CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The dawn of the twentieth century found the Muslims of India in a great mental anxiety. Political awakening was around them and they were unable to decide their course of action. While a section of their community wanted to indulge in politics to secure 'adequate representation' in the Councils, a sizeable section among them still adhered to the advice of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the great saviour of the community, who told them to be aloof from politics which he considered to be the other name of revolution and thus going back to the days of the great Mutiny. The speech of John Morley, the Secretary of State for India, finally settled down the controversy, whether or not, the Muslims should participate in politics. A pressurised Mohsin-ul-Mulk formed the Simla Deputation.

1. See Articles in the Aligarh Magazine 1900 written by leading Muslims, some of them advising their co-religionists to join political movement and the others asking them to be aloof from it.

2. See Sir Syed's speeches in opposition to the National Congress in Lucknow, 1887 and Meerut, 1888, Mukkamul Majmaa Lectures Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, (Lahore, 1900), pp. 295-325.
which presented an 'Address' to Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India, at Simla on October 1, 1906 that marked the beginning of political activity among the Muslims. The 'Address' highlighted the grievances of the Muslims community and implored the Viceroy for 'a due consideration of their genuine grievances, in the forthcoming political set-up of India. As a result of all this, the All India Muslim League was founded in Dacca on December 30, 1906, with Nawab Vigarul Mulk as the President of the Session.

The foundation of League had created the general impression among the Indians—Hindus and Muslims—that it was to oppose the Indian National Congress. But it was combated by the Muslim leaders who explained that the League was founded "to prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities." The League in its objectives very clearly mentioned


4. For the Address presented to Lord Minto by the Simla Deputation see Struggle for Independence, 1857-1947, (Karachi, 1958), Appendix II, p.3.


6. The Pioneer, October 25, 1906, see article 'Mahomedans and Hindus.'

that it would promote among the Musalmans of India feel­ngs of loyalty to the British Government and safeguard their political rights.

Since 1892 they had always been under-represented or sometimes even had no representation at all in the Councils and the majority community won all the seats. Therefore the Muslims fought for the separate electorate in 1908-09 and the League in its annual sessions of 1907-1908 demanded and resolved for the grant of the separate electorate. The Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, President of the London Branch of Muslim League, led a delegation to Lord Morley to convince him of the urgency of the separate electorate. The outcome of all these persuasion was the Minto-Morley reform scheme of 1909 which provided the right of separate electorate to Muslims. The moderate Congress leaders welcomed the separate electorates but the other section of the Hindus looked down upon the scheme as unfair to them. This led to a temporary cleftage between

8. Ibid.


11. Contd...
Hindus and Muslims but the Tripoli and Balkan Wars (1911-12) and later the World War I (1914) united them. The Hindu-Muslim unity was further cemented when the Lucknow Pact (1916) provided adequate representation to the important minorities by election and the Musalmans through special electorates on the Provincial Legislative Councils. The Pact also said that for the Imperial Legislative Council "one-third of the elected members should be Mahomedans elected by separate Mahomedan electorates in the seven provinces in the proportion, as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by 12 separate Mahomedan electorates....." Thus the long cherished dream of the League and Congress was fulfilled and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Mazharul Haq, Mr. Mohammad Ali, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Pt. Jagat Narain, A.Rasool thanked their communities for tolerance, adjustment and political insight which was to create a United India in

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11. The Pioneer, August 20, 1906; See also the Modern Review, October, 1907, p. 338 and p.486 respectively. The Pioneer, July 18, 1909, See also the Presidential Address of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya to the Lahore Session 1909 of the Indian National Congress.

future. The efforts made by Jinnah for this unification was highly applauded and Sarojini Naidu is said to have repeated the remarks of Mr. Gokhale which he had made for Jinnah that "He is the best ambassador of the Hindu Muslim Unity." The Hindu-Muslim rapprochement, in 1916 marked an epoch which spearheaded the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movements in which both the communities stood unitedly to oust from India their common enemy, the British. Indian nationalism was mixed up with Pan-Islamism and one drew strength from the other. But the Hindu-Muslim alliance was short-lived and just after the suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement by Mahatma Gandhi, the British once again succeeded in tearing asunder the unity of both the communities.

The period between 1922 to 1926 had witnessed the rise of communalism, finding expression in communal riots in India which further uprooted the edifice of this unity so assiduously built up between the two major communities. The communal relations had reached such a stage that even the Nehru Report rejected the Lucknow Pact, the base of Hindu-Muslim Unity, and forced nationalists like M.A. Jinnah,

13. Ibid., p. 97.
Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali and scores of other Muslim leaders to leave the Congress.

