Chapter-III

The Breaking Down of The Impass and The British Responses 1940-45
As the World War II was reaching its crescendo, the working committee of the all-India Muslim League made overtures to the British government to mobilise the resources of the country, provided they were assured constitutional guarantee of Pakistan. Jinnah told the Viceroy that he was not going to sell Muslims for the sake of few crumbs of office during the War. He called upon the British to give them half the seats in the executive council and the right of self-determination to the Muslims alone. Jinnah pleaded to His Majesty's Government (HMG) to accept his demand because he felt, in the end, Congress had always agreed, once it was recognised by HMG. Jinnah cited the example of separate electorate being granted by the British government in 1909 to be accepted by the Congress at the Lucknow pact in 1916. Similarly, Congress opposed the thirty-three and half per cent of Muslim representation in the Central legislature but when HMG granted the communal award in 1932, it accepted after some resistance. Jinnah surmised, just like earlier occasion Congress would be forced to accept the Pakistan demand, once HMG gave its recognition. What Jinnah actually pleaded was vocal declaration of Pakistan in order to come to terms with the Congress.

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188 See "The Statesman" of August 21, 1942 which gives detail account of the All-India Muslim League session held at Bombay.
189 See Jamaludin's Ahmed's speeches and writing of Jinnah, Lahore, pp 562-65.
British government's attitude to this situation was to keep away from the Pakistan business. The Viceroy took the line that, Pakistan or any other solution was a matter for the Indian themselves to resolve. HMG should not be accused of continuing the deadlock or sabotaging the reconciliatory effort. It should be made clear that British government was unbiased towards one or other principal parties. 190

Viceroy Linlithgow gauged that in the wake of the growing intransigence of both Muslim League and the Congress there could be no settlement. He feared, at the end of the war Gandhi would repeat his demand for national government and Jinnah would insist on Pakistan. Viceroy felt that since HMG could not go against the wish of the majority or a substantial minority, the best course would be to sit back and make positive move at an appropriate time. Linlithgow discerned that the apprehension of Hindu domination forces Muslim League to demand Pakistan. He felt that communal factor was so interwoven that it would be impossible to reach an agreement on an united India. 191

The Governor of the Central provinces Twynam reported to Viceroy tha "HMG should avoid the policy of appeasement and be in no hurry to move."

190 Linlithgow to Amery MSS\URF\125\12-24, 24&25 May 1943, The Viceroy House, New Delhi.
191 Ibid.
Jinnah understands well enough that Cripps offer accepts the idea of self-determination and that's the principle which hold good. Indian politician had always demanded more than what they needed in hope of eventually settling for something less, but now the difficulty was HMG can offer no more." Twynam added, 'since HMG can not set up a central government without the support from either of the parties, therefore it should not concede Pakistan.'

Viceroy, Linlithgow observed that since both Congress and the Muslim League were mutually divided to safeguard their political future and enhance their leader's position, it would be better to avoid any discussion which could be misinterpreted. HMG aim felt Viceroy should be secure the support of both the parties and priority should be given to the formation of a council where they were brought to the negotiating table. Linlithgow observed that it would not surprise, if there develops a mutual consent between Muslim League and the Congress for a coalition government.

It was at this point of time the Congress leader, Sir Tej Bhadur Sapru came up with the proposal that HMG should transfer power to an all-India

192 H.Twynam Governor of Central Provinces & Berar to Viceroy Wavell, extract L\P&J\ Secret & Personal, June 26, 1944.
193 Wavell to Amery L\P&J\513\H 298-304, July 16, 1944, Secret&Personal,The Viceroy House, New Delhi.
government headed by the Congress. As a reconciliatory gesture, he suggested, in future the executive and the legislature would jointly be controlled by Hindus, Muslims and the schedule caste. Sapru proposed to introduce major changes on the basis of joint electorate and make India a single nation state.

Jinnah resisted the proposal and wrote to the Viceroy that its acceptance by the HMG government would be repudiation of the pledge given to the Muslims and other minorities from time to time. Firoz Khan Noon of Punjab also raised objections to the Sapru proposal and informed Viceroy that Muslims were extremely apprehensive of HMG yielding to the vociferous Congress demands.

The Secretary of State LS Amery reported to the Viceroy that Muslim League press repudiates Sapru plan contending, it envisages a united government in which Hindus would have a predominant position. What they want was in the areas where Muslims constitute the majority be given first the right to frame a constitution.

Amery added, when Congress discovers, it was not going to get the Sapru type of government

For the details of Sapru proposal see secretary of state LS Amery's correspondence with the viceroy dated August 5, 1944. Transfer of Power of series 1942-1944.

Ibid.

Amery to Linlithgow MSS\EURF\125\12-24\ August 20, New Delhi.
their reaction would be more adverse because "India's nest contains Pakistan's egg." The Secretary felt that it was the Congress which had to evolve the means by which it can dump the Pakistan bogey. HMG remains firm that the best way out would be a mutual settlement of India's problem. If Muslim League and Congress were willing, then a transitional government could be set up and a constitution be prepared to ensure safeguards to the Muslims and other minorities. LS Amery observed that Muslim problem was real and can only be solved by mutual agreement. 197

As the Muslim League was building up the pressure on the British government to recognise Pakistan, Congress leaders started opening negotiation with them. In fact, Mahatma Gandhi himself wrote a letter to Jinnah showing his willingness to negotiate. The letter was withheld by the British government and Viceroy made it clear that it was not going to pay any heed to the meaning and language of the letter written by Gandhi. Secretary of State LS Amery and others were convinced that Gandhi would not accept Pakistan and did not see any outcome of the correspondence except magnifying his image. He was of the opinion that Jinnah's stature had been increased a good deal by handling the situation. 198

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197 Linlithgow to Amery Telegram, MSS\EURF\125\12-24\August 25, 1944.
198 For the details of Gandhi's letter controversy see Transfer of Power of Series May- August 1944.
Chaudhry Kaliquzaman, Muslim League leader of the United Provinces was not surprised at Gandhi's letter being withheld by the British government. He felt that Gandhi's letter was very vague and inconsequential and it was not desirable to enter into conflict with the British government. Khaliq considered that Muslim League's relation with the British was good and the response to the Pakistan issue encouraging. He knew, Jinnah would never come to an agreement with the Congress to which British government did not comply.

