Chapter – II

POLITICAL IDEAS
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POLITICAL IDEAS OF AZAD

Modern era, in the history of India begins with the arrival of the British. They brought with them modern European civilization and culture. This change included new scientific inventions and techniques, ingredients of industrialization and urbanization, new concepts in science, arts and philosophy and new experiments in government and the administration. It is said that these changes of modernism came to India in a very different perspective posing challenges India never faced before. “If India had faced the challenges of the west as a free independent land, the course of human history for the last two centuries may have been entirely different. Free and independent India would have judged western culture on its merits and accepted or rejected it. A process of synthesis would have begun for building up the future civilization of the world by combining core valuable elements. However, the politically subjugated India could not use her own discretion to meet the new challenges. She was left totally at the mercy of her victors who imposed new conditions of life to the extent and in the manner they thought fit for their own motives. As a consequence, the old Indian social, economic and political system was disturbed without being replaced by any new one suitable to the environment. There was hardly any systematic attempt to combine the oriental heritage with the western developments. Naturally the growth and development was
unsystematic and haphazard. Indian society was presenting a scene of disruption, disintegration and chaos in different areas including politics.

This changing modern period brought with it multidimensional problems to India. Attainment of her political independence, protection of indigenous industries, achieving economic stability and development, preservation of national integration, educational expansion and social uplift were the basic problems before the nation that was crumbling under an imperialistic yoke.

Main objectives of the British rule in India were the territorial expansion, economic gains and religious and cultural predominance. Attitude and the political policies of the East India Company had threatened the survival of the existing sovereignties on the map of India. Constantly increasing hunger of its directors for profit ruined the well-to-do classes of the country and brought destruction to indigenous industry and trade. The primary motive of the new (British) government was to make maximum possible economic profits from the newly captured land. The wars of expansion which the foreigners fought for their political expansion demanded more and more money and the administration was very costly. All the burden fell on the native Indians. The continuous enhancement of revenue demands impoverished the Indian aristocracy and reduced the peasantry to a unstable existence.

The commercial policies of the East India Company were aimed at capturing the Indian market by expelling the Indian industrialists in order to make room for their manufactured goods. Thus they practically implemented
this policy which in turn destroyed Indian crafts and industry and reduced the
native artisans to a state of poverty. “Suffice to say that immense wealth was
acquired, and formed in due course the nucleus, and perhaps the bulk, of that
capital which enabled England on the advent of the steam engine and the
machine to establish her industrial supremacy in the world in the 19th
century”. Furthermore the policy of evangelism which intended to convert
Hindus and Muslims to Christianity added fuel to fire. The old Indian culture,
values and beliefs were hit hard and attempts were made to destroy them. ‘The
new wave of western rationalism brought with it the destruction of traditional
values, age-long customs and prevalent structure of society and religion. It
shook faith in the indigenous religions and decried and ridiculed Indian culture
and the process apotheocised western culture, norms of behavior, intellectual
outlook and social and political institutions.’

These socio-political and economic conditions led the political stir in
India. Lenin had correctly observed that the age-old plunder of India by the
British, and the contemporary struggle of all these ‘advanced’ Europeans
against Persian and Indian democracy, would instigate millions, tens of
millions of proletarians in Asia to wage a struggle against their oppressors
which would be just as victorious as that of the Japanese. Pattabhi
Sitaramayya the Congress historian is also of the view that the economic drains
resulting in the poverty of the people the loss of territory and the establishment
of the foreign rule had created anger and discontent and the revolt of 1857 was
the last armed attempt to throw off the foreign yoke.
Indians offered strong resistance to the political and territorial ambitions of the British imperialism whenever possible. The spirit of freedom was visible in all uprisings during the British rule, both in violent and non-violent forms. Several revolts spread throughout the country against the foreign rule. The revolt of 1857 was the climax of the movement to end the British rule from India. The defeat of this violent resistance of the Indian people to a foreign rule changed the whole course of the Indian history. This gave an opportunity to the foreigners to mould the national trends on divergent paths.

It is not necessary here to go into the history, full of black and treacherous deeds, full of the exhibition of low and rapacious human nature, full of wreckages of broken engagements and treaties of the acquisition of India by the East India Company.\(^6\) After the suppression of revolt of 1857, the Company rule which had introduced an incredible amount of disaster and corruption into the administration and poverty and wretchedness among the people, was eliminated and India was put directly under the British Crown. The imperialist policies were more tightened than ever before. All anti-British movements in India were ruthlessly suppressed and the people were completely disarmed. All government efforts were concentrated to stabilise the British empire. The British, however, failed to sense the pulse of the nation that could re-emerge with more vigour after suppression. The nation so tyrannically suppressed by the foreigners could hardly be content with the foreign rule. Under the new rule ‘the political administration’ as Subhash Chander Bose wrote ‘was no longer a centralised government with autonomy in the branches’
as was the case with former rules. ‘It was a highly complicated system with its ramifications in every town and village of the country, and with bureaucracy ruling with a firm hand under orders form the centre. People began to feel for the first time in their history what foreign rule really meant. Throughout Indian history all foreign elements have always been slowly absorbed by Indian Society. The British are the first and the only exception to this.’

The Hindu pioneer surveyed the situation of ‘India under Foreigners’ published in 1838 in these words: “The Government of India (under the English) is purely aristocratic; the people have no voice in the council of legislature; they have no hand in framing the laws which regulate their civil conduct. Worse was the monopoly of the state service, the law’s delay, the insolence of officers, the heavy expenses of Government, the retirement from Indian of all those who acquire wealth, and the enormous taxation to which the country is subjected. The violent means by which foreign supremacy has been established, and the entire alienation of the people of the soil from any share in the government, may even from all offices of trust and power, are circumstances which no commercial, no political benefits can authorise or justify.”8 The implications of the foreign rule did not stop here and the repercussions were strongly felt in other aspects as well. It seemed as if India was losing her ties with her glorious past. The past was based on religion and sentimentalism. The present was based on science and reason.
Blind faith had no place among the educated class. The educated Indians demanded the scientific response to every belief. If not satisfied, they were inclined to depart from their customary ways and adopt new culture.

The sense of superiority complex in the white rulers for their culture and religion and spread of Christianity through missionaries became a threat for Indian culture and the indigenous religious system both Hinduism and Islam. The old middle class was especially concerned with this danger. For them the preservation of their past traditions and the religion was more sacred a problem than anything else. The religion was to be defended at any cost.

These sentiments echoed from several platforms simultaneously and the reaction to the foreign threat became violent. Several social reformers and workers came out in the field to face the new challenge. Swami Dayanand, Swami Vivekanad and a large number of other reformers and leaders raised their voice in defense of the ancient glory of India. Their preaching’s formed the emotional basis of a more energetic nationalism. They put emphasis on past glory of the nation and reminded them that they were culturally superior to their present rulers, “who were depicted as mere barbarians when the Indians had developed and advanced civilization”. These efforts gave the Indians a sense of duty they owed to the nation. In India, political awakening was caused by religious inspirations. Religion became the part and parcel of Indian politics. Religious measures were adopted in politics to rouse patriotism in the people. Revivalism of Ganpati Festival by Lokmanya Tilak is an illustration.
The national consciousness and political regeneration of India got an active turn due to many combined factors. The political forces originated in due course of time. By the eighties of last century, the suppressed people of Indian began to recover from political depression. With the knowledge of modern world, they sought new methods to face, the political challenge of foreign suppression. An armed attempt was considered out of question, so they resorted to the constitutional agitation. The outcome was ‘The Indian National Congress’. The purpose of the organization was something more than merely striving for the political goal of self-government in India by constitutional means. By the end of 19th century the Indian National Congress, no longer remained a microscopic minority. The first ever experiments in agitation and demonstration against British Rule had begun in India. The beginning of the 20th century was not a smooth time for the British government in India. They were having troubles with vigorously emerging Indian nationalism as weakest point of imperialism were identified and hit at by economic boycott of foreign goods. Consequently the material returns to Britain from India began to decrease proportionately. An extremist movement was growing fast in the country. The Indian press was vigorously attacking the policies of the government. Dada Bhai’s book ‘The Poverty and the Un-British Rule in India’ became the gospel of extremism. The movement, in certain quarters, was heading towards revolutionary and terrorist tendencies. ‘The attitude of the British government had become more and more stiff as the national consciousness became more and more expressive’.