The settlement of the 'Minority Question' was the corner-stone of Jinnah and Mohammad Ali's political philosophy which they continued to preach till their last days. Not that they were opposed to the Hindus but what they wished was the acceptance by the majority of their genuine rights to ensure perfect safety to the Muslim community. In a persuasive speech Jinnah said, "what we want is that Hindus and Mussalmans should march together until our object is achieved. Therefore it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but the Mussalmans of India, and here I am not speaking as a Mussalman but as an Indian. It is my desire to see that we get seven crores of Mussalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom. Would you be content with a few? Would you be content if I were to say I am with you? Do you want or do you not want the Muslim India to go along with you? You must remember that two major communities in India, I say this without the slightest disrespect to other communities like Sikhs, Christians

and naturally therefore these two communities have got to be reconciled and united and made to feel that their interests are common and they are marching together for a common goal." But Jinnah was unheard of and Maulana Mohammad Ali also met the same fate. Hence in sheer desperation they left the Congress. The severance of Jinnah and Mohammad Ali from the National Convention of the Congress was most unfortunate and it was from here that the politics of separatism was perfectly on heels.

The League, thereafter, met at Allahabad in December 1930 under the Presidentship of Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal who had unambiguously declared the goal of the All India Muslim League and supported the resolution of the All Muslim Parties Conference passed a little earlier at Delhi. In his Address, Sir Iqbal pointed out the areas which he considered to be as 'Muslim India.' He said - "I would like to see the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind, and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-Government within the British

Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India." The League, thus, for the first time highlighted its policy of securing a 'Muslim India' and declared emphatically that it would not be content with any of the constitution that fails to guarantee full Muslim representation on population basis in the Punjab and Bengal. All this was certainly not liked by the Congress.

The British stood as an observer of the situation and to solve the constitutional deadlock the Home Government called a Round Table Conference on November 12, 1930 of the leading political parties, prominent being the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, Hindu Liberals, Hindu Mahasabha, Depressed Classes, Indian Christians and Princes of States. The galaxy of the Indian representatives discussed the constitutional problems of their community. There was a sharp difference at the attitude of the British and Indian members of the Conference on the

issue of Dominion Status. The British Government was willing to grant Dominion Status only when the process of realising responsible government was complete. It might take years. But the British Government accepted to take steps in the Provinces regarding the full responsible Government with certain safeguards. Towards the end of the general discussion the conference decided to set up a Federal Relations Committee to consider the structure of a federal system of Government in India.

While discussions were in progress minority question loomed large on the Conference. Like their previous stand, the Muslim delegates while desiring India to be free, wanted some safeguards for the Muslims and to achieve this they made the convincing speeches in the conference. The Congress did not participate in the First Round Table Conference and it joined the Second Round Table Conference and devoted most of its time on constitutional and communal problems. Gandhiji who also joined the Conference informally convened the meeting of leaders to study and get


20. Ibid.
some communal settlement but he did not like many of the communal demands of the Muslim delegates. He had brought with him the Congress scheme for communal settlement. The scheme insisted on the 'joint electorate' as the basis of representation in the future constitution of India and 'reservation of seats' for Hindus and Muslims in provinces, where they were less than twenty five per cent of the population. When the details were worked out, the minorities could not reach any satisfactory solution. Thus Gandhiji failed to secure an agreed solution of the 'Communal Question' and communal problem stood where it was in the First Conference. The Conference ended on December 1, 1931 without achieving any solution for minority problem. The Third Round Table Conference which met on November 17, 1932, took stock of the first two conferences and prepared a complete outline of the new constitution which was submitted to the Parliament and which came out as the Government of India Act 1935.


The Constitution of 1935 envisaged a Federal structure with a scheme of Provincial Autonomy in the provinces. The All-India Muslim League condemned the Federal structure vehemently but decided to utilize its provincial part. In its Twenty-Fourth Session held at Bombay on April 11, 1936, the All-India Muslim League formally defined its attitude towards the Act of 1935. In its resolution the session resolved that "The All-India Muslim League enters its emphatic protest against forcing the Constitution as embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935, upon the people of India against their will, and in spite of their repeated disapproval and dissent expressed by various parties and bodies in the country, the Muslim League considers that having regard to the conditions prevailing at present in the country the Provincial scheme of the Constitution be utilized for what it is worth, in spite of the most objectionable features contained therein, which render the real control and responsibility of the Ministry and the legislature over the entire field of Government and the administration nugatory." This session, also

emphasised that Hindus and Muslims were not "two communities" but "two nations" in many respects.

