As a promising Muslim Party, the Ahrars decided not to commit themselves firmly vis-à-vis the Unionists' line represented by Fazl-i-Husain's semi-communal approach. Later on, the Muslim urban intellectuals opted for a strategy after Fazl's premature death. That was deeply rooted in an antagonism against the 'Punjab ruralism', which strongly characterized the political structure of the Province.

The early campaign achieved the Unionists' goal of bringing the Ahrars down at great cost to the communal harmony of the Province. The Ahrars' non-committal attitude was after all a half way measure and lacked

essential criticism against the communal inclination of the Unionists' politics.

The 'cause of Muslims' provided an opportunity to the urban Muslim intellectuals, who had been strongly opposed to the rural elite powers, the basis of the Unionists' politics. Because of the new political directorship of Sikandar Hayat who tried to stick to the strict definition of the term 'Unionism', namely a supra communal unity, much more than the founder of the Unionist Party did, the place for a particular demand in favour of one religious community was naturally off the course for the new 'Unionist' leader. But, by this time, there had been every indication in the Province that a certain kind of communal stance passed with flying colours. The urban elites' eyes was taking in everything for the consolidation of their support; the situation, where the 'cause of Muslims' suddenly was thrown out of the mainstream , found new leaders in

this wing. They could use the remaining heat of the Shahidganji incident to steer provincial affairs to their own advantage. The rebirth of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League owed a lot to this political climate.

At the beginning of the period of provincial autonomy, however, the Unionists leadership had formed a solid block, strong and united, in spite of the small group of Punjab urban Muslim leaders attempting to thwart the power. For Jinnah, who was persuaded to return to India from self-imposed exile in England and to take charge of the Muslim League a little more than a year before the 1937 elections, situation like this had been already set at the outset of the fresh start of his political career. Not only in the Punjab, but also in other Muslim majority areas local Muslim leaders outside the League, had entrenched themselves in the provinces, and they were extremely reluctant to follow

the all-India Muslim policy in order to maintain their own original policy, based on regional concerns. In the case of the Punjab, though Jinnah could appreciate the devoted efforts of the urban elites to solidify the foundation of the Provincial League, he noted at the same time that the League would never achieve a hold over the Province without encroaching upon the rural basis of the Unionist politics. Because he wanted a broadbased organization in the Punjab, he appeared to hesitate to leave matters wholly or even mainly to a group which could not yet muster general support in the Province.

The Sikandar-Jinnah Pact which came out at this strategic movement was to perform consummate tactical function, in spite of much controversy on its true interpretation. In return for the extremely good understanding of the 'situation', Sikandar was given by Jinnah special powers to dominate the affairs of the Provincial Muslim League. Naturally,

this caused great deal of frustration among the newly organized provincial Leaguers, namely the Iqbal group. Moreover, in addition to this complicated atmosphere, the demand for 'Pakistan' which was in full swing at all-India level, especially centering around the Muslim minority provinces, began to evolve casting a particular regional accent on the Muslim politics of this Province. In order to discuss this point, we have been concerned in this study with the shape the so-called Pakistan movement took in the Punjab by focussing attention on the student movement. The Punjab Muslim Student Federation held the position not only because of the active and energetic participation in it, but also because of the role as a suitable asylum for those 'Leaguers', who did not feel at home in the Unionist - dominated platform of the League.

In this sense, as far as the Punjab was concerned, the 'League' politics as a nucleus of the Pakistan movement, purely

under the very name of the Muslim League, had to await a certain development of the situation till 1944, when the double - game of the Unionists, who tried to exclude the League's interference in the Punjab by making use of the dual membership of the two parties under the 1937 Pact, was over. The rise of the League in the provincial politics did not mean any change at the leadership level. Helped essentially by a factional struggle within the Unionist Party, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League came to be finally dominated by a 'new generation' of the prominent leaders in the Unionist wing at the top, who switched over to the League on the calculation of their own best interest. Their skillful transformation as 'Muslim Leaguers' and the effect of this on the mobilization of the people on the demand for Pakistan also showed that in the Punjab a certain spirit of unity achieved during the Pakistan movement was largely based on personalities rather than on 'party' principles.