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But, perhaps the government was more responsible for the out burst of the new spirit and intensive feelings of revolt among the nationalists than other factors. The cold attitude of the government towards the demands of the moderates, unfruitfulness of the constitutional means of prayers and petitions, denial of right of representation, and neglecting the popular wishes worked like the dry straw in the fire. The Indian administrative machinery was fully manned with the foreigners who could not realize the native aspirations, and when the British Parliament passed a resolution in favour of simultaneous examination for the I.C.S. in England and in India. The government of India did not honour the resolution. Because of intolerable increase in the land revenue the farmers deserted the lands and horrible famines broke out in the country taking large toll of human lives. The ice-cold attitude of the foreign government was strongly resented by the people. Military expenditure was going on increasing because of the wars on the frontiers of India. The profit motivated economic policies of the government remained unchanged. The policy of free trade was persistently ruining the Indian industry. India had bled white, “the defense forces were an army of occupation and a standing army for imperial exploits. The inflated military budget had starved nation-building activities. The British Civil Service was the highest paid bureaucracy in the world, governing the poorest people on the earth; there was racial discrimination in every sphere of life, administrative, social and economic. Indians were treated as helots in the British empire.”11
Gokhale was quite accurate in representing the Indian resentment over the control of the Indian Purse by irresponsible foreigners who paid little attention to the demand of the nation. In his evidence before the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure (the Welby Commission) he spoke thus: “the position virtually amounts to this, that it is the administration of the finance of one country by the Executive Government of another, under no sense of responsibility to those whose finance are so administrated, and for years past we have been treated as a vassal dependency, bound to render services to the suzerain power, and to place all our resources, whenever required, at its disposal. As a result millions upon millions have been spent on objects which have not advanced the welfare of the Indian people so much as by an inch—even the empty sense of glory, which is a kind of barren compensation to self-governing nations for such large expenditure of money, is not available to us as a consolation.”

**Divide and Rule**

These national aspirations served as serious challenges to the British imperialism. To meet the challenges the Britishers sought the never failing strategy of ‘divide et impera’ in order to weaken the nationalist forces that threatened the British empire. Time proved that they were not wrong in their tactics. In accordance with the time-worn policy of ‘divide et impera’ the government was the main instigator in the formation of the communal organizations in India. The approach was to weaken the hold of any single political party on the masses. Such tactics could only delay the doom of the
British in India. It was not a correct answer to the native problems and the emerging forces in the country. In order to pursue their own selfish motives they went up to the evil deed of dividing a prospective nation. They had fully realised the progressive trends in the modern international politics for national liberation. The Indian national movement was organically connected with the world movement for liberty. That is why the foreign rulers were so anxious to change the direction of the natural currents. ‘Lord Irwin, the ex-Viceroy of India, holds the view that every stop in England and in the Dominions towards the development of responsible governments has been accompanied at a greater or lesser interval by a corresponding advance in India.’¹³ He has produced the following illustrations in support of his statement. ‘The Act of 1883, the Indian Councils Act of 1861, the Indian Councils Act of 1892 and the Indian Councils Act of 1909, have followed popular movements in England or in the other parts of the British empire.’¹⁴ Subhash Chandra Bose, while commenting on this statement remarked that ‘one should go further and say that the Indian movement is organically connected with the world movement for liberty. In India, as elsewhere, the beginning of the nineteenth century was an important landmark. The revolution of 1857 followed in the wake of the world revolution of 1848. The birth of the Indian National Congress took place at a time when there was a similar upheaval in other parts of the world. The movement of 1905 closely followed the Boer war in South Africa and was contemporaneous with the Russian revolution of 1905. The attempted revolution during the Great war was a phenomenon visible all over the world, at about the same time. Last but
not the least, the movement of 1920-21 was contemporaneous with the Sinn Fein Revolution in Ireland, with the fight of the Turks for their independence, and it closely followed revolutions which brought freedom to countries like Poland and Czechoslovakia.'

The main intention of the British was to turn the direction of the giant flood of National liberation movement inward so that all the national energies might be employed against the movement itself.

**Indian Muslims’ Problems**

As British came into power the Muslims gradually fell prey to the political revenge of the new rule. The British suspected the integrity of the Muslims and they could not rely on them in the administration. They were denied the government jobs and a systematic campaign was started to replace them in the administration as well as to displace them from the social position. This change took place all of a sudden, for example, in the course of barely 70 years. ‘Before 1774, Muslims were economically, politically and educationally the dominating community of Bengal. Sir William Hunter went so far as to say that it was then impossible for a Muslim of good family to be poor or unemployed. All this was changed in the course of barely seventy years. Warren Hastings’ policy of replacing Muslim revenue officers by Hindus started a process of impoverishment which was accelerated by the Permanent Settlement and the resumption proceedings. The settlement deprived most of the then existing land owning families of their land. The few Muslim families that survived the settlement were almost out by the Resumption Proceedings.
Macaulay’s educational circular recommending the replacement of the Persian by the English completed the change. Again, according to Sir William Hunter, it became almost impossible thereafter for a Muslim of good family to enjoy employment or wealth.\textsuperscript{16}

The response of the Indian Muslims to the new challenges was slow. They could not realize that the change had come to stay. They tried to revive the past in vain. In the western and the southern part of the country the Hindus and the Muslims responded alike and they started learning English and the Western education without giving up their religious and cultural traditions. But in North India there was a lot of difference between the behaviour of the two communities. In Bengal the Hindus were forty years ahead of the Muslims in learning Western education. After 1857 the United provinces and Punjab followed the example. But Muslims as a community remained indifferent to the British administration and to the western education and culture.\textsuperscript{17}

The policy of Muslims denying themselves the new opportunities thus provided by the circumstances, deprived themselves of the government jobs which compulsorily required the qualifications in the western education. The Hindus who had availed of the opportunities were naturally to occupy the government jobs – a field which the Muslim had left without competition.

Apparently, these were minor things in the beginning but the rift was created and later on it gave place to a wider and wider gulf. “All this left an unforgettable mark on the future politics of the country. Hindus were on the side of the Government and Muslims arrayed against it. During the first half of
the nineteenth century, the journals and public addresses of prominent Hindu leaders in Bengal made violent criticism of the Muslim rule, and enthusiastic, almost thrilled, applause of the British administration. Almost all the evils from which the country was suffering were attributed to the Muslim rule.”

The fact was repeatedly brought to the notice of the Government. The Calcutta Persian Paper, ‘Door-Bin’, dated July 16, 1869, commented thus: ‘All sorts of employment, great or small, are being gradually snatched away from the Mohammedans, and bestowed upon men of other races, particularly the Hindus. The Government is bound to look upon all classes of its subjects with an equal eye, yet the time has now come when it publicly singles out the Mohammedans in its Gazettes for exclusion from official posts. Recently, when several vacancies occurred in the office of the Sundrabans Commissioner, the official, in advertising them in the Government Gazette, stated that the appointments would be given to none but Hindus. In short, the Mohammedans have now sunk so low that even when qualified for government employ, they are studiously kept out of it by Government notification. No body takes any notice of their helpless condition, and the higher authorities do not change even to acknowledge their existence’.