Sir Wazir Hasan, the President of the said session, also stressed on the reorganisation of the Muslim League and suggested the creation of its district branches to enforce League's policy in view of the planned introduction of Provincial Autonomy. Keeping in view the new constitutional scheme the League under Mr. M.A. Jinnah formed a Central Election Board consisting of 35 members to take steps to contest the approaching elections. This was to be followed in Provinces also. But League was still a very weak organisation with no primary organisation worth the name and very insufficient means of propaganda to send its representatives to the assemblies to fight for the cause of the Indian Muslims.

A screening of the session of All-India Muslim League of 1936 reveals that for the first time it planned to organise itself for the election; became very active

25. Ibid., p. 259.
and posed itself as the only representative body of the entire Muslim community of India. For the first time, in its chequered career the League pushed the idea of Muslims being a 'nation' and not 'community'. Never before such ideas were projected and it was a novelty. Henceforth the League mustered its courage to fight stubbornly for every issue related to Muslims in India.

In view of the approaching election for the Provincial Legislatures under the scheme of 1935 which were to be held in February 1937 the League released its election manifesto, stating that it would see that democratic self-government, be realised and it would utilize the legislatures to extract the maximum benefit out of the constitution. The election manifesto also stood for the protection of the religious rights of the Mussalmans and pledged to fight against all measures which encroach upon the fundamental liberties of the people and economic exploitation of the country.

From the beginning the Congress stood for Hindu-Muslim as one nation. Throughout its long career, it

27. Ibid., pp. 152-56.
28. For more details see Ram Gopal, Indian Muslims, op.cit., pp. 243, 45.
fought for the cause of India and its people. In its Election Manifesto released in Bombay in its meeting of August 22, 23, 1936 the Party high-lighted its programme, "The policy of Congress", the Manifesto said, "will be to resist British Imperialism and to end its various Regulations, Ordinances and Acts". It promised "decent standard" of living, regulated hours of work and conditions of labours, settlement of disputes and relief against old age sickness and unemployment and the right to form Unions and to declare strikes', removal of untouchability and uplift of Harijans, development of cottage industry and the improvement in the treatment of political prisoners were also given very prominent place in the Manifesto. To acquaint the Muslim masses and to bring them in its fold, the Congress started a Muslim Mass Contact Movement and this also found place in its Manifesto.

As scheduled the elections were held in 1937 and the Congress won the majority of seats in the Legislative Assemblies of six out of eleven provinces, whereas the League failed to win majority in any of the four Muslim

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majority provinces. It won only 108 seats out of 484 seats contested. Seats captured by both the League and Congress and others were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of seats</th>
<th>Seats won by Congress</th>
<th>No. of Muslim Seats</th>
<th>Seats won by Muslims</th>
<th>won by other Muslim Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.P.</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>C.P.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.W.F.P.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1585</strong></td>
<td><strong>714</strong></td>
<td><strong>484</strong></td>
<td><strong>108</strong></td>
<td><strong>376</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A perusal of the able table reveals that the performance of both the League and the Congress was not satisfactory. Congress performance in the Muslim majority areas as well as in its own was below expectation and similarly the League also failed to do well in its majority areas. This can be attributed to their organisational immaturity. Jawaharlal had realised this and after the election he remarked that 'only in regard to the Muslim seats did we lack success. We failed because we had neglected working among Muslim masses and we would not reach them in time. However the Congress leaders were happy on their election results and declared that the Congress had entered the Legislature to combat the Act. It was also believed that the League and the Congress would cooperate in the Legislature to further the interest of the people of India as Mr. Jinnah had repeatedly declared his intention to work with other groups and parties. But now the position was changed. The Congress had emerged victorious and refused to entertain any proposal that might have the appearance of representing the Muslims as a separate political unit.

Congress refused to form any coalition ministry with the Muslim League unless they liquidated their organisation and repudiated all vestiges for their claim to form a separate political body. This was soon proved in U.P. which was a testing-ground for the Congress.