In connection with the separate home-land issue, what captured the imagination of the Punjab Muslim leadership can not be seen merely in terms of the interests of the Muslim community. As we have already seen, the provincial nature of the separatist issue was quite centrifugal by nature. It comprised not only of a new vista entertained by the feudal elements but also of the challenge of the urban Muslim elites to fight the traditional political structure. The young men found in it a useful fighting principle, providing people a platform on which to guide the orthodox 'League cause'.

Furthermore, in order to advance our understanding of the various shades of thought on 'Pakistan' among the Muslims in this Province, we have placed focus on the following three standpoints — the religious leadership, the business community, and the left wing. In the case of the religious

leadership of the Punjab, the power structure in politics was almost equally applicable to their structural bases. Because of this, their responses to the Pakistan issue was quite realistic in proportion to the changing political situation of the Province, in particular with 'Pakistan' in sight. Since their apparent 'political' backing for Pakistan was actually being done under the very name of the religious backing, their political ambition was circumspectly hidden in the course of the battle.

To the Punjabi Muslims in business, the so-called 'Pakistan movement' gave a chance to band together against the Government policy under the War. Their complaints had a kind of double nature namely not only against the monopolization of the non-Muslim counterpart but also against the dominance of the rural 'Muslims' in the provincial affairs, which was,

they believed, the cause of the indifferent attitude of the Government. Unlike the particular ambition of Muslim big businessmen throughout India, which can not be related without mentioning the League's mobilizational efforts through its guarded attitude towards the economic issues, the 'political' motivation of Punjabi Muslim businessmen originated in their real lives, rather than in sort of open aspiration.

The left wing (Communist Party) in the Punjab during the period of the Pakistan movement set their backing for the cause of the League with in certain ideological mould. In accord with the Central Party's justification of the right of a 'Muslim nationality' to self-determination, they joined the movement through the front gate of the League. Although they objected to the Unionists as part of the reactionary elements, they failed to be so sensitive in grasping the changing phase of the power structure of the Province in the midst

of the movement, which was almost perfectly shifting from the Unionists' hands to the League. As a result they were later on to disclose their inability to justify many contradictory aspects of their political behaviour.

Following the resignation of the Congress Ministries, the All-India Muslim League suddenly shot into importance, mainly through the British policy. A series of negotiation on the future of India gradually led Jinnah to obtain the chance to convince them that no constitution would be adopted without the League's approval and consent. The demand of the League for 'Pakistan' itself played a certain role in Indian political life; it compelled the Congress and other organizations including various community groups to think afresh on the problem of minorities and the extent and degree of self-determination for different territorial units. But difficulties arose when the real emphasis shifted from the demand of self-determination to one for division of India. The myth of a separate nation was strengthened by the League's adoption of undefined

'Pakistan' as its official objective. The League's claim to be the sole representative of the Muslims in India was also emphasized to buy time. But, even in those days, the call for 'Pakistan' was partly supposed to be merely adopted for the sake of improving the bargaining position of the Muslim League.

When Jinnah decided to challenge the Unionists in the Punjab he was motivated by the all-India consideration that the Punjab as a Muslim majority province should demonstrate its unwavering solidarity with the All-India Muslim League. His involvement in the affairs of the Punjab was to prove a catalyst that transformed the configuration of the Provincial politics for the remainder of the period of the provincial autonomy. The development of the League politics there was, however, not directly linked to the League's attainment to power before the Partition. Namely, in the Punjab, the League under the period of consideration did not serve

its political apprenticeship by fulfilling certain terms of office. In this sense it may be concluded that the Punjab joined the new nation-state of Pakistan through the League not as a party, but as a 'movement' that stirred the Province strongly enough to lead the political atmosphere into a new direction. This did not necessarily mean the League's full readiness to shoulder the burden of responsible provincial leadership.

- II -

Nearly forty years have passed since the Partition of India, but the 'Partition issue' has still current meanings, especially in the context of the contemporary politics of Pakistan. This does not necessarily mean that India is now totally immune from the political complexity originated from this historical event. Rather, what draws my attention to the former is the frequent as well as direct feedback of Pakistan's politics to the Movement for Pakistan.