The story does not end here. It was only after the suppression of the Mutiny that the British statesmen had to display their statesmanship more freely than before. While analysing the causes of the Mutiny they discovered that certain other ingredients were to be added to their diplomacy in order to make their empire rebellion-proof and not to give way to any united action by
the Indians against them. They deplored defects in pre-mutiny army that “The one that operated most fatally against us was the brotherhood and homogeneity of the Bengal Army, and for this purpose the remedy is counterpoise; firstly, the great counterpoise of the Europeans, and secondly of the native races.”

A Royal Commission appointed which suggested reorganisation of the Indian army on communal basis to counterpoise the effects of one another.

This policy of counterpoise prevailed from social organisation to military organisation. Gradually the two communities grew jealous of each other.

By the end of the nineteenth century the Muslim leaders realised that the policy of denunciation of western education by them was a grave mistake. To promote western education among Muslims and to qualify them for government jobs was the primary motive of the Muslim leaders who came forward in the social field. In 1877 the ‘National Mohammedan Association’ was founded by Syed Ameer Ali. In the beginning it kept itself limited to the petty social affairs. In 1882 the Association adopted a resolution mentioning that ‘It Aims at the political regeneration of the Indian Mohammedans by the moral revival and constant endeavours to obtain from Government a recognition of their just and reasonable claims.’

The resolution further added: ‘It is hoped that the Association, while working in the cause of the Muslims, will also be able to promote and conserve the interests of their non-Muslim compatriots.’
The author of the “Indian Muslims” observes thus: ‘Ameer Ali’s utterances did not betray any feeling of communalism, and therefore one wonders why he did not make Banerjee’s ‘Indian Association’ the medium of his activities. There is no clear explanation of this, but it appears logical to infer that since the benefits for employment in higher ranks, expected to flow from the Indian Association’s agitation, were to go almost exclusively to Hindus and not to Muslims, Ameer Ali believed that the Muslims being backward educationally, needed a different organization, which could apply itself to the task of opening educational institutions and agitating for a share of Muslims in government appointments.’

The inference is logical, but we should not neglect the factor also that the social and political regeneration in India was initiated on religious basis, separately and in different times. The religious leaders of the two communities worked separately in their own communities. Perhaps the combined reforms would neither be effective nor tolerable by the people. Even the nationalist leaders could never dare to address the other community as frankly as they could do to the community to which they belonged. This was the greatest flaw in the Indian politics that it could never practice secularism in its true sense though it made a hue and cry about it.

As the movement started in different phases and in different sections at different times, all the sections and phases could not pace together. Being on different stages of intellectual development and economic development the two communities could not put their common demands together.
It was but natural that their approaches towards solving their problems were different. A common relief however justified could not satisfy both the communities. The result was that the memorial Submitted by Ameer Ali to the Viceroy Lord Rippon urging the claims of Muslims to the Government jobs made a demand that the Muslims be given jobs through a system of selection and not through competition. This was in contrast to the demands of the ‘Indian Association’ as the latter did not denunciate the competitive examinations; though it had demanded a change in the place and age limit for the examination. The ratio between the Hindus and Muslims in the Government Service was 215 : 6 in the Twenty Four Parganas and more or less the same in other districts of Bengal.

Thus the second cause (religious reformations being the first) for the separate activities was educational and economic disparity between the two communities. In the beginning none took it to be communal. Even if it was communal it was considered secular and national as it had a positive aspect of social and economic reforms of the communities.

**Political Trends among Muslims**

**a) The Policy of Appeasing the Government**

Another reformer among the Muslims, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, selected social, cultural and academic field for his activities. His approach was more humane and less political. The way he protected the English people during Mutiny could not be assessed as pro-Muslim anti-Hindu or anti-India. Certainly, he was not a Muslim fanatic. He was a realist, who considered the
western education for the Muslims the first essential condition for their betterment. He made his stand clear before the Mohammedan Educational Conference in 1886 ‘I do not agree with the people who say that political deliberations will take us to national progress. I consider the education and the educational progress the only means of national development.’ The political horizon was not yet very clear. He thought that politics without education could not give any relief to the Muslims. The consequences of the highest political bid, made by the Muslims in 1857, were quite fresh.

The immediate problem of the Muslims was economic which could not be solved without the help of the Government. Therefore a pro-government policy for the Muslims was encouraged by him. His emphasis was on the solution of the problems of his community, so that they could get proportionate seats in the Government services without competitive examinations. In the political field also, the favour of the government could help the Muslims. Being in minority they required political safeguards which could be provided only by the government.

Gradually, the Indian National Congress was becoming more popular among Muslims. Badruddin Tayabji was the President elected in 1887. By that time the Government of India had changed their attitude of patronising the Congress. The British principals of M.A.O. College, Aligarh were perhaps intentionally deputed by the Government to have a watch on the academic centre of the Muslims. The influence of the English principals who preached
religious exclusiveness and their disproportionate emphasis on the religious
instructions kept the students away from general politics of the country.

In the beginning the policy of Aligarh School was that of neutrality
towards the Congress. But as the Congress gathered momentum and posed a far
off threat to the British rule the policy of Aligarh School took another turn.
They preached Muslim to remain aloof from politics. Politics was considered
beyond the scope of Aligarh School. The fear of tyranny of majority as well as
the oppressive policy of the Government had haunted Sir Syed’s mind most.

b) India National Congress and the Muslims

India National Congress was founded in 1885 with 78 delegates from
the different parts and sections of the country. Since the very beginning a good
number of educated and political minded Muslims supported it. Badruddin
Tyabji and Rehmatullah Sayani were among the founder members of the
Congress. Gradually their number increased. In the Madras session there were
78 Muslim delegates out of 603, and the next year their number rose to 221,
covering the larger part of the country. Some of them represented Muslim
Associations and some belonged to the nationalist associations. ‘Inspite of the
hostility of Aligarh School, and cautious attitude of the Central Mohammedan
Association, the attendance of Muslims at Congress Sessions was increasing
year by year.”25 The speeches made by Muslim delegates at the Congress
sessions represent the sentiments of the age. A few illustrations will suffice to
show their mood. At the session of 1889, ‘Hadayat Rasul, a Muslim of Oudh
proposed that although the Hindu population was a majority, the number of
Hindu and Muslim members in a council should be equal. His own co-religionist, Hamid Ali Khan, Bar-at-Law (of Lucknow), opposed him arguing that no such question as ‘Hindus or Mohammedans’ should be raised. Another Muslim delegate, Wajid Ali Biwaji said in an excited tone that ‘the number of Muslim members in the councils should be thrice that of the Hindus.’ A fourth Muslim opposing these proposals said: ‘We have assembled here for one common object. On such an occasion the Mohammedans cannot call themselves Mohammadans, nor Hindus, Hindus, but rather forgetting all differences of creed, caste and colour, we should call ourselves Indians.’ And when Hadayat Rasul’s amendment was put to vote, even Muslim delegates voted against it.26

The Muslims adopted the same attitude in 1890. In the session a Muslim Member, Syed Sharfuddin, while speaking on the reforms resolution, said that the argument that Muslims were a minority community and that their interests would be jeopardised by the reforms had had no relevance. ‘Look at the very city of Patna. There are twenty seats in the Municipality, but inspite of the Hindus being in majority, they elect more Muslims. Out of the twenty Municipal Commissioners, thirteen are Muslims. The Hindus are in overwhelming majority; still five Parsis, three Europeans, two Hindus and two Muslims represent the Municipality.’27 And all this was said at a time when there was vast disparity between the two communities in the civil services. The fear of the tyranny of the majority had not arisen its head in the common Muslims, such a fear should have no place in a society which is democratic and
intellectually and politically developed. The nationalist Muslims had looked forward to such a society.