In U.P. Muslim population figured only 14% but had been politically active and influential. The Congress won majority of seats in this province but was unwilling to accommodate League. On the eve of the formation of Congress ministry, Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant, asked Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, the leader of the Muslim League, about the adjustment of seats. Khaliquzzaman replied that the League would accept one third seats of the total strength of the Cabinet and assured his party's full cooperation in all Congress programme. But he refused to accept any Congress Muslim to be on the Cabinet and argued that only the Muslim Leaguers were entitled to represent Muslims in the Cabinet. The Congress had no objection to it but wanted League to cease functioning as a 'separate group'. Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad handed over to Khaliquzzaman a

letter of the Congress party stating pre-conditions for the inclusion of League in the Cabinet. The letter stated that 'The Muslim League party in the United Provinces Assembly shall become part of the Congress party and will fully share with other members of the party their privileges and obligations as members of the Congress party.' The letter also said that 'The Muslim League Parliamentary Board in the United Provinces will be dissolved, and no candidate will, therefore, be set up by the said Board at any election.

The letter was interpreted in the Muslim League circle as a mischievous attempt of the Congress to merge the separate entity of the League into the Congress. It created suspicion among the Muslims that the Congress wanted to integrate the Muslim community with the Hindus. Khaliquzzaman called it a 'death warrant' of the Muslim League and refused to accept any compromise between the League and the Congress. League wanted Khaliquzzaman and Nawab Ismail Khan, both Leaguers on the Cabinet and no Congress Muslim while Jawaharlal's strategy was to give one seat to League and the other to a Congress Muslim.

This was in keeping with the postures of the Congress that it was a body composed of both Hindus and Muslims and the League did not represent the entire Muslim community. League's demand was acceptable to Maulana Azad but unacceptable to Jawaharlal and the former could not prevail upon the latter. The negotiation between the League and Congress was a total failure and from here the Muslim League stood more firmly as ever to fight for Muslim cause, Jawaharlal's refusal had changed the course of Muslim politics in India and strengthened the conviction among the League circle that the Congress was an organisation of Hindus and represented them only. The refusal of the Congress for the inclusion of two Muslim Leaguers on the Cabinet was certainly a blunder. The Congress could not have lost anything but gained the Muslim support if it had taken two Leaguers on the Cabinet. It was also not foreseen by Congress leadership that such a small incident would flare up into a mighty opposition in future. Assessing the incident Maulana Azad in his *India Wins Freedom* says: "Jawaharlal's action gave the Muslim League in U.P. a new lease of life. All students of Indian politics know that it was from the U.P. that the League was reorganised."

35. Ibid.
Jinnah made the most of such a situation, appealed to the Muslims to unite and fight against Congress. From here onwards the League and Congress never saw face to face and as Ram Gopal rightly puts it, 'It was one of the most fateful and distressing failures in the political history of India; it gave strength to the belief, held by adventurous Muslim leaders, that the Muslim should have a separate homeland.  

The popularity of the Congress among the Muslims was deteriorating but Jawaharlal, the Congress President, still claimed that two forces British and Congress dominated the Indian scene and the Muslim League represented only a small group of Muslims. This was immediately replied by M.A.Jinnah who said that the Congress did not represent the Muslims at all and had no authority to speak on their behalf. He said that besides the two, there was the third party, the Muslim League which could not be ignored in the emerging constitutional set up.  

The Congress had formed its ministries in provinces in 1937. Their treatment to the minority had been

rankling in the League's bosom. When tales of woo and oppression on Muslims in the Congress provinces were sympathetically described by the League Legislator, they were ridiculed and laughed at by the Congress.

The plight of Muslims in the Congress ruled provinces was a burning issue with the League and Jawaharlal's speeches for the Muslim Mass Contact Movement drew the attention of many observers of Muslim politics. Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal was one of them. He immediately wrote to Jinnah to counteract Jawaharlal's argument for the Mass Contact Movement and pressed him to call a Muslim convention at Delhi to combat Congress activities. In one of his letters dated June 21, 1937 Iqbal wrote to Jinnah: 'You are the


40. Jinnah in his presidential address said "when Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan was reciting in the U.P. Assembly, the tales of oppression on Muslims in different places, and was even giving concrete instances in support of his allegations, what were the Congressmen in the House doing? They were laughing and ridiculing him", see Ibid., p. 288.

only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up for a safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps to the whole of India.1 Palestine question was also an issue which agitated the minds of the Muslim masses and Dr. Iqbal told Jinnah to utilize it as well.