Viceroy Linlithgow made it clear that he was not going to buckle under Jinnah's pressure and maintain a reasonable distance in order to help the premiers of Punjab and Bengal to smoothly function during the War. This would give the signal that HMG was not subject to the dictates of anyone.

In his discussion with Jinnah, Linlithgow asked him to accept the Cripps offer and enter in the national government to which Jinnah refused. He insisted, since plebiscite would be a waste of time and may lead to riots in Punjab and Bengal, British government should first accept Pakistan. Linlithgow felt that since Jinnah represented a minority which could only hold itself with the

199 H Hallat Governor of United Provinces to Linlithgow, MSS\URF\5\11\ File no 144\Personal and Secret (UP) June 3, 1944.
200 War Cabinet papers file no43\203\ LPO&J\8\517\ff\ 54.7 Memorandum by the Viceroy of India.

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assistance of HMG, he wants to clinch maximum safeguards for his community. 201

After the Quit India movement, when most of the Congress leaders were under detention, Jinnah told Kanji Dawarka Das that he had talked to many prominent Hindu leaders who confessed that Congress was totally wrong in ignoring Muslim League and still there were many wise men out of jail who can iron out the differences.202

It was at this point of time, Rajgopalchari took the initiative of resolving the Pakistan issue. Rajaji, as he was fondly called lay down the conditions that if Muslim League agreed to support the Congress, the latter would constitute a commission to demarcate the contiguous Muslim majority districts in the North and East of India. These districts would decide by a plebiscite to be separated or not from India. In the event of separation, an agreement would be made on such essential matters such as defence, foreign affairs, commerce and communication. 203

The formula was an attempt to force Jinnah to define what he meant by Pakistan. His partial concession that Muslims should only have the right to the contiguous districts in the North and East of India where they were in absolute majority was to be interpreted as an attempt to deprive Pakistan of

201 Linlithgow to Amery MSS\ EURF\125\12 \ May 25,1943, Viceroy House, New Delhi.
202 Kanji Dwarka Das:Ten Years to Freedom 1968,pp286.
203 See Appendix for the text of Rajgopalachari's formula.
the numerous districts of both Punjab and bulk of Assam. His proposal was aimed to bring the majority of the Hindus in one fold and only give the right of self determination to those contiguous districts where Muslims were in a majority. The plebiscite of the entire population would dilute Muslims enthusiasm and in course of time they would cease to demand Pakistan.

At a deeper analysis Rajaji's proposal was to draw a line between Muslim politicians who wanted to keep their provinces intact by balancing them through cross-communal alliances and the Muslim League's leaders who wanted to seek their support to negotiate for the protection of the entire subcontinent's Muslims.

Rajgopalachari wrote to Devdas Gandhi, the journalist son of Mahatma that he could give a grand fight to Jinnah and demolish him in his own organisation except for the British government. British responses to the Rajgopalchari's proposal was luke warm. They felt that, the formula appeared to be binding only if there was an actual transfer of power to the Indian government. It was vague on mutual agreement and how essential purposes and central arrangement could be established. British government observed that Rajaji obviously had in mind the areas only co-terminus with the existing Muslim majority provinces would belong to Pakistan. In that was the case.

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Rajagopalachari to Dev Das Gandhi, November 29, 1943 MSS\URF\Serial no 2032\ Transfer of Power Series 1942-44.
then eleven districts in Punjab including Amritsar and about the same number in Bengal including Calcutta would belong to India. In Assam, Sylhet would be the only district with an absolute Muslim majority. Karachi and Dacca would be the only ports left to Pakistan.  

The new Viceroy General Viscount Wavell who took the charge after having a successful military stint in the middle-east felt that any pronouncement for or against Pakistan during the war would be catastrophic on the internal situation of the country. It was not clear whom Rajgopalchari represented and even if he could go some distance on his own he could hardly eke out any concession from Jinnah, felt the Viceroy. He also doubted that Congress and the general Hindu feeling would support him. The proposal obviously had Gandhi's blessing and offered blank a cheque knowing well that it would be rejected by the Muslims.

Jinnah very well understood the intricacies of the Rajgopalchari's plan and told Rajaji that he must have the Congress behind him plus the guarantee for the acceptance of Pakistan in principle and the plebiscite by the Muslims alone in the first instance. He scuttled the issue by referring it to the working committee and later denounced it as "a mimed, mutilated and moth eaten version of Pakistan."  

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205 Secretary of State LS Amery to Churchill LPO&J\6\1026\FF\73\ Via Air ministry CNC Telegram.

206 Wavell to Amery LPO&J\10\21, Wavell's Private Papers, July 11,1944.

207 See "The Statesman " October 5 1944.
Wavell thought that Jinnah made a tactical blunder by rejecting the formula so bluntly without suggesting any alteration. He assumed that much of Jinnah’s strength lies due to the feeling, both inside and outside the Muslim League that he was the only man who could stand up to Gandhi. Viceroy nevertheless was apprehensive if Jinnah meant business he would like to take the course which suited the most to his followers. 

On the other hand Wavell comprehended that the motive of Rajaji’s formula was more complex and one reason for Jinnah to turn it down was it did not come directly from Gandhi. Viceroy felt that Gandhi knew that most of his followers including the members of the Hindu Mahasabha detest the idea of Pakistan and if Jinnah’s fallacy could be exposed and he was put out of the way, a different opinion may prevail in the Muslim League camp. Wavell observed that what congress want was humiliation of Jinnah and his removal from the national politics. He observed that Jinnah was a shrewd fox who would only negotiate when confident of being successful. Viceroy recommended to avoid giving impressions that British do not want communal settlement."If there was an evidence that the parties were really anxious to come to terms and HMG intervention would help, it was only then we were to react." 

208 Wavell to Amery LPO&J 16/21, August 1, 1944, , Viceroy House, New Delhi.

209 Wavell to Amery· Telegram LPO&J 6/110/158
At the annual session of the all-India Muslim League on 24 April 1943, Jinnah made a public announcement that he would like to directly talk to Gandhi. He specially referred the necessity for the Hindus to guarantee Muslims the right of self-determination and a pledge to abide by the Muslim plebiscite alone. 210

Wavell observed that Muslim League was in a peculiar position to bargain with both the Hindus and the British government and they would like to drive as hard a bargain as they could. About Gandhi-Jinnah talks, Viceroy wondered "whether Gandhi was going to fall into the trap for the sake of merely having a Congress majority. Was he going to cling to the idea that the Congress ought to dominate in those few minor departments which any way was going to be transferred to the interim government. Was he going to be frightened to death on score that Muslims would break away leading to partition of India. Viceroy could not believe that Gandhi was going to be the party to such vital issues." 211

Wavell's impression was it would be difficult to reach an agreement if Jinnah was to claim half the portfolios in the central government. Since the agreement had to ratified by the Congress working committee, Gandhi would suggest a joint approach

210 War Cabinet papers file no 43/203\ LPO&J/8/517/ff 54.7 letter for Gandhi and Jinnah Proposed Conversation, Memorandum by the Viceroy of India.