Yet there was one more trend among the Muslims. Though they were not anti-Congress they were over cautious. Syed Ameer Ali and his Central National Mohammedan Association were among them. The Association was one of the organisers of the first Congress and Syed Ameer Ali had expressed high hopes about the new born organization and also had assured their support. But the support was withdrawn the very next year although it held Congress in high regard. The Executive Committee of the Association was of the opinion that ‘the unqualified adoption of the programme of the Congress will lead to the political extinction of the Mohammedans.’

The Association further observed that ‘the system of nomination by which the councils of the Government were recruited was not always happy in its results.’ But keeping in mind the socio-economic and political conditions of Muslims the Association concluded that, ‘the introduction of the representative institutions in the country in their entirety would not be to the advantage of the Mohammedans.’ It further observed that the soaring disparity between the two communities had rendered it ‘absolutely necessary for this committee to be on its guard against any movement likely to jeopardise the interests of the Mussalman subject of her Majesty’ and that ‘until the Mohammedans were on par with the Hindus in political development and educational progress and the assertion and preservation of Mohammedan interests were included in the Congress programs the consummation wished for by the Congressists would
and in the absolute effacement of the Mohammedens as a community in this country.\textsuperscript{32}

c) The Separatists

In 1887 Syed Ameer Ali desired to hold a political conference of Muslims at Calcutta. Badruddin Tyebji and Sir Syed both advised him not to start a separate political organization for Muslims.\textsuperscript{33} But political activities in the country were becoming more hectic and now it was entirely impossible for the Muslims as a community to remain aloof from politics. The Government had realized the change. Since the beginning, the governments were quite conscious about the role of Muslims in the country. By the end of the nineteenth century the government was successful in keeping the Muslims away from politics. Now they had to change their policy from negative to positive, and while the Muslims participated in the politics of the country still they would remain under the control of the government. The government was well aware of the religious and ideological differences among the two communities. Political consciousness in India was the result of the religious revivalism. The religious fanaticism led to antagonism. Everything, good or bad, belonging to other community was opposed. Religious tolerance was out of question. It was not considered the part of the religion. The whole situation was a call to the foreign rules to take the advantage of religious antagonism. Perhaps it was Lord Dufferin who started the double game of uttering on one hand honeyed words to the protagonist of the nationalist movement and on the other hand words of warning to the Mussalmans.\textsuperscript{34} It was he who invited A.O.
Hume ‘to make the Congress a political organization and invited Congress delegates to garden parties.’ At the same time he laid his mind open in his minute on reforms that, “India is not a country in which the machinery of European democratic agitation can be applied with impunity. Having regard to the relation in numbers, in condition, in status, and in qualifications for government of what may be called the Europeanized or educated section of Indian people as compared with the masses of that constitute the bulk of the nation, I am convinced that we should be falling into a great error, if miscalculating the force and value Congress movement and the influence of its supporters and advocates, whether in the press or elsewhere, we were to relax in the slightest degree of our grasp of the supreme administration of the country. ‘It was he to started the division of India into two irreconcilable camps.’

An unsuccessful attempt was made in the form of partition of Bengal to divide the nationalist forces but it was ruthlessly opposed. It was not difficult for a nation of diplomats like the British to devise the new ways and means.

The demand for separates electorates for Muslim should have been most appealing – a method to safeguard minority community against future majority-tyranny. This was killing two birds with one stone. A deputation of Muslim met the Viceroy who was kind enough to see that his scheme was a success. The incident was so excellent in the diplomatic history of Britain that the Viceroy was immediately informed of ‘joyful’ incident. The joy was expressed in official letter addressed to Lady Minto thus ‘I must send your Excellency a
line to say that a very big thing has happened to-day. The work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a longer years. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty two million of people from joining the ranks of seditious opposition.\textsuperscript{37} Time proved the unerring sagacity of the rulers. A little later the Muslim league, a separate Muslim political organization was founded. The government tried their best to make the new organization popular among the Muslims.

Apparently it seemed that it would draw the attention of educated Muslims but inspite of all the governmental patronization it was only off and on when the Muslim league could gather momentum on some sentimental or delicate points with the slogans like ‘religion is in danger.’ It was only in the fifth decade of present century when people could understand the meaning of ‘the work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a longer years.’

However, a young generation of Muslims was mentally preparing to take an independent line, i.e., independent of government’s patronage. They were the product of new consciousness among the Muslims. Though they had learned the principals of religious tolerance and nationalism of their own, their religion could not stand in the way of their nationalism nor they could be deterred in the name of ‘future majority tyranny.’ They dispassionately pondered over the national problems of India and thought that the Indian Muslims were the component and inseparable part of the Indian nation. They wanted to sow the seeds of religious tolerance among the masses and teach
what does democracy and liberalism mean. This national education wanted a cool and dispassionate reasoning and non interference from outside.

**Azad’s Approach**

Azad belonged to the last category mentioned above. Though brought up in an orthodox religious family, he developed his own independent thinking who saw no conflicts among religions. For him religion and politics were two parallel streams and there was no religious antagonism in politics. The combination of religious principals in the politics makes politics more tolerable for humanity. It demands work and sacrifice from every citizen for national cause irrespective of religion. His interpretation of religion makes room for all the religions and communities. He belonged to minority community but he was not afraid of ‘majority-rule’ nor could see reason for ‘majority-tyranny’. From his own behavior he showed how Muslim should behave with other people belonging to the same nation. No doubt, Azad yield to the collective decisions of the party but every body knows the role played by him in the national politics. In social and political affairs he believed in common and collective leadership. Once the decision has been taken after due consideration, it should be obeyed in the interest of the nation which is certainly above the individual interest and ideology.

Azad and Mohammed Ali Jinnah both are paradox of Indian history, who contradicted the environment they were brought up in. Azad was brought up in the most orthodox religious way in which there was no place for religious tolerance, secularism and nationalism. He was taught the absolute dogmas of
religion. Mohammed. Ali Jinnah was brought up in modern ways. He had a chance to study western ideologies at home. Religion was never his field of study or work. The opinion that he ever studied his own religion is controversial. But the world is well aware of the roles played by the two personalities who over ruled their government.

**Nationalism:**

Azad defines nationalism as a belief and realisation of certain condition of social life of man. It distinguishes a group of people from such other groups. Through such organisation a large group of human being leads a well organised and integrated life in order to make collective struggle for their social ends. Azad had discussed the evolution of human relations and traced out many landmarks through which the human caravan passed in order to reach its ultimate goal.

To study the evolution of man, two aspects of human life, - as specie and as individual – should be kept in view. How did mankind evolve as specie on the earth? The question can be answered with the help of history and vestiges. To study individual life of man we turn to the living individual. Azad studied man from both points of view and concluded that the social consciousness evolves alike in the life of individual and society. He has analysed nine stages of social evolution of man. The same are the stages of social relations and social consciousness in individuals and society both.
Thus Azad traced out the history and development of social relations and social consciousness. He has taken only one and positive aspect, i.e. the element of unity. He did not discuss the negative aspect of division, conflict and war. He was of the view that man has a social instinct to unite with his fellow beings, and more the opportunities he gets to unite, the larger organisations he forms. When these uniting factors are misused they take the form of conflict, war, division, distinction, and discrimination. In the above analysis of natural human relationship, Azad nowhere talks of religious and ideological unity. The people having same ideology or religion also have attraction towards each other but as the religion or ideology is subjective to man’s taste, one may or may not belong to any ideology or religion. Neither is it compulsory nor natural. Azad has not discussed it under natural evolution of social consciousness. To him religion does not come in the way of human and brotherhood rather it preaches them it.