Jinnah was quick to react and in the annual session of the All-India Muslim League held at Lucknow in October 1937 he condemned vehemently the attitude of Congress towards minorities. Delivering his Presidential Address he held the Congress responsible for alienating the Musalmans of India by pursuing a policy which was exclusively Hindu. He appealed to the Muslims to reorganise themselves to formulate a constructive programme for the uplift of the Muslim India. He called them to seek protection under one flag. "I entreat and implore that every man, women and child should rally round the common platform and flag of the All-India Muslim League. Enlist yourselves by hundreds and thousands as quickly as you can as members of the All-India Muslim League, Provincial Leagues and District Leagues." Leagues Lucknow session of 1937 was a milestone as

42. Ibid., pp. 32, 33.
it was for the first time in the history of the League that it also worked on the Mass Contact programme for 43 Muslims.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League was directed to frame and put into effect an economic, socio-educational programme with a view to fix working hours for factory workers and other labourers; to fix minimum wages; to improve the housing and hygienic conditions of the labourers and make provisions for slum clearance; to reduce rural and urban debts; to derive means for the relief of unemployment; to advance compulsory education; to establish clubs and military colleges; to enforce prohibition; to abolish un-Islamic usages from Muslim society; to recognise a volunteer corps for social service and devise measures for the attainment of full independence and invite the co-operation of all political bodies working to that end.

To review the whole situation a special session of the All-India Muslim League was convened in Calcutta on

43. All-India Muslim League, Lucknow Session October 1937 Presidential Address by Mr. M.A. Jinnah, Printed and published by S. Shamsul Hasan, Assistant Secretary All-India Muslim League at Muslim League Printing Press, Darya Ganj, Delhi, 1945, pp. 6-18.

April 17, 1938 under the Presidentship of Mr. M.A. Jinnah. Over two thousand delegates from different parts of India participated. Mr. Fazlul Haq in his welcome speech drew the attention of Muslim India on the extremely critical position of Muslims created by the Congress and Hindu Mahasabha resulting into the suppression of the legitimate rights and liberties of the Muslim community.

Jinnah who delivered the Presidential speech acquainted the audience with the tremendous progress the League had made during this period by creating Provincial and District Leagues and enrolling lakhs of people. "Within less than six months," he said, "we have succeeded in organizing Muslims all over India as they never were at any time during the last century and a half. They have been galvanized and awakened in a manner, which has astounded and staggered our opponents. Muslims have shaken off their torpor and shed the miserable state of despair and demoralization into which they were sunk so deep. They are beginning to realize that they are a power. They possess the strength, the potentialities of which they have not yet realized, and if only they will take their affairs

in their own hands and stand together united there is no power that can resist their will." Thus Jinnah reinvigorated the League which it had never been in its history.

He had taken the challenges of the Congress most seriously and his speeches in opposition to the Congress were a sort of the 'declaration of war' against it. It surprised Gandhi who on February 3, 1938 in a letter expressed his anxiety over this change. He wrote to Jinnah:

"You seem to deny that your speech was a declaration of war, but your later pronouncements too confirm my first impression ..... In your speeches I miss the old nationalist. When in 1915 I returned from my self-imposed exile in South Africa everybody spoke of you as one of the staunchest nationalists and the hope of the Hindus and Mussalmans. Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah? If you say you are, in spite of your speeches, I shall accept your words."

46. Ibid., pp. 290-91.
But this letter could not modify Jinnah's stand. He characterised the Congress as a 'Hindu body' and declared that the Muslims have made it clear more than once that, besides the question of religion, culture, language and personal law, there is another question, equally of life and death for them, and that their future destiny and fate are dependent upon their securing definitely their political rights, their due share in the national life, the Government and the administration of the country.

The high-handedness of the Congress against the Muslims in the Congress ruled provinces was League's main concern. In its meeting of March 20, 1938 it resolved to appoint a special committee to collect all informations about Congress atrocities. This led to the appointment of an Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Raja Mehdi of Pirpur to investigate Muslim complaints against Congress ministries.

48. All-India Muslim League - Calcutta Special Session April 1938, Presidential Address by Qaid-e-Azam M.A.Jinnah, Printed and Published by S.Shamsul Hasan Assistant Secretary, All-India Muslim League at Muslim League Printing Press, (Daryaganj, Delhi, 1945), p.9.

Besides the Pirpur committee A.K. Fazlul Haq, the Premier of Bengal, in December 1939 also issued a booklet entitled *Muslim Sufferings Under Congress Rule* which also brought to light the Congress atrocities on Muslims.

Both the Pirpur Committee Report and Fazlul Haq's book, clearly pointed out that the Muslims were the worst sufferers under the Congress rule. The Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League also appointed a committee to inquire into the hardships of Muslims under the Congress Government. The Report came to be known as the Shareef Report which also brought out that the Muslims in Bihar were in a state of constant fear.