Luckily, in connection with this study, I have visited Pakistan twice — first, during the summer vacation of 1986, and, second, in the beginning of 1987. Through the rare chance of contacting many Pakistanis and consulting a variety of material including daily newspapers, I was in the early stage of the research, to tell the truth, so much embarrassed

to know the so close relationship between the 'past' of forty years back and 'today' of the society. There are still going on arguments on what the new state was then envisaged to be. In this regard, to decide what Jinnah said during the period of the Pakistan movement, a kind of hair-splitting examination of his speeches and writings serves even now as a reference point for debate on the nature of Pakistan and its future. Thanks to the guidance given by Professor Bipan Chandra before and after the research trips to Pakistan, I have now developed my interest in the Partition Studies afresh from this unexpected embarrassment.

The latest flareups of rioting in Karachi has brought home to us the existence of the crucial issue of nationalities in the society, which has been developing into a ticklish situation, in particular, concerning

the position of muhajirs (Muslim immigrants into Pakistan from India after the Partition.)¹ Because of the Federal Government's concentration of all power at the Centre, the demand for provincial autonomy had so far appeared justifiable as a healthy balancer to us outsiders. But the muhajirs' reaction against the concept of four nationalities which came out through the recent riots which negates the concept of a 'Pakistani' nation, seems to lead to a serious dilemma in the nation-building process peculiar to this society. Through the battle for Pakistan with many sacrifices, Muslim muhajirs have settled in the promised land to become 'Pakistani' and not to become Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluchis or Pathans. This group's insistence on strengthening forces that would help to build Pakistan's unity through culture-oriented

1. For the discussion on the recent issue of muhajir and nationalities, see the writings of Iqbal Masud, Partha S. Ghosh, Babar Ali, and Shibte Hasan in Bibliography.

elements — Islam, Urdu ... etc. — all depends on factors to which the proponents of the confederation in favour of the idea of the regionalism have hardly given much importance.

Meanwhile, the question of the ideological roots of the demand for 'Pakistan' also still continues to be contested by many people. Especially, the emergence of the phrase 'Ideology of Pakistan' in post-1977 Pakistan occupies a position of central importance in the appraisal of the Pakistan movement.² Apart from the debate, strictly at the level of definition, the 'ideology of Pakistan'

2. For the discussion on the 'Ideology of Pakistan', see the writings of Muhammad Munnir and Pervez Amirali with Nayyar in Bibliography.

as a means of creating an Islamised society and as an instrument for forging a new national identity is now a target of severe criticism from those who are opposed to the present regime. Jinnah himself never used the phrase. But the phrase has been contextualized in the need for stability of those in power after the establishment of Pakistan. National leaders in power emphasize and demonstrate that the basis of Pakistan is found in the shared experience of a common religion. This has resulted in the oppositions moving to a line of debate which has strengthened the secular aspect of the State structure. Interestingly enough, through this controversy, the 'Two Nation Theory' has now entirely come to the fore among the very opposition circles who firmly confirm that it has genuine historical roots and so also 'Pakistan' which are a century old,³ most probably in order to negate the policy of the current Islamization.

3. Pervez Amirali with Nayyar, op.cit., p.168.

Furthermore, the nationalities— issue and the 'Ideology of Pakistan' controversy mentioned above are subtly entangled with the question of Punjabi ethno-centricity, which was created by the Pakistani rulers as an ideological instrument for the smooth implementation of their centralized unitary policies.⁴ Instead of the term ethnicity, the situation is also explained in another form as protest of the suppressed peripheral nationalities of the country vis-à-vis the dominant core nationality.⁵ Unlike the muhajir issue, this clearly indicates that the separate loyalties which have so far evolved around the regional issues are still functional enough to identify themselves in contrast to the allegiance to a certain religious — cultural solidarity.

4. For the discussion on the issue of the Punjabi domination, see the writing of Uma Singh in Bibliography.
5. See the writing of Asghar Ali Engineer (1984) in Bibliography.