The natural law of evolution as Azad discusses is just like the journey of a caravan; it begins from one (individual) and ends of all (mankind) it starts from the particle and terminates on the whole. This is the point where all distinctions of name, place and all limits are removed; all narrow discrimination and restriction give way and ingenuous and sagacious man can easily recognise the unity of universe. There are many units, particles and individual but they are the parts of one single whole. The ultimate truth is the unity of whole; race, nation, country and continent are the names of different
parts of the same whole. In fact, there is only one name for it and that is humanity.38

Azad observes thus, when caravan of wisdom sets forth, it is from one to many and from part to whole and until it advances stage by stage it cannot discover the ultimate reality. That is why in every aspect of life the history of human knowledge is the history of a complete journey from the beginning to the end. Knowledge progressed step by step to discover the reality. Human wisdom took a lot of years to find out even the smallest truth. This is the reason why man could not discover human relationship earlier. It was not possible for a man to understand forthwith the oneness of his species over the globe. This peculiar condition is especially with man. While other species on the earth do know and understand each other and maintain the unity of their flock, man has to create and develop that consciousness in due course of time. His consciousness is the result of his efforts and experiences.39

History of human relation is the history of social and intellectual development of man. Each relation depicts one step forward. Azad has extracted following conclusions:-

Nationalism and patriotism is a certain mode of social relationship of human beings, but it is not the first and the last condition of its kind. It is one of the links of a long chain.
The series of social relationship is a series of human belief and consciousness of social life and collective relationship. Race, nation, mankind, all are different stages of this consciousness.

The intermediate conditions or stages are not the ultimate or final stages in themselves. They are only additional links. On every step, man thought that it is the final and ultimate stage, but it was not so. It was narrow and imperfect thinking. The real amplitude of nature is the universal relationship of man on the earth.

**Prejudices**

To Azad no religion on earth can adopt a narrow and prejudiced approach, nor can it be limited to one country or one nation or one race. Nor does it teach a narrow conception relating a few persons and leaving the large numbers out of its ambit. The scope of religion is as broad as the extent of humanity itself. Religion does not provide man with imperfect and narrow knowledge. If somebody preaches narrowness in the name or religion, it is his fault and not the fault of religion. Azad presents religion as the broadest and the most liberal principle of life. Religion is above all sorts of prejudices. He says that, at the time of emergence of Islam, humanity was divided into tribes and countries. The Arab population was an aggregation of several tribes. Every tribe had a limited concept of its own lineage and was not willing to include others in its circle. While they were proud of their own lineage, they humiliated other tribes and condemned them. Thousands of people were massacred for the
sake of the name and fame of their tribe. Moreover there was discrimination between Arabs and Non Arabs. Arabs used to think themselves superior to non Arabs who again were divided on the same lines. They felt pride in declaring themselves as Arabs or Romans but never felt pride being human being which was their first and the superior most rank and the basic title.

Islam did not support these narrow distinctions nor it acknowledge those bondages. It called on the people to have one common and natural relation of humanity. The Quran says:

“O’ Mankind, we have created you from a single pair of a male and female and made you into Nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other). The most honoured of you in the sight of god is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”\(^{40}\)

Azad distinguished between the instinct of protection of one’s own country and race on the one hand and the prejudices against other races and countries on the other hand. So far we protect our country and our race and do not jeopardise the enlightened self interest of others, it is not objectionable by any ideology or religion. Protection is the first necessity of life and existence: it is the birth right of every animate being on earth. Azad says whenever such a circle is formed, it starts with the instinct of self protection, but later on protection is replaced by prejudices. In the beginning when a group of people encircles themselves with in the four wall of the country in order to defend
against enemy it is defensive nationalism. A little later the instinct of defensive nationalism is replaced by the feelings of national superiority and national pride. Now the motto is not only self defence, but also to offend others, hence it becomes offensive nationalism. The national and racial pride creates the separatist tendency and provokes the instincts of humiliation and degradation of other human beings on this or that excuse. It gives way to conflicts between nations and finally leads to war and destruction. All the highest and noble ideals of human beings are destroyed. Islam is not opposed to defence: it is opposed to offence.

The only cure to this ailment was to stop the formation of such narrow circles. Whenever a narrow group is formed it is but natural that that it will create rift in the larger circle of human unity. That is why Islam opposed to encourage the narrowness and divisiveness among the people. It is tragic that the world could not attain that height of vision and extent of liberalism which could remove these differences. Consequently though Islam tried to make a circle which was comparatively larger than the previous ones, it could not attain the highest ideal of binding the whole mankind in one thread.

Azad has analysed three basic factors which take a man or group of men to the narrow prejudices of race and country.

1) Narrowness: When any group of men cuts itself off from the rest of the people and is besieged itself in a very narrow circle, their thinking become narrow, their vision is limited and tolerance shrinks. Their intellect too shrinks
within a small corner. Their class mind is unable to attain the extent of vision, liberalism and tolerance in views, and height in determinations and ideals. The instincts of human sympathy disappear. Their thinking is deprived of depth and breadth. One can see up to himself and upto his corner only and is unable to absorb any external influence. Inspite of being a human being he wants to be away from his own specie. An unbridgeable gulf is created between him and the humanity. Caste system is the best example of such narrowness which crushed all noble instincts and encourages groupism.

2) Pride: None other instinct is as fatal for humanity as class pride. It ruins every corner of belief and action. An unnatural criterion of superiority is established against the criterion of humanity, action ability and righteousness. In ancient ages the pride of Arabs and Brahmins and in the modern ages the pride of European nations are the best examples of such class pride. In this great century of science, skill and equality an Englishman would prefer an English and an American would prefer an American. However, there is difference between pride and self respect.

3) Superiority: When a group is formed on the basis of country and race, gradually it develops feelings of national and racial superiority. To an extent there is no exaggeration but when they cross limit they are intoxicated with national pride and national superiority. Every individual of such nation aspires that whole mankind should bow to him; every piece of land should belong to him. His greed and national interests know no bounds. The Romans had
divided humanity into two classes the rulers and the ruled. They were the rulers and the rest of the world was to be ruled.

Azad has discussed various aspects of modern nationalism, and its evolution. It emerged as a force against the imperialism and foreign rule. Unfortunately, it took the place of very evil it had fought out and had banished. The name was changed but the evil was retained. The concept of nationalism was discovered to determine the rights of people and to establish them. None is authorised to deprive man of those rights. If some people have a right to freedom why can’t the other enjoy the same right? It is true that many a nation achieved national liberty against the foreign yoke; many a battle was fought and millions of people were massacred in order to attain the national goal but all the nations of the world could not get same rights. The nations themselves became the means of destruction and ruin of humanity. They discarded off human rights and liberties. Previously the same was being done in the name of king, emperor or dictator, now it is being done in the name of democracy, equality and liberty. National and racial superiority is still being practiced even in the most civilised part and the people of the world. The class narrowness, national pride, and national and racial superiority have got the most prominent place in the world civilisation today. Every nation has fallen prey to narrow national prejudices and wants to keep others deprived of every possible material and intellectual gains.

Such a kind of nationalism is essentially offensive. It is contradictory to the principles of humanity and human brotherhood. It cannot go together with
the concept of human rights and liberty. In the name of freedom it ruins individual rights; and in the name of nationalism it is the worship of might and power!  

The gains of nationalism

Azad, however, does not deny certain achievements which were made by the human groups in the name of nationalism. National movements emerged throughout the world and people were united at least on territorial basis and some of them could get territorial independence. Azad has calculated following gains of emergence of nationalism.

