CHAPTER – 6
MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

In the previous chapters, the course of the freedom struggle against colonial rule was studied where the role of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has been seldom dealt. This chapter is fully devoted to his life and role played by him during the struggle against colonial power and thereafter.

ANCESTORS

To start with his ancestral background, his descendents came from Herat to India during Babar’s time. One of Maulana Azad’s ancestors, Maulana Jamaluddin alias Shaikh Bahlol of Delhi, was a contemporary of Akbar the Great.¹ His family had always distinguished itself in the pursuit of learning and the zeal to serve the cause of Hadith and Sunnah.² He said to Mahadeo Desai, one of his early biographers, “I can say that there wasn’t one of my ancestors, but was noted for his learning and sufism.”³

Maulana Azad praised his ancestors in his work Tazkirah. Among his ancestors, he selects his mother’s uncle Shaikh Muhammad Vatri, the Mufti of Madina; his grandmother’s father, Maulana Munawwaruddin and an ancestor from his father’s side, his paternal grandfather, Shaikh Jamaluddin of Delhi. Maulana Azad has been accused of elevating some of his ancestors.

Certain discrepancies have been pointed out in the accounts of his ancestors in Azad Ki Kahani Khud Azad Ki Zubani and Tazkirah edited by Abdur Razzaq Malihabadi and India Wins Freedom dictated by Maulana himself in Urdu, translated and written by Humayun Kabir. Azad Ki Kahani Khud Azad Ki Zubani was published after Maulana Azad’s death and Maulana Azad did not know about its contents. Tazkirah appeared

¹ A.K. Azad, Tazkirah, Malik Ram (ed.) Sahitya Academy, Delhi, 1968, p.25.
² Ibid, p. 302
³ Quoted by Subhash C. Kashyap (ed.) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989, p.3-4
without his approval and he had no opportunity to revise it or correct its mistake. India Wins Freedom is a work of doubtful authenticity. In such a situation, when Maulana Azad had no control over the texts attributed to him and when book ascribed to him were published without his approval, some confusion with regard to detail on his life is bound to occur. Therefore, to attribute motives to Maulana Azad for misleading his readers by exaggerating the achievements of his ancestors would be totally unjust.

Maulana Munawwaruddin, one of the last Rukn-ul-Mudarassin of the Mughal period, got frustrated at the conditions prevailing in the country during 1855. He decided to migrate to Hedjaz. On his way to Bombay, he passed through Bhopal. Sikander Begum, the ruler of Bhopal was so impressed by his sermons that she prevailed upon him to stay.

During 1857’s revolt, he made his way into Bombay and died there during 1858-59. Maulana Azad’s father, Maulana Khairuddin, who had accompanied Maulana Munawwaruddin to Bombay, however continued his journey to Hedjaz. He had already finished his education in India and hence was able to derive the maximum benefit from the teaching of the scholars at Mecca and Madina.

Maulana Khairuddin was a learned scholar and a master of theology. He was the only Indian Muslim scholar of the time to have been selected to teach the tenents of Islam and deliver sermons in the holiest Muslim seminary of the world.

COMING TO INDIA

Maulana Azad’s father Maulana Khairuddin remained in Hedjaz for about twenty years. He paid his first return visit to India in 1887. After that, he continued travelling between India and Hedjaz till 1897 when he was persuaded by his disciples and followers to come

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5 Ibid.
back to India and accept to be the Imam of Calcutta, the then capital of British Indian Empire. Later, his family joined him.

BIRTH OF MAULANA AZAD

Maulana Azad was born in Mecca during the month of Zill Hijja in 1305 A.H as Firoz Bakht but was known as Muhiyuddin Ahmed in his youth. He has given the year of his birth as 1888 but has not mentioned the date. In the commemoration volume, published through government assistance, Humayun Kabir has given Maulana Azad’s date of birth as 11 November 1888. But this is not corroborated by any other sources. Qazi Abdul Ghaffar has placed his date of birth during September 1888. According to Ghulam Rasul Mihr, Azad was born on 17 or 18 August 1888. On the basis of Azad’s own statement in the Tazkirah, Malik Ram calculates that Azad was born sometime between 9 August and 6 September 1888. Almost all the biographers of Maulana Azad have accepted this date.