211 Wavell to Amery Tel LPO&J/10/21 15, August 1944, Viceroy House, New Delhi.
to secure release of the detained Congress men from the jail. Wavell apprehended that Gandhi may side track on many issues to secure Jinnah's cooperation which could embarrass HMG, but was confident that Jinnah may not agree to do so.\textsuperscript{212}

Wavell observed that majority within the Muslim League were strongly in favour of coming to terms with the Congress. Muslim League ministries both in Bengal and NWFP were rather shaky and they could only remain in power by patching up differences with the Congress. There were some indications that Muslim intelligentsia might be satisfied with a united India, provided their representation at the centre was satisfactorily increased.\textsuperscript{213}

Viceroy observed that there was nothing tangible to come out from the talks and it was difficult to tell what Gandhi had in mind. It was believed that his main idea was to extract from Jinnah the definition of Pakistan and expose its hollowness. The other reason for Gandhi to agree for talk was to gauge Jinnah's image and judge common Hindu reaction on Pakistan.\textsuperscript{214} If this was the objective, then it was unlikely, Jinnah would fall into the trap and may not commit to any point, of substance.

\textsuperscript{212} Wavell to Amery LPO&J\10\23,24 August 1944 Viceroy House New Delhi.
\textsuperscript{213} Wavell to Casey, Governor of Bengal R\3\2\54\ FF 32-4, December 17, 1944, Viceroy House, New Delhi.
\textsuperscript{214} Wavell to the Governor of Orissa H Louis extract LPO&J\5\243 FF\180 \Report no 6\252, September 23, 1944 Government House, Calcutta.
felt the Viceroy. While on the other hand, both the parties would prefer to keep things as they were, since there was practical difficulty in implementing Pakistan scheme. 215

Wavell showed optimism that it was possible that some agreement may arise to shelve the Pakistan scheme before the end of the war. The two prominent Indian parties would ask for a provisional government on equal basis with common understanding regarding minorities and selection of representatives from other groups. 216

Jinnah seemed to be aware of the repercussion of any such agreement in the provinces where his position was not strong. It was obvious that any disturbance in the delicate balance would make the Muslims of the minority provinces stress their impending fate under Pakistan which may hamper Jinnah's long term tactics. Jinnah knows well that any arrangement with the Congress would prove fatal to his own ascendancy and for Pakistan.

Viceroy observed that Jinnah was not so naive to understand that British government was using him as a pretext to deny India's freedom. By doing so Jinnah's stature keeps on growing and HMG should stand up to him as they had done against the Congress. 217

215 Ibid.
216 Wavell to Secretary of State LS Amery Tel LPO&J\8\319 September 29, 1944 Viceroy House New Delhi.
217 Gandhi's request to see Jinnah War Cabinet Papers, file no\43\203\LPO&J\8\517\FF54-7, Memorandum by Viceroy of India.
In the wake of Gandhi - Jinnah talks dated for August 19, 1944, Tej Bhadur Sapru feared, Jinnah would argue an entire range of constitutional possibility and make most stringent demands. He therefore, advised Gandhi to base his arguments on the 1935 Act and on the offer made by Stanford Cripps. 218

Jinnah had three main demands, first- acceptance of two nation theory by which he meant a sovereign Muslim state to be constituted of the existing Muslim majority provinces. Second in these provinces the right of self- determination was to be exercised by the Muslim residents alone. Third- relation between Hindu India and Muslim India to be settled by a treaty, as between two independent sovereign states. Jinnah said before the Muslim claim had fully been settled, there was no question of any constitutional link between the two states or formation of provisional government in order to achieve independence. 219

Regarding the first demand, Gandhi had an outright objection. About the second demand, his stand was, if Jinnah was determined to have Pakistan it should be only without those districts of Assam, Bengal and Punjab where the population was predominantly non- Muslims. As far as the third demand, Gandhi had deliberately avoided mentioning the term central government and instead suggested "a board of representatives" of

218 Wavell to Amery Tel LPO&J 12/21 August 1 1944, Viceroy House New Delhi.
219 See Appendix for the full text of the Gandhi- Jinnah talks.
both the states or any other authority acceptable to both the parties based on mutual goodwill. As evident, Gandhi- Jinnah differed completely on the composition and character of Pakistan. Gandhi wanted partition but reserved the right of partnership of common interest. All that he was prepared to concede was an extended form of provincial autonomy. Gandhi's idea was to grant some form of self-determination for Muslims within a united India. His immediate aim was composition of provisional government responsible to a central assembly elected through adult franchise.

Jinnah wanted first the constitution of two independent sovereign states to be accepted in principle. He insisted that future decision must rest after the delimitation of the boundaries. Jinnah's plea for self-determination did not necessarily mean severance from India though he avoided the controversy by saying that there was no difficulty in understanding Pakistan, the only thing was, it should be conceded in principle at the first instance.

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220 Note by Evan Jenkins, private secretary of the Viceroy on Gandhi - Jinnah talks.
221 Wavell to Amery MSS\EURF\125\12\ Viceroy House New Delhi, Transfer of Power Series Volume 5
222 Report by reliable information of a talk with Jinnah giving exposition of his view on Pakistan issue: Annexure No 2, File No 187, MSS \EURF\125\127.
As expected, the much publicised Gandhi- Jinnah talk ended in a failure. Jinnah was flabbergasted and told Kanji Dawarka Das "why did Gandhi came forward for the talks when he had nothing substantial to offer." 223

The breakdown of the talks revealed the absence of any common ground between Gandhi and Jinnah. Gandhi wanted to delegate power to an interim government first and then settle the Hindu- Muslim differences. If Gandhi's interim government materialises, he would hope for Hindu domination in India, subjected to some kind of self- determination given to the Muslim provinces, felt the Viceroy. 224

Viceroy observed that Gandhi had made no efforts to mitigate the Hindu character of his provisional government by offering substantial share of power to the Muslims. He felt that Gandhi's search for truth fall very low in his political agenda and despite willingness to talk, he appears to be as intransigent as Jinnah. On the other hand, Jinnah declined to give further details unless the two separate states Hindustan and Pakistan were constituted. 225

The break down of talks compounded the problem as despite pretension of friendship there was undercurrent of bitterness between them.