1) The fundamentals of national liberty and human rights revolutionised European society and intellect. The principles and beliefs of modern nationalism created a new collective force which was more organised and powerful than the previous organisations.

2) Before the emergence of nationalism in Europe people were entangled in religious prejudices. The religious orthodoxy had paralysed the mind and thinking of the peoples. The growth of nationalism removed the religious prejudices. Nationalism replaced religion in order to organise people on comparatively larger grounds and interests. Nationalism had to face in its cradle not only they tyranny of state but also tyrannical suppression by religious orthodoxy. Voltaire declared crusade for sake of human
liberty, instead for the ‘Holy-land’. The victory of nationalism was a victory over kingship and church both. The result was that the deeper the nationalism was rooted the more the religious stagnation was vanished.

3) Nationalism brought the principles of liberalism with it. Previously there were severe restrictions on freedom of thought and expression. A larger social circle provided them with larger opportunities of developments. Every aspect of life and thinking was affected and benefited beyond expectation and imagination.

4) All small groups and forces within the country which were entangled with each other previously, were united and integrated to give birth to a stronger force. The national and patriotic instincts surpassed all prejudices whatsoever. By the end of the eighteenth century, it was a crime to be a Jew in any European state. The emergence of nationalism made them a component part of the nation they were born in and now they could hold the highest national office in their states.

Thus, on the one hand, nationalism had achieved a lot of successes and had surpassed smaller groups and narrow religious disputes, and created a comparatively larger scope of human unity and solidarity but on the other hand it too fell prey to group narrowness and crated national prejudices. It could not give the same right to the whole humanity. The concept of national liberty and equality and right to self determination was considered special privileged of
Europe and no other nation of the world was recognised as deserving the same rights. It seems that Europe was led to think that the nations of the world have been classified into superior and inferior nations, and that both differ in their nature, liabilities and capabilities. All rights to liberty and freedom were reserved for the superior nations. The west became the superior half of the world. The inferior nations could not demand the same rights and the same liberties equal to the superior half. When France was preparing for her third revolution for liberty, no French man had ever thought that unfortunate subjugated nations like Algeria too deserve the same. How the champions of liberty and nationalism are crushing the same natural instincts of other nations of the world, is no more a secret. The other powerful nations of the world like the Great Britain and America feel no disgrace in declaring that they are the protectors of the small nations, and watch-men of the world liberty. They preached liberalism but practiced tyranny and suppression without any justification. Asia and the East are no more silent on their subjugation by the west and the so called superior nations of the world.

However, when nationalism took the offensive turn, it caused the Europeans have ruins, not once but several times, the power surpassed all just and moral principles of human liberty equality and emancipation. A chain of endless wars started to stabilise national superiority so much aspired by each nation of the continent. The European nations swooped on the backward nations in order to establish their superiority over the world by exploiting them politically and economically. This desire of nations to rule over the world
entangled them among themselves. The world had to fight disastrous way because of this extreme form of nationalism. Thus nationalism fell prey to the same prejudices, aggression and offence as did the casteism or tribalism in the ancient ages. Although it changes the name and colour, it could not change the spirit of aggression and exploitation. Consequently the circle of human unity and solidarity is still as narrow as it was before.

**Reaction of extreme nationalism**

The extreme and aggressive nationalism of European nations touched the extremes of frenzy and delirium. The world reacted. It observed that even after so much exciting tumults and wars fought in the name of liberty and equality, the real liberty and equality was still hanging far away in the horizon. The nationalism became hindrance in the way of liberty and equality. The tyranny and coercion which was previously limited and centralised in few hands is now being possessed by the larger groups of men. The mankind is still deprived of achievements of the ideas it had so deeply longed for. Capitalism has replaced feudalism and is dominating the world politics. Imperialism has ruined the world. Socialism is the reaction against capitalism, imperialism and colonialism. Azad thought that socialism was taking the extreme form of ‘communism’ and has become a challenge to the present day social order and system. Azad reached the above conclusion while tracing the history of nationalism. A good many philosophers of Europe and the world seem tired of the aggressive nationalism and are in search of new formula which can unite the whole world in one single organisation. The world is not yet relieved of its
differences in order to prepare the soil for world’s unity and solidarity. The differences will be there, though names may be changed. Hence, the adjustment of the world for the cause of peace and prosperity is to be made with a margin for the enlightened self of each nation, group and individual.

The ethical and moral values and sentimental appeals to the conscience do not yield the desired fruit. These values are tried ones. People have suffered so much in the name of these values that they want no more to be fooled by these terms. The positive and material interest of each nation is the primary consideration for the good international and human relations. No doubt, that when self interests are turned into selfish interests all evils begin and put the world into trouble. Self restraints and self control is, no doubt, a good principle but each individual and each nation cannot exert the same with efficiency and can easily fall prey to this evil instinct. Therefore, external checks are necessary and each nation should so safeguard its interests and be so prepared that the greed and hunger of other nations do not damage its interests, or if they are already causing damage, it should stand up with all its might and strength to turn the faces of imperialists and aggressors. Azad strongly favoured this defensive and protective nationalism which was the life and soul of the nation and without which, no nation can survive. That is why he called on his nation, and especially his co religionists, to be united forgetting all petty differences for the emancipation of their motherland. No religion comes in the way of achieving emancipation for a section of the humanity suffering under foreign yoke. He emphasised that any thing which impedes the achievement of such a
noble cause is irreligious and immoral. He called them to accept the challenge of the imperialist forces which had become constant threat to the existence of the small nations and was exploiting them on all grounds. To bow to such a powers is a sin against God and man. He called them to save the nation and humanity against the beastly tyranny of the power hungry nations of the world who are shedding blood of weaker nations in order to satisfy their own thirst. Calling on the nation Azad said:

“The brutality and savagery in man has awakened again. He is the superior creature in the universe in form, but in fact he is the wildest wolf in his desires. He seems civilised being in the palaces but in the battle fields he is more brutal than beasts. He has entered the worst phase of his cannibalism and the extreme of blood shedding. The human habitations are deprived of peace and comforts of life. For the one who was the best and the superior most on the earth of God has turned the worst and the inferior most.”42

Azad feels extremely sad on the destiny of man who has harnessed the nature and power, discovered the forces, attained the heights of knowledge, reason and research and civilisation, collected the heaps of treasures, is unable to save the very existence of humanity. The humanity is standing on the verge of disastrous ruin. None of his discoveries and inventions are able to save him. It is because that the powerful nations of the world want to dash against each other, so that one of them only should dominate the whole world. Whatever principles they claim for themselves are denied to the smaller nations. During
the Second World War and even before the war, the big nations of the world had declared that they are the protectors of liberty and democracy on earth. But as soon as India claimed the same right for her, the reality was forced to unveil itself; ‘the protector of liberty and democracy’ told her that the Asian and the African nations should not dare claim the rights claimed by the European nations. But Azad proclaimed: ‘The right of India to self determination was her fundamental and birth right which could not be waved by her at any cost. If it was waved her national existence would be waved.’

The power only can force the power to vacate unlawful possession and domination over the nations. The high principles of ethics and reason can change the behaviour of individuals but they are unable to impress the selfishness of the dominating nations. The whole world witnessed how might has taken the place of right and reason. Even in the midst of such desperate conditions, Azad did not neglect the hopeful aspect of the picture. He marked the universal awakening among the peoples irrespective of their race, colour and religion; peoples’ movements were growing fast in all the four corners of the world to get emancipation from the old, rotten and desperately failure systems of the world. They were restless to achieve a new system based on reason, peace and justice.