These Inquiry Committee Reports provided much literature to the authors of the League and Congress. While the League authors criticised the Congress for its revengeful policies the Congress authors defended it. To Maulana


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Abul Kalam Azad, all these charges 'were absolutely false.' "If there had been an iota of truth in any of these charges", he wrote, "I would have seen to it that the injustice was rectified. I was even prepared to resign if necessary on an issue like this." But in view of the discovery of letters of the Muslims addressed to the Congress High Command in the All-India Congress Committee papers, Azad's defence appears to be partisan. These letters were written to the Congress President and the Secretary by Muslims requesting the Congress leaders to tour their localities which suffered under the Congress Raj. Not only did the Muslims write these letters, even Christians too complained the way Hindu treated them.

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Under these circumstances the League convened its Twenty Sixth Session at Patna in December 1938. To challenge the Congress atrocities the course of action was to be decided here. Jinnah chaired the session and in his Presidential Address he refused to admit that the Congress was a representatives body of Muslims or Christians. It was a 'Hindu body' and represented 'Hindus only', Swaraj meant a Hindu Raj and the National Government a 'Hindu Government.' He criticised the Congress policies in most vehement manner and said that its policies had forced the Muslims to a life and death struggle. Jinnah's speech infused fresh energy in League every year and day by day it was gaining momentum.

The League charges were refuted by the Congress President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He desired the complaints of League to be investigated by an impartial authority such as Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of India. But Jinnah had already referred the matter to Viceroy and did not agree. Meanwhile the World War II had started and the Viceroy declared India a belligerent without consulting the Congress ministries. This administered a rude shock to Congress and it resigned on October 28, 1939. The League heaved a sign of relief and celebrated the 'Day of Deliverance and thanks giving', on December 2, 1939.


57. M.H.Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah, A Political Study*
Jinnah, had been a believer of one nation theory but held that the rights of minority be duly considered. Since Nehru Report failed to give the Muslims their due, he left Congress and became active member of the League but his ideas of a composite nation never wavered. The Congress ministries of 1937 which were atrocious to Muslims had shaken his faith and he started feeling in terms of Muslim being a separate nation and in reply to one of Gandhi's letter he wrote: '.....I have no illusion in the matter, and let me say, again, that India is not a nation nor a country. It is a sub-continent composed of nationalities Hindus and Muslims being the two major nations.' Similar ideas were expressed by him in an article for The Times and Tide in which he reiterated, "Experience has proved that whatever the economic and political programme of any political party, the Hindu, as a general rule will

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vote for his castefellow and the Muslims for his coreli-
gionists." He concluded that 'Democracy' of the Western
type would not be suitable to India where things were
determined by majority detrimental to minority. The Cong-
ress ministries served as an example and experience had
also proved that Jinnah would not agree to any such Cons-
titution. Hence he appealed to the British Government to
consider the entire problem of India's future constitution.
According to Suleri, Jinnah's fear regarding the federation
were well founded for he foresaw that "once saddled in the
Centre (Federal Government) the Hindus will be in a command-
ing position to muzzle the four or five Muslim provinces
into complete subordination."

As stated earlier after 1938 Muslims had developed
the idea of their being a separate nation but they had not
caught the idea of a separate homeland for themselves. Of
course, they viewed with great concern the principle of self
determination to decide their future in India. Various
schemes were suggested from time to time. Iqbal in his

60. The Statesman, Calcutta, November 21, 1938,
Presidential Address of the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930 demanded the formation of a consolidated Muslim state in the best interests of India and Islam. During the Round Table Conference in London Muslim students propagated among the Muslim delegates a proposal for 'Muslim India' and 'Hindu India'. The Muslim delegates took it as no more than a student scheme. The booklet of Rahmat Ali also found much currency in England in 1935 in which he took himself as the founder of the Pakistan national movement. Similar other schemes put by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan of Punjab and Dr. Syed Abdul Latif of Hyderabad in 1939 also proposed the division of India. The League did not take them seriously. But the Congress ministries in 1937 and its anti-Muslim politics disturbed the League and there was non escape for it now.


64. Uma Kaura, op. cit., p. 156.

The League met at Lahore on March 22, 1940 for its 27th Annual Session with Jinnah as its President. This session is very remarkable in the annals of the All-India Muslim League as it is for the first time that Jinnah boldly proclaimed Muslims a separate nation and since Hindus and Muslims could not live together because of their social, economic and political differences they needed a separate country.