224 Wavell to Amery Tel\MSS\EUR\LPO&J\8\45\October 19, 1944.
225 Ibid.
Viceroy observed that Jinnah was arguing for something which he had not worked out, while Gandhi was putting counter proposal in which he did not believe. Nevertheless, the parleys helped in bridging the gap between extreme and moderate Hindu opinion.

According to Wavell Gandhi- Jinnah talks had only clarified that they had not abandoned their frigid ideas and were bent, talking on parallel lines. The talks were designed to trap Jinnah into an exhibition of unreasonableness regarding Pakistan which would be beneficial to the Congress cause. Wavell felt that Jinnah extradited himself pretty well from the trap. In view of the extreme backwardness of the Muslim masses, Jinnah was apprehensive of their succumbing to the propaganda from Hindu landlord and capitalist classes. Notwithstanding the fact Jinnah's insistence to agree for plebiscite by Muslims alone was damaging his case, felt the Viceroy.

The Private Secretary of the Viceroy, Evan Jenkins observed that Gandhi- Jinnah talks clarified the Lahore Resolution only to the extent that Pakistan essentially constitute of Sindh, Baluchistan, North West Frontier Province, Punjab, Bengal and Assam. The question of their sovereignty was to be decided by Muslim residents of these areas without references to the wishes of other inhabitants.

\[226\] Ibid.
\[227\] Ibid.
\[228\] Note by Evan Jenkins, private secretary of Viceroy on Gandhi-Jinnah talks R\3\1July 23, 1944. 113
This was however not the definition of Pakistan, because without Calcutta the eastern Muslim states would hardly have any meaning. The demand for Assam by Jinnah strikes as one of the most bizarre claim where Muslim population was just 33 per cent. If suumer valley was to be excluded then rest of Assam had just 20 per cent of Muslim population.  

The Governor of Assam A. Clow reported that although there was speculation on partition in some section, the situation had been vitiated by the plebiscite suggestion. There were rumors that Assam government land policy was aimed to create Pakistan. It advocated linking Sylhet to Bengal so that the valley may be outside Pakistan. Since then the fear of Muslim majority in parts of the valley loomed large among the Hindus. They would not have resented immigration so vehemently if they did not fear that this would subsequently strengthen Muslim claim for separation of Assam.

The idea of Pakistan alarm Hindus who fear Mahatma may betray them while Muslims fear Gandhi may diddle their cause. However, the Gandhi- Jinnah talks had underlined Jinnah's dominance and the general public opinion was, it had got Congress recognise Jinnah's representative character. The break down of the talks had disappointed many Muslims while Hindus breathed a sigh of relief in Assam.

229 A Clow, Governor of Assam to Wavell extract\MSS\EUR\ LPO&J\ FF\34 October 5, 1944. Fortnightly Reports, India Office Library.
230 Ibid.
231 Ibid.
Liaquat Ali Khan told Governor Clow the possibility of Assam being divided. He said a new proposal had been made on behalf of Gandhi which suggests the possibility of having a separate Pakistan and an agreement on defence and some other matters with the rest of India. 232

The premier of Assam, Saddullah told the Governor that he pointed out to Jinnah that the demand for the whole of the province would not secure Muslims dominance. He made it clear that close identification of the Muslim League with the immigrants would not convince the Muslims of Assam, the majority would be too small, the Hindu's too clever and Muslims too quarrelsome. 233

Clow reported to the Viceroy that Jinnah had some idea of leaving out a piece of north west Bengal to make Muslim position more secure. Jinnah reported to have said that even backsliding of Muslim League ministry was preferable to none at all. It was not surprising that Jinnah proposes a new idea to justify Assam's inclusion in Pakistan by claiming not only provinces where Muslims predominate but simply dominate. He claims six provinces to be handed over as sovereign Muslim territories. Clow informed that something should be done to debunk the impossible Muslim claim and Jinnah should be warned to swallow the bitter pill of Pakistan. 234

232 Clow records the conversation with Liaquat Ali Khan, Ibid.
233 Clow records the conversation with Sadullah, chief minister of Assam, Ibid.
234 Ibid.
As the power-brokering was going on at the centre, provincial politics also became fluid due to the absence of Congress from the political arena. Muslim League urged its provincial members to prepare themselves on the war footing.\(^{235}\)

Jinnah by reference to social justice and economic organisation tried to make the provincial premiers believe that their future lay only in following his leadership. Jinnah said, after the war, British government would be left so powerful that they would not confer on us the boon of Pakistan. Right now the mercies shown by the Governors of Sindh, Bengal and NWFP should not give them any false hope as this was to expose the promises Muslim League had made to the masses.\(^{236}\)

Jinnah abhorred the idea of loose federation and argued that a strong centre would pulverise the provinces and in that case Muslims would be driven to the wall. Jinnah said that at a time when British government was no more to hold the balance and the interim government was in authority to distribute powers, Muslims would find themselves in a hopeless minority both at the province as well as at the centre. In such case that would be the end of Pakistan. \(^{237}\)This was the reason why

\(^{235}\)Note of the proceedings of the all-India Muslim League session April 29 1944.

\(^{236}\)Jinnah address to the AIML session at Delhi on April 29, 1944 cited in Pirzada's Foundation of Pakistan Volume 2 pp 423.

\(^{237}\)See Jamiluddin Ahmed's Speeches and Writings of Jinnah pp 382.
Jinnah insisted on establishment two sovereign states and formation of an interim government on equal footing with the Congress as the only way to safeguard Muslim interest.

Wavell could not believe that an astute politician like Jinnah could be serious about Pakistan. His refusal to answer awkward questions raised by Gandhi showed that he had not thought out its implication or would not like to disclose them.