MAULANA AZAD’S CHILDHOOD

Azad’s mother died when he was only eleven and his father was a very strict man, who gave him lessons thrice a day. Maulana Azad spent most of his time in the company of his father, his teachers, the visitor who called on his father and with his sisters and brother. Once his sister Fatima Begum recalls, as a boy, he “would climb a raised platform and ask his sisters to surround him and applaud him and then get down and walk off slowly and deliberately”. He had no friends or companions of his own age to talk to or play with. He never learnt to play or to go to a school. He knew not what entertainment

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11 Arsh Malsiani, op.cit, p.2.
15 Arsh Malsiani, op.cit, p.2.
or relaxations were. Maulana Azad wrote, “I never got an opportunity of moving out of my house so far as my education was concerned.”

He associated with men almost twice his age. Shibli Nomani, who was thirty one years senior to him and Maulana Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani, who was his elder by twenty one years were his friends. In Azad’s house one could seldom hear a guffaw of laughter. He spent his time in idle-day-dreaming or in talking to himself in a flamboyant declamation before an imaginary audience.

He is compared with John Stuart Mill, who began learning Greek at three and read Herodotus, Xenophon, Lucian and the first Eight Dialogues of Plato at eight. Like young Macaulay, he read voraciously, with guidance and also independently, from his father’s library which had a big collection of books brought largely from Turkey, Egypt, Persia and from Bombay. He mastered the whole of Fiqah-i-Akbar, Tehzib and Khulasat-i-Qaidani when he was only twelve years old, which astounded the scholars and religious divines.

He had a very sharp memory because of which his teachers had to teach him separately. He was capable of assimilating passage after passage and reproducing them effortlessly. He claimed later that whatever he read once sank down and settled in his mind and he could remember much of it. Because of the joylessness at home and the kind of severe teaching administered under the eagle eye of his father which lacked vividus visanimi that excites and exalts young men to shine on their own, Azad began to look serious minded, grave and far too mature for his age.

17 Arsh Malsian, op.cit., p.2.
MAULANA AZAD'S EDUCATION

Maulana Khairuddin was very clear and firm about one thing - he wanted his sons to succeed him as Pirs. Learning and devotion to Islam and its propagation had been family's raison d'etre for generations. Piri and Muridi had their own charms which could hardly be compared with material gains. Accordingly, Maulana Khairuddin planned an elaborate programme for the education of his children whom he decided to educate at home. He firmly believed that outside influence would corrupt the habits and manners of his children and mislead them.

Calcutta had a famous madrassa, a theological centre of higher learning, founded by Warren Hastings in 1781, where instruction was given in Oriental studies, particularly in Arabic and Persian. But this did not induce him to send his sons there. Khairuddin did not think well of the madrassa as an educational institution. The idea of imparting English education to his sons was abhorrent to him. In fact, Maulana Khairuddin hated things modern. He preferred to live in the medieval world. To him, only Quran, Hadith and Shariah mattered and he wanted his sons to live in that world.

In Mecca, both the sons had finished the Quran and had learnt some portions of it by heart. They went to the haram sharif for their lessons in Qerat when the family moved to Calcutta. Khairuddin himself began to teach his children. Though conservative in the matters of education, he made no distinction between boys and girls. As their mother was an Arab, the boys had started picking up Arabic by instinct. Urdu was treated as mishmash not to be taken seriously as a literary language. Persian and Arabic languages were taught, but the main focus of their study was to master the Quran, Hadith and other Islamic religious literature. Due to heavy pressure of work and his failing health,

21 Ibid. p. 95.
however, Maulana Khairuddin could not teach the entire course of studies to his sons. So he had to engage some eminent teachers to share his load of work.24