Azad rejected the idea that Muslims were in minority in India or there will be any danger to their existence in free united India. As he explained:
“In political term, when the word ‘minority’ is used it does not mean that any number of people who are, according to the simple principles of mathematics, less than the number of other people, are essentially a minority and that they must be anxious for their safeguards. Minority means a weaker section of people who, in number and capability both, could not be self reliant to preserve themselves while living with a big and powerful group. To create such an apprehension it is not sufficient that the number of one group is less than the number of the other, but it is also essential that the number is so less that the group is unable to preserve itself. Secondly, the problem should not be seen on numerical ground only, the qualitative element too should not be overlooked. If qualitatively they are not inferior, they should not feel harassed, and politically they need not be in minority. There are certain more factors which also count much in deciding a political minority.”

It is how Azad calculated the position of Indian Muslims in free united India. To him, to think Muslim as minority was obviously ‘a self deception.’ These calculations of Azad were based on his deep analysis of the Indian society. The number of Muslims was sufficiently large to protect and preserve themselves. Secondly the Muslim society in India was not divided into social and racial basis. The principles of equality and brotherhood of Islamic life had saved it to an extent from social rifts. No doubt, they made the one fourth of the total population of the country, but it was not the mere question of number only. Was there any just reason for such a huge number to be indulged in such
suspicions as they would be unable to protect their rights in free and
democratic India?

Thirdly the number was not limited in one area but it was spread over
the different parts of the land. There were five provinces including the British
Baluchistan, in which the Muslims were in clear majority, and in seven other
provinces they were in numerical minority. The government of free and united
India was to be a federation with limited powers and the units were to be
expected to be autonomous as they were under the government of India act
1935, though the act in itself was full of defects. However, this was the way on
which Azad had thought, India was marching ahead. Hence to think even for a
moment that the Indian Muslim were in any danger in free and united India,
was a vague idea and was vehemently rejected by Azad. He reiterated his
assurance to the Indian Muslims that all such suspicions were the creation of
mere passive imagination as he said, “I can not believe it for a moment that
there is any place for such suspicions in the future map of India. Really
speaking, these suspicions are there as in the words of British Statesman, which
he had said about Ireland, that “we are still standing on the bank of the river
and though we wish to swim, we do not jump into the water.” There is only one
alternative to these suspicions that we jump into the river without any fear. As
soon as we have done that we will come to know that all our fears were
baseless. 48
Azad has given an account of his own thinking. In the beginning of the second decade of the present century, he had observed that the majority of Indian Muslim was keeping aloof from the political struggle of the country. This kind of general attitude could not check Azad from reaching a different conclusion which opened to him a new way of certainty and hope. The miserable condition of the country was before him. All those who were in the boat could not remain indifferent to its progress. This was a must for everybody to take the decision about his behaviour in the given circumstances. To take the final decision, one had to go deep in the fundamentals of the things so that he could know where did he stand. Azad adopted the same method, he did not look into the things superficially. He did a thorough analysis. The question before him was, ‘How should Indian Muslims look to the future of India - with suspicion and fear, or with courage and confidence’? In the first condition, no constitutional proclamations or guarantees, could be able to remove their suspicions or fears and they would permanently need the presence of a third power in order to protect them. Azad preferred the latter course of self reliance and courage. It was free from suspicion and fear. Activities and programmes to achieve the object, was his prescription to the ailment of the nation. The storms of the time were unable to defeat the freedom fighters till the Sun of victory shines on them. Such was his belief in 1912 when Azad started the publication of the ‘Al-Hilal’ and he put his decision before the Indian Muslims. His call did not go unheeded and political consciousness was awakened in the Indian Muslims. He reminded his co religionists on the occasion of the Ramgarh
session as well as on several other occasions that he was calling them still from the place he had called them in 1912 and that the had minutely observed all the incidents and happenings during this period. He never took the things narrowly. He analysed the situation by standing in the midst of happenings and it was impossible for him to belie his own observations and to suppress the call of his conscience. He called them again and again; tolerated their differences and appealed them “This is the problem of nation’s fortune. We should not decide it under the current of timely emotions. We should decide it on the basis of solid realities because the same cannot be amended again and again. I admit that unfortunately the atmosphere of the time is clouded with dust. But they should see the reality through it. They should consider every aspect of the problem and I am sure they will not find any other way better than the suggested one.”

Azad clearly expressed his dissatisfaction against the Muslim leadership. He knew that the masses were innocent and simple. They could easily be misled by wrong leadership. The Indian Muslims were especially simple minded, easy to be convinced, quick in obedience and simple in following; they were ever ready to carry on any command. But it was very unfortunate that these self-styled leaders were exploiting their community as a means of worldly honours and were playing with their sentiments. They treated it just like a football and every leader was kicking it to exhibit his sportsmanship.

The Muslims drew the carriages of their leaders, donated thousands of rupees at their first call, took their commands as the divine oracles and devotedly obeyed their leaders who were ignorant worshippers of bureaucracy and ambitious of
big posts; who never cared for the benefits of Muslims even for a moment. They reaped advantages out of their simplicity and innocence. 53

Azad was sure that Muslims were certainly being misled. The leaders’ personal interest led all Muslims to the policy of appeasing the Government and to political aloofness. He declared that the way adopted was wrong and would result in drastic and hopeless consequences.

Azad had pleaded a speedy action against the Government. He again and again warned the Muslims not to fall prey to the false premises of the government. He pointed out that power bows before power only; it does not bow before humbleness and faithfulness. The pro-Government policy of the Muslims was a sterile policy. He held the self-styled leaders responsible for the deviation of Muslims.

Azad held the Simla Deputation the first schism in the Muslim politics and that the Muslim League was only a shadow of the Government. 54 He said that the political separation of Muslims from other nationalities residing on the same soil was a superficial policy. How is it possible that the groups who are participants in rest of the matters should be separated in the political field? The true nature of the things was that they would have common politics organizations as well. It was the greatest price which was to be paid by the Indian Muslims in order to win over the favour of the Government. When His Excellency the Governor of Bombay addressed an Urdu Conference at Poona on the problems of Muslims and asked them to remain faithful to the
Government Azad commented in his journal ‘We (Muslim community) did always rely upon the government and never hesitated to give any sacrifice. For their favour only we remained enemy not only to 220 million neighbors of ours but also to ourselves’. We purchased the enmity of the whole world for the sake of one.\textsuperscript{55} He advised his co-religionists to go on striking harder and harder and with quickness. The flood of time was drawing nearer for their help. Once the object was achieved they would get everlasting emancipation. The flood would sweep away even the very soil of the foundation.\textsuperscript{57} He vehemently opposed the policy of the British Government who were experimenting the power of mesmerism on 66 million people (Muslim population of India in 1912 was 66 million.) of India.\textsuperscript{58}

Azad did not believe in the strength of number. Strength of character and discipline supersedes number. As back as in September 1912 he had cleared his views about the problem of numerical strength. Commenting on the dispute of Ismaili Hindus he wrote: ‘The biggest mistake of the Muslims is that they are engaged in the problem of numerical strength and weakness but do not care for the strength of hearts, though Islam does not care for number.’\textsuperscript{59} He held that for those who worship man instead of God, it makes no difference if they remain in this religion or that or go atheist.