The Viceroy thought that there should be some saner solution to the crude Pakistan bogey which had every ingredient of being a direct route to civil war. He felt that attraction to Pakistan to the uninformed Muslim masses lay in the belief that within a given area they would place themselves at an advantage against their non-Muslim neighbours.\footnote{Wavell to Amery October 3, 1944, Transfer of Power Series Volume 5.}

Wavell’s reaction was, Pakistan required a careful consideration as party attitude had hardened since 1942. He discerned that if articulate Muslim opinion insists on separation they should not be denied the right of self determination and in case sanity dawns upon them they would choose some form of union with India. Since Jinnah would not even discuss a constitution till Pakistan was conceded in advance, British government should take initiative to press upon the Congress to agree to the Muslims demand. Formation of a separate sovereign state for the Muslims in India was the only way to keep India united, felt the
Viceroy. British policy, therefore should be to come down to the side of Pakistan because that was the only way Jinnah may be willing to cooperate with rest of India. The possible solution to Wavell was to explore the prospects of a constituent assembly which had to remain in power till some common agreement was achieved.  

As far as Muslims in the minority provinces were concerned, most of them thought Pakistan to be a bargaining point in opposition to the Hindu Raj. Most of them seem to be satisfied with 50-50 percent representation in the Congress provinces.  

The Governor of Central provinces Twynem reported to the Viceroy that the fear of Hindu domination of the Muslims did not mean that they wanted severance from Hindustan.  

The problem started vitiating since the speech made by the Viceroy Linlithgow at Calcutta on December 29, 1942 where he visualised India as one geographical entity with a federal constitution. Later Wavell's reference of the geographical unity of India created a wide spread resentment among the Muslims who regarded it as an attempt to sabotage their demand. They felt that British

239 See for details Papers prepared by Wint Moon during 1944-45 and note by Hallet Governer of UP, April 1944- July 1945.
240 H. Lewis, Governer of Orissa to Wavell, extract LPO&J\5\234\FF18O July 23, 1944 Government House Calcutta.
241 H Twynam Governer of Central Provinces and Berar to Wavell, extract\LPO&J\, July 26 1944.
government should reiterated their pledge and make an advance on the Cripps offer. Muslim League wanted an immediate adherence to the broad principal of division of India as demanded by the AIML through the Lahore Resolution.\textsuperscript{242} Sir Lurnely reported from Bombay to the Viceroy that there was considerable swing on the part of the Muslims towards Pakistan, more out of despair than anything else.\textsuperscript{243} This was also true of the Muslims of other minority provinces like Bihar and the United Provinces.

The return of Allah Baksh ministry and his open association with the Congress boosted the prospects of Muslim league to come to power in Sindh. It got opportunity when Allah Baksh ministry was dismissed in 1942 and Muslim League ministry was reappointed under Hidayatullah. It was followed by the holding of the all-India Muslim League session in Karachi in 1943. Ever since then Muslim League established itself on relatively firm footing in Sindh though the rivalry with GM Syed continued. However by July 1944 Sindh government seem to be revolting again from Muslim Leagues control and GM Syed demanded its resignation. Even then, Jinnah asserted that he

\textsuperscript{242}Note of the proceedings of the AIML, April 24, Delhi, 1944.
\textsuperscript{243}R. Lurnely Governer of Bombay to Wavell extract MSS\EURF\125\52\ March 23, 1944, Government House Bombay.
controlled over fifty per cent members the provincial Muslim League.\textsuperscript{244}

H. Dow, Governor of Sindh reported to the Viceroy, that undoubtedly since the discomfiture of Allah Baksh ministry in 1942 there had been great rise in League's membership but in the present circumstances Jinnah was unlikely to put any imposition if it did not suited the province. The Governor knew that if Jinnah tried to temper with the Sindh ministry soon the support to the Muslim League would fade away.\textsuperscript{245}

In North West Frontier Provinces Governor Cunningham reported that Pakistan issue was brought on the forefront and Peshawar city was holding a conference where Jinnah may possibly be invited to preside. Mher Chand invited a debate on the issue but premier Aurangzeb tactfully avoided the Pakistan controversy. At the outset Governor had warned Aurangzeb to put the Pakistan idea in the back burner. It was Cunningham who protected Aurangzeb's ministry from the onslaught of Dr Khan Sahib. Here Muslim League's victory in the four by-elections had little to do with any enthusiasm for Pakistan. It was victory of the British over subversive elements (Congress) which Jinnah was claiming to be his own. In the NWFP where 75 per cent seats


\textsuperscript{245} H. Dow, Governor of Sindh to Wavell extract\MSS\EURF\ LPO&J\ FF\34, October 5, 1944. Fortnightly Reports, IOL, London.
were reserved and Muslim League held power since 1943-45 provincial legislature never passed a resolution in favour of Pakistan. 

In Bengal, the situation was slightly different. Muslim League campaign from 1942 shifted the focus concerning the province to the issues which suited the all-India Muslim League. This was as a result of British government’s attempts to mobilise all possible elements due to war time consideration.

Governor Casey reported that he did not like the manner in which the mischievous propaganda of the Muslim League was causing hindrance to the war effort. Since the Lahore Resolution, Muslims of Bengal want the boundaries of the North-East Pakistan to be less than Burdawan division comprising, Howrah, Hoogly, and Midnapore districts, by including all of Assam and part of Purnea district contiguous to north west of Bengal. The combined area would give them a majority of 58 per cent in place of 51 per cent, if only Bengal and Assam were included. The minorities point of view, felt Casey, advocate a more homogenous Pakistan by including whole of Bengal because they would get less opposition from Hindus than by its partition.

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246 Cunningham Governor of NWFP to Wavell extract\MSS\EURF\LPO&J\FF\34, July-October 1944. Fortnightly Reports, India Office Library London.

247 Casey Governor of Bengal to Wavell extract\MSS\EURF\LPO&J\FF\34, July-October 1944. Fortnightly Reports, India Office Library London.
Governor reported, that Khwaja Nazimuddin wants an autonomous sovereign Pakistan with a bare non-Muslim majority which would share responsibilities with India on mutual basis of give and take. He feels that Congress dominated centre may not have an effective hold over Bengal and would be satisfied if Hindus agreed to the idea of an independent eastern-state where Muslims have an effective majority.

Governor reported that the reasons advanced were ridiculous as it would have all the disadvantage of a small state and would not be an economic unit except being a Muslim homeland. Casey felt that Bengalis were suffering from the claustrophobia that politics of the subcontinent had always been dominated by the area near Delhi and Bengal had suffered most.

There was little evidence to suggest that in Bengal most Muslim Leaguers thought of a sovereign Pakistan as late as till 1944. Industrialist Isphani could only tell Casey that Muslims did not want to be under Hindu domination. The Governor observed that Muslim League was determined to have Pakistan but would not necessarily mean to be excluded from Hindustan. The main objective behind the idea of Pakistan was to secure a base for negotiation on equal footing with the Congress, and once this done, it was only then Muslim League would turn its attention towards united India. Not withstanding the fact, Casey summarised that Pakistan idea was doing incalculable harm to the Muslim community.  