Under the guidance of Maulvi Yakub Khan and Maulvi Nazir-ul-Hasan, the children studied Persian and Arabic languages. Saadat Hasan, who was awarded the title Shams-ul-Ulema later and was the second master in Calcutta Madrassa taught the fundamentals of Hadith to Azad.25 Azad’s association with Mirza Mohammed Husain (a profound Persian and Arabic scholar), who had come to Calcutta from Iran, brought him in close touch with classical Persian literature.26 Maulana Azad learnt from Hafiz Walliullah, Urdu alphabet. With a little proficiency in Urdu, he was able to read Yadgar-e-Ghalib and Qaitay-e-Burhan.27 Intellectually, Azad derived great benefit from his year-long association with Shaikh-ul Rais, an outstanding Arabic and Persian scholar, who guided him in the study of Sharih Hikmit-i-ul-Ishraq.28 He learnt the subtleties and nuances of classical Persian literature from Mirza Shirazi, a Persian scholar who was well-versed in French, German and English literature.29 He also took lessons in Turkish language from one Tahira Beg but could not make any headway in it.30 He learnt the English alphabet from Muhammad Yusuf Jafri, chief examiner of the Oriental course of studies, who gave him Peary Churan Sarkar’s first book to read. He then took up the Bible in English and compared it with its Urdu and Persian versions.31 Such a comparative study combined with his reading of English newspapers enabled him to read English books in history and philosophy.32

Due to the rigorous teaching imparted to Azad, he was able to complete the highly specialized Dars-e-Nizami (framed by the great teacher Mullah Nizamuddin and

25 Abdur Razzaq Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p. 170,180,188.
28 Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p. 205.
32 Ibid.
prevalent since the 18th century) when he was only 6, taking one third of the normal time for completing it.\textsuperscript{33} This was indeed a remarkable performance for a young boy at that age. He had started preparing a Persian dictionary before he was ten.\textsuperscript{34} This amazing feat is similar to that of young Thomas Babington Macaulay who had begun to write a compendium of universal history at the age of eight.\textsuperscript{35}

After completing \textit{Dars-e-Nizami}, as was the custom, Maulana Azad was required to teach a batch of students and he taught higher philosophy, mathematics and logic to fifteen students.\textsuperscript{36} About forty years later, Maulana Azad assailed the \textit{Dar-e-Nizami} as antiquated and worthless because it encouraged cramming of the text without giving any insight or developing the thinking faculty.\textsuperscript{37} He also criticized his father's method of teaching which started with the memorization of some texts because that was the method of teaching in the family of Shah Walliullah.\textsuperscript{38}

Maulana Khairuddin was not content with \textit{Dars-e-Nizami} for Azad. So he went beyond it and included in his course of study other subjects like medicines, mathematics, astronomy and astrology. He taught the whole of \textit{Baidawi}, some Sufi text of Ibn Arbi and Suhrawardy. He also initiated Azad into the study of the principles of logic. But the main focus throughout remained on the study of \textit{Quran, Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqq} and Islamic religious literature.\textsuperscript{39} It was indeed a very hard experience to be taught by Maulana Khairuddin who would give lessons to his sons thrice a day, in the early morning, afternoon and at night. The children also said their prayers five times a day like devout Muslims. They had to get up first at 4 A.M. for their \textit{namaz}, and this habit of rising early became a permanent feature of Maulana Azad's life.\textsuperscript{40} In the course of his teaching exercises to his sons, Maulana Khairuddin would examine them to see how far they had

\textsuperscript{34} Malihabadi, \textit{Azad Ki Kohani}, p. 203-204.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid, p.88.
\textsuperscript{40} V.N.Datta, op.cit., p.10.
grasped what had been taught to them. In this face to face encounter Maulana Azad always met with a sharp rebuke from his father as a result of his failure to answer the questions. Later, reading became a passion and Maulana Azad began to devour books. His teachers could not keep pace with his progress and had to teach him separately from other children.  

Maulana Azad recollects the remarks of his teacher who taught him Rational Sciences, in light humour while referring to his amazing intellectual power: “this youngster Azad expounds to me the Sadrā but is under the foyind illusion that I was teaching him.” In his exposition of the principles of logic and astrology he would leave even well trained teachers flabbergasted. He read with diligence the works of Imam Ghazali, Iman Razi, Shah Walliullah of Delhi and the Ain-i-Akbari. The Persian poetical works of Rumi, Sadi, Hafiz, Bedil etc. were at his fingertips. His favourites in Urdu were Mir, Ghalib, Hali, Shibli, Syed Ahmad Khan, Mohammad Nazir Ahmed and Muhammad Husain Azad. Referring to his accomplishments as a youth, Sarojini Naidu once remarked, “Do not talk of Maulana’s age. He was fifty the day he was born”.  