Azad viewed that this confusion of numerical weakness or strength was infused in Muslims from without. It did not come from within. He sarcastically remarked that the problem had become the axis of all the misfortunes of
Muslims. They could not join the Congress because they were in minority and were afraid of their extinction at the hands of the Hindus. They could not participate in the demands of self-Government because they were less in number and it would become a Hindu-Government that would be to their disadvantage.\(^6^0\) He warned of the separatist tendency that had gone to the extreme. Even the joint protests of the Hindus and the Muslims with regard to the affiliation problem of the Aligarh University were not considered proper. ‘Even if there is common purpose and the sphere of unity is limited, one should remain fearing lest the giant of majority tear them down.’\(^6^1\)

To Azad such fear of number was untrue. By quoting various illustrations from the pages of history he pointed out that while sometimes the number did not count much in armed conflicts how could it affect the mutual co-operation? He asked the Muslims: “what has happened to you that you are so much afraid of the number three-times to you? No doubt, in the conditions you have reached to, it needs no majority of Hindus, you are alone sufficient to destroy yourselves”.\(^6^2\) What Azad preached to Muslims was to have the fear of God only and not the fear of number. The one who believed in God and was true to his action need not be afraid of his brethren. He advised them: “If you want to live in India embrace your neighbors. You have already experienced the result of separation. Behave with other communities properly, be they respond you in the same way or not. Mingle with them. don’t mind it, if there is any hesitation on their part. You should look to the position you have among
the nations of the world. You are the vicegerent of God on earth. Be superior like God and look after them. Elders should excuse the youngsters; they do not get cynic or cry if teased by them."\(^6^3\) Such was his approach towards Hindu-Muslim problem in his early period. His approach was that of a saint or a preacher; sometimes he abused them and at the other he flattered them like children.

Azad took up the pen to write on the political policy of the Indian Muslims on September 1, 1912. In fact, he had longed to discuss it much earlier, but due to the sudden rise of a new problem of Aligarh University he had to concentrate more on that subject. He chided them for their inactivity and concluded that their pro-Government attitude was proving a stumbling block in the way of progress. Their existence proved unfortunate for the country. Whenever Government wanted, it exploited them for their diplomacy and dashed them like a rock against the glass of the national will. This caused them a great loss and they were thrown far away from the politics of the nation. Inspite of these political separations, Government had foreseen that the Muslims could not remain politically idle for long. Sooner or later they would join the Congress. Therefore, the Government chalked out a plan to keep Muslims engaged in some lengthy and complicated task, so that they should get no time to concentrate upon the political problems. Education was chosen for the purpose and the Muslims were engaged in it. Azad moaned this loss of national energy. The national forces which were to be utilized chiefly in the national movement were being spent on one single issue, i.e., the higher
education. While their neighbours were engaged in hot discussions about the constitutional reforms, political demands and other national rights for the nation, just on the other side of the wall, the Muslims were wasting their time in discussing the problem of higher education in their endless conferences, meetings, articles and newspapers. All the forces of Muslims were devoted only for that end. Azad asked them if it was the whole politics? Was it a making and unmaking factor in the destiny of the nations? Did England get parliamentary democracy only through it? Were the French people, whose songs of liberty echoed the streets of France, only those persons who were holding the highest degrees in education? Was it only high education that brought about revolutionary changes in Iran and Turkey? The education could certainly play an important role in the development of political consciousness in the country but it was not the whole national movement in itself. He demanded of the Muslims their active contribution in the national movement.

It was in this context that Azad lamented over the waste of forty years by the Muslims for education by neglecting other more important problems.

It was impossible that any nation could remain sleeping for ever. It was certain that the Muslims too would rise and join the national movement. Had there been no other political stage except the Indian National Congress, naturally they would have joined it. But the Government shrewdly devised a new playful toy for their change of taste and pass time. This was the ‘Muslim
League’. Azad called it a ‘new form of negligence and aloofness,’ or ‘slumber in the name of awakening’. It had the stamp of politics in keeping with the changed circumstances and was originated under a new leadership. Azad knew that the Muslim League though apparently glittering was not gold; it was a piece of brass polished to amuse the Muslims. The stir created among the Muslims was diverted inward so that they need not to go out of their own circle. ‘Alas, we entered the realm of politics after a long slumber but that too not with our free will.’ He exclaimed. It was so unfortunate that they had come to the edge but the cunningness of the rulers displaced them and they could not realise the deviation from the path. An unbridgeable Pacific was created between the people and their objective. Their leaders had explained them that the causes of the political aloofness were still prevailing, i.e., lack of education, shortness of number, fear of majority and the difference in speed of progress; everything was there to hinder the Muslims from joining the common politics. Had they joined it the other community would get preference being in majority. So, for the Muslims the only politics was ‘to safeguard their rights against the Hindus first, because they created hurdles in the progress of Muslims by their educational advancement and majority of number. Azad laughed at such views which had advised the Muslims to have safeguards against their neighbors. He thought it a new notion for the Muslims to misguide them with the result that instead of the Government which otherwise had been the target of their force, the direction was very easily changed towards their
own neighbors. Consequently even after the entry of quite a big community into political field the government had nothing to be afraid of.

Azad addressed mainly the educated Muslims who had political consciousness. He asked them, “For God’s sake do justice. Was it not a drastic blunder and painful condition that when our neighbors were engaged in national welfare and national politics we had closed our eyes from the rest of the country? Our ten million brethren were getting food only one time. The whole country was heading towards the economic decay. The burden of heavy taxation was more than the paying capacity of the country and was still getting heavier. The heart of the country was weakening with the troubles of the zamindars. The conditions of the farmers were deteriorating. The military expenditure had disrupted the national economy. There was no proper provision in the national budget for national education. The doors to the key posts on administration were closed on them. The contracts for extension for railway were offered to England. The soil was thirsty for lack of irrigation facilities. The law was defective and administration uncomfortable. Did these problems not demand their attention? Were they only for Hindus to take trouble of? Was it a sin against God or treason against Government to talk of these problems? Azad assessed the situation and gave it a verdict. It was not a fault of Government but of the people themselves. The Government never prohibited them from putting their demands forward; they never closed their doors for the complainants. There was no section in the criminal law of the country which had declared the complain and demands crimes. Rather the Government had
encouraged them and honored them reasonably. Although it was first true that first they looked towards their own diplomacy and if a nation was willing to sacrifice themselves for their (Government’s) benefits why should they refuse to accept this offer, especially at a time when the circumstances had demanded them to support of one community? The Muslim offered themselves for the purpose. Why should not the Government take the full advantage of his opportunity?  

Azad took an extreme view of the things. Most of his remarks were sarcastic. He did it all to point out grave mistake committed by the people having separatist tendency. Azad thought that circumstances were similar for both Hindus and Muslims and if the circumstances could help the Hindus why could they not guide to Muslim. Azad admonished in the first person. ‘Had we desired we could adopt the right path.’  

Azad was a revolutionary thinker in his views. To the surprise of fanatics of every religion, he revolutionised the basic concept of religion. The concept he produced was severely attacked by the orthodox Muslims since they did not like his liberal interpretations. The fanatics of other religions also could not appreciate his views. Azad’s attack on traditionalism and his challenges to the centuries old modes of religious thought were resented by the traditionalists of every creed. They did not like, also, his belief in the ‘truth of all creeds’. The concept, though not the likeness to the orthodoxy is however, not un-Quranic or Un-Islamic. His approach to religion is based on the broad principles of
secularism where religion encompasses all the creeds within with in its ambit, appreciates all principles of goodness and behaves democratically with the followers of other creeds and maintains justice for all on the principles of Nature. Azad has presented a secular concept of religion in the broadest possible aspect. The law of Nature implemented suitably to the environment is true religion. Such was his interpretation of Islam to which he was committed and professed whole heartedly throughout his life.

Religion is the righteous will of whole mankind. Narrow, prejudicial and discriminatory practice in the name of religion, is not true religion. It is the manifestation of one’s own selfish and narrow motives and of the vested interests. They give colour of religion to their base motives in order to achieve their petty interests.
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