248 Ibid
As the Muslim Leagues influence grew in national politics, its attitude hardened towards the Unionist party in Punjab. The aim of the all-India Muslim League was to organize itself as a separate entity in Punjab. Here Premier, Khizar Hayat Khan reaffirmed his faith in Muslim's right of self determination but detested the interference of Muslim League in the province. Jinnah however made it clear that unless the Unionist label was discarded and Punjab ministry was called Muslim League, he would not lend any support to the popular reform which the Unionist government was like to bring about.

Governor Glancy reported that Kizar had not yielded any ground and Jinnah had failed to move him, the fear was in the long run the delicate communal alignment of Hindu, Muslims and Sikhs may break down in Punjab. Governor reported that things had come to such a pass that Kizar was expelled from the Muslim League and Unionist party was in a precarious position. Muslim League had started a propaganda campaign and it was high time that Unionist took effective measure to safeguard its name. 249

249 B. Glancy Governor of Punjab to Wavell extract\MSS\EURF\LPO&J\FF\34, July-October 1944. Fortnightly Reports, India Office Library London. Also see correspondence with Wavell, LPO&J\5\247\FF\75\ Governor House, Lahore June 7 1944. Punjab's Chief Secretary Report, LPO&J\248\106\First Half of March 1945.

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Jinnah attacked the Punjab ministry by denying the existence of Sikander- Jinnah pact. He suggested that there was no Unionist party and both Kizar and the Unionist belong to the Muslim League. In order to protect himself, Khizar wanted the Governor to issue an official order to stand up to Jinnah in the interest of the prevailing war situation. Glancy rejected the appeal but conceded that the main threat to the political tranquility in the state comes from Jinnah and the Muslim League.  

Jinnah returned to Lahore in 1944 proclaiming Pakistan to be the panacea of all ills. Glancy warned that the idea of Pakistan had dire implication for Punjab. It seems that enthusiasm for Pakistan among uninformed Muslim circles was a political recourse for which the state may suffer. The scheme had not been unpopular with some Muslims and was intensely disliked by the Hindus and the Sikhs. HMG should make it clear the practical difficulties that stood in the way if the idea of Pakistan was hobnobbed in Punjab. Governor pleaded that the various schemes for India's partition should be analysed and sufficient water should be thrown on their impracticability. It should be Jinnah and his followers to explain their position; at present their cry was, give us Pakistan and we would explain you its working latter; how illogical this seems felt Glancy. He stated that there was nothing more alarming menace to peace then the pursuit Pakistan and no

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\(^{250}\) Ibid.

\(^{251}\) Ibid.
one can deny the possibility of the political unrest after the war. Any serious attempt to materialise Pakistan with its bare Muslim majority in Punjab was expected to plunge the state into a civil war.

However, Glancy concluded that Pakistan would never come about and Jinnah's attempt to take Punjab by storm was a very bad show. He requested the Viceroy to wean away Muslim opinion from Pakistan and offer them if not equal, at least adequate representation at the centre.252

The problem was compounded by the rising prices and ambition of the distinguished families in Punjab. So Kizar had no option then to accept Jinnah's leadership. The failure of Khizar - Jinnah talk was the turning point in the provincial politics. It was since then that the rural elite was forced to choose between Unionist and the Muslim League, majority plummeted towards the League fulled by social, economic and religious reasons.

In 1944, the Muslim League press came up with a pamphlet regarding the delimitation of population in Eastern Pakistan. It said that the two states of Pakistan in the North and the East would have the existing population as in India and in case, Muslim minority of Hindustan or the Hindu minority of Pakistan found it intolerable to stay in their present homeland an exchange of population was to be contemplated. Pakistan would constitute the national home of Indian Muslims while Hindustan would be the national home of the

252 Ibid.
Hindus. After deciding the constitutional rights, the non Muslim residents of Pakistan would have all the rights of a normal citizen. Correspondingly, Muslim residents would have the same rights in Hindustan. This was the substance of the Lahore Resolution of the all- India Muslim League, passed on March 22, 1940 and since then remains the sheet anchor of Muslim India's political demand.\[253\]

Governor of Bengal Casey accounts some very interesting conversation with different people in his diary. PG Griffith told Casey that a great many Hindus all over India were conscious that since 1942 Gandhi had led them astray. Public opinion favoured that an agreement between Congress and the Muslim League would result in a joint government at the centre. He felt that if Pakistan came into being it would eventually flounder for economic reasons. The two Pakistan could not economically be self- sustained areas. Griffith told Casey that British had done nothing to remove suspicion that they do not want to block Hindu-Muslim settlement. If British stood firm and make it known, they would accept nothing less than formal agreement, the idea of Pakistan --

may fade away.254

Casey's conversation with Shabuddin suggest that Pakistan movement in Bengal arose primarily out of Muslim experience with the Hindus who had done every thing possible to keep them down. In addition, Muslims believe that it was impossible to find safeguards to withstand the Hindu pressure, therefore they insist on a sovereign state.

MIRA Baig, organiser of the national war front, thought Jinnah really did not want Pakistan and he was using the movement to garner Muslim support. Once Muslims were able to hold themselves on their own, they would then agree to an all-India government. However he felt, more the separatist idea of Pakistan was canvassed, the more it was to get buried into the mind of the Muslims.

The Muslim League leader, Khawaja Nazimudin believed that communal cleavage in reality was based on economic considerations. Hindus had held Bengal in fief till recently and now Muslims were determined to break this shackle. Once Pakistan in the north-east was established there would be no one more keen to join then the Hindus of Bengal. They would have a share in the administration and would be given reasonable safeguards. Industrialist, MAH Isphani admitted that he did not believe in Pakistan till a few years

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254 Governor of Bengal Casey's Diary in two volumes, January - July and September- December contains the account of the above interview with different people, seen at the India office Library London.
ago but now it seems to be inevitable. He was happy to note that Muslims were showing signs of political regimentation.