Lastly, in Pakistan today, we notice that the ideological battle for the termination of longstanding polarization characterizing the current politics is being fought between the authoritarian establishment and its allies in the theocratic lobby on one side, and the people with aspirations of democracy on the other side. In fact, through this confrontation, many opposition leaders have emphasized the significance of reconstruction of the State on secular principle. But during my second visit to Pakistan, I have come to know that the 'anti-secular' campaign, which is at present the target of those who are against the current regime, is not necessarily sustained only by the religious orthodoxy or the imperialist powers as the critics put it. Furthermore, the so-called 'secular' approach that can be seen in the recent Partition Studies of Pakistan is closely related to the quite opposite view on the same issue, which happens to take the form of the 'anti-secular' campaign.

In order to clarify these two aspects, I am here concerned with the following two stimulating writings ——— one is written by Ziauddin Sardar, and the others by Hamza Alavi.⁶ Both of them are, in spite of the extremely opposite viewpoints, eager to make a break in the current situation. Alavi has shown his understanding of the Pakistan movement from point of view of a secular Muslim nationalism. He says Jinnah's two nation theory expressed the ideology of the weaker Muslim "Salariat" vis-à-vis the dominant high caste Hindu "Salariat" groups. The "Salariat" class, who was, according to him central to the movement, is the product of the colonial transformation in the Indian Society of the 19th century and it comprised those who had received an education that would equip them for employment in the

6. See Bibliography.

expanding state apparatus. This class is essentially an auxiliary class which serves the economically dominant classes in the colonial and post-colonial state and has its own specific interests by way of opportunities. Because of this complete 'class-interest' understanding and the consequent strong denial of the ideological origins of the Pakistan State, he seems to have totally left out the 'emotional factor', which was no doubt underlying at the bottom of the movement.

Meanwhile, Sardar, who has emphasized the importance of the "contemporary appreciation of Islam", is not a proponent of the politics of any religious fanaticism. Rather, he makes a calm approach to a controversial 'Islamic society' with a message that it cannot come about in the absence of proper intellectual home work. According to him, 'Islamic state' as a result of the Pakistan movement is even

now a process of becoming, not an instant product that is imposed from above. In this respect, he says that Pakistani intellectuals and 'ulama' owe it to their integrity to articulate such basic notions of Islam as justice and equity, brotherhood and political consent in accordance with contemporary reality and to fight for policies through which these principles can be integrated within the fabric of society. As this attitude shows clearly, he holds the view that nothing but Islam can provide legitimacy for Pakistan's existence. Looking back on the Pakistan movement, he says :

If the Muslims of India desired a secular state they would have stayed in India,..... To hope that Pakistan will become a Marxist Paradise or a secular heaven is to be a benighted imbecile. To actually work for such a goal is to negate the legitimacy of the country.

If we could call Sardar a reformer with a message, Alavi would be an 'opponent' of the present regime. In this sense, the latter seems to be for the time being busy in negating everything religions in order to attack Islamization, and his 'secular' approach to the Partition study also can be said to be partly 'aimed at' being a weapon to oppose the current policies of the Government.

During my stay in Pakistan, I asked particularly those who are now in the so-called progressive circle how they appreciated 'Islamic-factor in the historical context of the Pakistan movement and how they wanted to deal with 'Islam' in the current context of their 'movement'. If I am allowed to say here my frank impression, most of them seem to regard 'Islam' as a completely reactionary force. They say that the rulers use 'Islam as a reactionary force, therefore they are fighting it.

But I hardly found any support for Sardar's understanding.⁷ Although the discussion on the role of Islam in the Pakistan movement is another independent topic, the 'past' of forty years back is now brought back to life in the form of issues mentioned above.

7. Besides Sardar, as far as I know, Institute of Policy Studies (Islamabad) non-government centre for policy-oriented research represent the exact same line of vision. According to their guiding principle of a 'new experiment' in Pakistan, "The Challenge that confronts the people of Pakistan is not to discover what is the Islamic political order but to institutionalize the principle of Shura in their political life.

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