Begum Shah Nawaz said that, she always wanted a loose union of races within India on the lines of original constitution of the United States or America. Though she lamented that the Pakistan movement started as a protest but as time progresses, it was on a journey of no return. Speaker of Bengal Assembly, Nausher Ali was of the opinion that not even quarter of Muslims had any conviction about Pakistan and a stage would come when Jinnah may drop the idea in exchange of adequate safeguards for the Muslims. The economic advisor Sir Theodore Gregory regarded Pakistan more as a rallying cry than a concrete policy. Steven felt, by pursuing the idea of Pakistan, Muslims were riding for a fall. In any case they would have the same privilege in India as in Pakistan. They would have a ministry in Bengal and would have an upper hand in Punjab. In Central government they were likely to get an adequate representation. On the contrary formation of Pakistan would result into a very third rate administration.

Casey's conversation with GD Birla suggests that it was not possible to achieve an all-India government and there was no alternative than to partition of India. DP Kaitan told Casey, if Muslims want

\[255\] Ibid.

\[256\] Ibid.
Pakistan they should be given the same. Munshi suggested, since Bengal consists of Hindu and Muslim constituent, the predominantly Muslim east-Bengal should be separated. The editor of "Hindustan Standard" Hem Chander Nag said that Hindus and Muslims were unlikely to reach an agreement and British had to impose a solution. However, he thought Pakistan would be a devastating failure.  

Governor of Bengal Casey summarised that he saw no alternative to Pakistan as it was in a stage of inevitable journey. However, he stressed that Pakistan was impossible and more, the intelligent Muslims realise, the better it was.  

When asked to define Pakistan, Jinnah told Kanji Dwarka Das, if Congress had agreed to his suggestions, communal problem would have been resolved by now. He wanted one friendly gesture from the Congress which had not been forth coming. Jinnah added, "you tell me what was my fault, why so much venom was spilled against me, why Hindu press had become my enemy, why they doubt my credentials, why they forget my old records, why Hindus were considering me foolish who wants to divide India, tell me, what was unconstitutional in asking Pakistan to be accepted in principle. If a working principle was agreed  

257 Ibid.  
258 Ibid.
upon first, then the other details could be discussed on a latter date. Jinnah quipped." He explained that Pakistan did not mean pan-Islamism and wanted to see it within the geographical boundary of India. Jinnah showed his apprehension that much time had been wasted and if immediate solution was not reached, the two communities would not able to work together ever in future.²⁵⁹

What Jinnah wanted was, Congress and the British government should first accept his demand for Pakistan then he would explain its form and content. Pakistan was to constitute of the existing Muslim provinces in the north and the east with safeguards to its minority population. To effectively run the government Jinnah demanded parity with the Congress at the centre. He wanted the British to supervise as how both communities would work together in matters of common interest by retaining supremacy at least on defence and foreign affairs.

Viceroy clarified that British should allay any fear that they were using Hindu-Muslim differences for their own advantage. It should categorically be stated that HMG still adhered to the terms of the Cripps proposal and do not wish to make political move of any consequence. Viceroy felt HMG could give India independence but not unity; it had to be completely neutral between Hindustan, Pakistan or united India. British government do not want to antagonise the Muslims as

they had been friends and supporters for several years. The north west and north east of India that would possibly be Pakistan lies across the track of British line of communication. Also, HMG would not like to antagonise their Muslim cousins in middle east which lie across the imperial line of communication by air and sea.  

Bengal governor Casey wrote to Wavell that he had all the reasons to believe that the demand for Pakistan was a wishful thinking of the Muslims and could be a plausible bargaining point. At present it was the biggest hurdle in the way of the constitutional settlement of India. The perception of both the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress was, Muslims should not get more than their share of population.

On the other hand, Muslim League would not agree to perpetual Hindu domination through a strong central government. Pakistan was the extreme expression of Muslim suspicion which was to some extent real but not justified. Nevertheless, Casey added, unless the idea was quashed and other means of satisfying the Muslims substituted, it was unlikely to declare independence. A definite attempt had to be made to woo the Muslims away from the Pakistan

260 Wavell to A, Hope Governor of Madras \LPO&J\3\20\FF\35\file no 10\ Secret and Personal November 3, Viceroy House New Delhi.
and provide them alternative with safeguards.261

Wavell observed that Pakistan do not make any sense but in the present scenario it was on an inevitable stage of journey. The demand of Hindus had crystallised for an all-India unitary government, while Muslims were adamant on the two nation theory. The Hindus were largely to blame for this attitude of the Muslims, because of their policies in the Congress run provinces between 1937-39. It was since then, Muslims were convinced that no proper safeguard could ensure them a fair deal in an all-India set up. If Muslims wanted Pakistan they could have, but as far as British government was concerned it would be a mistake, felt the Viceroy.262

Viceroy's impression was Pakistan would not work as it would create new minority problem as bad as of now. Since this was an emotional issue not thought out, it thrives on opposition. Some of the enlightened Muslims may regard it as a bargaining point but for the Muslim masses it was a real proposition with strong sentimental appeal. The usual plea of the Muslims was Pakistan should be first conceded and the details of its working could

261 Casey, Governor of Bengal to Wavell LPO&J\8\520\FF\95\October, 9, 1944, Government House, Calcutta.
be worked out later. The state or states would be economically unsound, felt the Viceroy, and even if Punjab and Bengal were made economically viable, in the long run they would gain nothing out of its secession. In both the provinces they any way would dominate the legislature, it was going to give them nothing except freedom from the centre; this may sound attractive but might lead to economic subjugation far worse than what Muslims fear now.\textsuperscript{263}

Wavell observed that since religion and social pressure were very strong in Indian politics, the best course would be to exploit local patriotism. At the same time there was no harm in asking Muslim intelligentsia as how they propose to deal with some of the serious difficulties about Pakistan and was there any saner solution to India's partition?\textsuperscript{264}

Viceroy felt that some solution was expected to emerge, if HMG got some educated Muslims to think seriously on the issue. As far as Pakistan was concerned, the new state can not emerge purely on Muslim plebiscite. They can not take over Calcutta as Muslim capital or make economic success of the predominantly Muslims rural areas of the east- Bengal. The right solution would be the pursuance of federal scheme embodied in the government.

\textsuperscript{263} See the informal discussion of political situation on the last days of the Governors conferences, Wavell Papers Political series August - September 1944.

\textsuperscript{264} Ibid.
ernment of India Act of 1935, but the problem was if now even princes were brought on the forefront to accept the federation both Muslim League and the Congress would backtrack. Wavell doubted any way shorter then government's imposition to resolve the deadlock. It was through the all- India conference at Simla that the issue was to be resolved. 265

Discussion

During the war British conservative politics was to pay lip service to bridge the communal impasse in India. They wanted Indians themselves to iron out their differences. Since Congress remained intransigent during the war, Linlithgow and his successor General Viscount Wavell helped Muslim League to consolidate its base in the Muslim majority provinces. Governors of these provinces favoured the formation of Muslim League ministries due to absence of Congress from the political scene. The position of Muslim League was though very weak but it had progressed in five years from non-existence to form governments in these provinces. It was during this time that the idea of Pakistan electrified the masses, a concept which preceded the delimitation and the demarcation of its territory.

Seeing a discernable shift in the Muslim masses towards the idea of Pakistan, Congress opened negotiation through Rajgopalchari who dwelled

265 Ibid.
at length to clear the about the ambiguity of Pakistan.

Rajgopalchari envisaged Pakistan to be created out of Muslim majority districts by taking the plebiscite of the entire population even in the Muslim majority districts. It was believed that it would sensitise the Muslim masses of the implications and dilute their enthusiasm for Pakistan. Rajgopalchari's proposal sought to draw a line between Muslim politicians who wanted to keep their provinces intact and those whose undefined demand threatened the cross communal alliances. It was a threat to Jinnah's ascendency as his power to bargain effectively depended on the backing of the undivided Muslim provinces of Punjab and Bengal. Fearful of being exposed, Jinnah dubbed Rajgopalchari's proposal as a" husk of Pakistan" and wanted to talk to Gandhi directly.

In September 1944, Gandhi -Jinnah talks concentrated on the precise meaning of Pakistan. Since the outline of any scheme of an interim government was never discussed, Gandhi's impression was, Jinnah wanted two independent sovereign states with no connection between them, except perhaps by a treaty. The talks focused on independence or resolution of communal issues first. Jinnah was adamant to have the existing provincial boundaries with Muslims alone deciding the future to be accepted at the first instance. While, Gandhi accepted division of India as between the
members of the same family reserving the partnership in things of common interest. He rejected the two nation theory and conceded some limited form of self-determination to the Muslims of the majority provinces. Jinnah did not subscribe to Gandhi’s view and the parleys ended in a failure.

At the provincial level, a new configuration was emerging since 1937. Congress drive for an unitary form government compelled the provincial leaders to be safeguarded their interest from the Central governments mechanisation. At the same time, the provincial politics operated under its own local parameters.

In Punjab Unionist party had been grounded on the terms of Sikander- Jinnah pact to support Muslim League at the all- India level and did not want its interference in the provincial politics. There existed a delicate balance of three communities under the Unionist party which drew its sustenance from British support. Communal configuration became rife in Punjab after the Shahidgang Mosque Grudwara dispute. After Sikander's death, Khizar Hayat Khan took the reigns of the state and when Jinnah tried to storm the state, discarding the pact and calling the Unionist as Muslim League ministry Khizar could not stand up to Jinnah pressure.

In Bengal, Fazlul Huq ministry of Krishak Praja Party, Hindu Mahasabha and Congress at its constituent survived since the mooted defence council by the British. Jinnah objected to Fazlul Huq's participation in the council as a Muslim and when the latter accused Jinnah of dictatorship, he was expelled from the Muslim League.
However, as a result of rift between United Party there was a defection in the Krishak Praja Party's camp and Fazul Huq had to show his dependence on the Muslim League again. His ministry was discredited after the famine in Bengal and a Muslim League ministry was again sworn in under Khawaja Nazimudin whose survival was always doubted ever since its inception.

In Assam, the Muslim League government was installed under Sadullah which sought assistance from the British and the Congress. In Sindh from 1937-42 successive government were dictated either by Congress or Hindu Mahasabha. It was during this period that Muslim League made inroads in this province, the main catalyst being Manzilgah the mosque-temple dispute. However, it was only late in 1942 that Muslim League was able to hold ministry lead by Hidayullah which was soon to raise the banner of revolt from Muslim League's control. In NWFP, it was the blessing of Governor Cunningham that sustained Aurangzeb ministry during the war.

Though Congress was absent from the political arena between 1942-45 and Jinnah had relatively an easy time making inroads in to the provincial satraps, but he was unable to succeed in stalling any loyal league ministries in the Muslim dominated provinces. Muslim politicians aligned themselves with the Muslim League out of calculation and not due to any commitment to the party. Their loyalty was to keep their respective provinces intact. Muslim leaders of these provinces wanted
to support Muslim League provided it does power broking for them at the centre. Their aspiration was for a strong and powerful province rather than any commitment to Pakistan.

At the fag end of the war, Jinnah had lost all semblance of authority in Punjab; Sindh and Assam’s ministry was getting out of control, the survival of Bengal and NWFP ministry lay on Governor's favour. Even at this juncture, Jinnah asserted his claim on having full control over six Muslim dominated provinces. This he could do by raising the banner of the Muslim League aloft beneath which he wanted to keep the waring faction united. It meant he could not be precise about Pakistan.

Jinnah always scuttled the issue by saying there was no difficulty in understanding Pakistan, first accept it in principle then he would explain its meaning. It seems he had in mind formation of two independent states as Hindustan and Pakistan bonded by a comprehensive treaty under the British supervision.

The Punjab Governor Glancy and his counterpart in Bengal Casey were unanimous that Pakistan idea should be immediately quashed, but Wavell wanted the construction of a council to precede for an agreement on the communal issue. Perhaps he did not want to preempt the future in a simple way.

In the ultimate analysis the Lahore Resolution which sowed the seeds of two nation theory which left the people confused and guessing due to its ambiguous character. The Muslim majority and
the minority provinces interpreted them in their own way. Rajgopalchari and Mahatma Gandhi tried to shed the mist by seeking explanation and Jinnah scuttled the issue of Pakistan. The absence of the congress from the political scene, led Muslim League make inroads into its majority provinces. The Governors of Punjab and Bengal warned that the demand for Pakistan was an alarming menace to peace and Jinnah should be cut down to size. Not withstanding the facts, Viceroy Wavell chose to ignore the views of the governors two important provinces on whose support thrived the rationale of Pakistan. He proposed to resolve the communal impasse through the all-India conference at Simla by initiating an agreement on the formation of an interim government at the centre.

The fourth chapter dwells upon the Liaquat - Desai pact and the congress British responses towards it. It discusses in detail the impact of Simla conference on the political scenario of India. It gauges the provincial reaction and gives the reason of the failure of the Simla conference.