Maulana Azad’s curiosity eventually took him outside the sphere of religious literature much against the wishes of his father. Doubts gradually began to stir within him about his father’s beliefs, convictions and outlook. A point eventually came when Maulana Azad began to break the traditional chains that bound him.

MAULANA AZAD’S MARRIAGE

Maulana Azad was only thirteen when his father got him married to Zuleikha Begum, the daughter of Aftabuddin Ahmed, a disciple of Maulana Khairuddin. Zuleikha was only seven at that time. She had a good schooling in Urdu and Persian and knew elementary

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42 Ibid, p. 98.
Zuleikha was an accomplished lady, well versed in household affairs and of a most hospitable nature. She took good care of Maulana Azad and evinced keen interest in his books and writings. When Azad was writing *Tarjuman-al-Quran*, she used to keep fanning him till late at night. Azad’s repeated imprisonment had cast a constant shadow of gloom over her and she used to pray for his safety constantly. Their only child, a son, died at the age of four. As the child was very handsome, he was named ‘Haseen’ or the beautiful one. Gradually, she became indifferent to her dress and make up. When Maulana Azad left home to preside over the historic Congress session at Bombay in 1942, Zuleikha, already beset by ill health, sought vainly to repress her agony while saying good bye to him. She died when Maulana Azad was detained in the Ahmednagar Fort. After his release, Maulana Azad paid a visit to her grave and read out *fateha*. Her passions, impressions and emotions towards her husband were recorded in her diary in 1908 and are preserved in the Azad Bhawan Library at New Delhi.

**MAULANA AZAD’S LOVE**

We have scant information about Maulana Azad in the interlude between the death of his father in 1908 and his launching of *al-Hilal* in 1912. Douglas believes that from the time of his father’s death until 1910 Maulana Azad was busy in the pursuit of sexual indulgences. In the formation of this opinion, Douglas seems to have been influenced by Maulana Azad’s letter to Syed Sulaiman Nadwi which is Maulana Azad’s unequivocal confession of his youthful licentiousness.

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45 Arsh Malsiani, op.cit., p.9.
46 Ibid.
47 Arsh Malsiani, op.cit, p.9. Also in Rajmohan Gandhi, op.cit, p.221.
49 Ibid.
50 Zuleikha Begum Ki Diary, Azad Bhawan Library, New Delhi, 1908.
51 Douglas, op.cit p. 95.
Nadwi was staying with Maulana Azad in Calcutta to assist him in the editing of al-Hilal. He saw Maulana Azad from close quarters and found him leading a sinful life contrary to the injunctions of Islam. In a private letter to Abdul Majid Daryabadi dated 26 October 1913, Nadwi compared Azad to flowers that look pretty but lack fragrance. Recalling his period of early youth, Maulana Azad stated that whatever he did, he did in extremes; be it virtuous deeds or sinful life, he never held back.

We find oblique references to his love affair disguised in poetic flights and passionate declamation in the concluding portion of Maulana Azad’s Tazkirah. It was on Abdul Razzaq Malihabadi’s insistence that Azad wrote the last part of Tazkirah in order to give a brief account of his personal life. Malihabadi tells us that Maulana Azad wrote an independence piece on his love affair which he withdrew later on the pretext of revising it. Malihabadi produced both the Azad Ki Kahani and Zikr-e-Azad after Maulana Azad’s death and could have easily reproduced from his memory at least some account of Maulana Azad’s love affair, but he did not because, as he says, he refused to divulge the secret of Maulana Azad’s life without obtaining his permission. This argument is unconvincing. It is quite possible that Malihabadi knew no details about this love episode for which he made tall claims.

Maulana Azad gives no details about his attachment to the woman he loved. He was no Rousseau to lay bare his heart! Nor does he tell us the name of the woman for whom he fell. It is also not clear whether Maulana Azad’s love affair was one-sided or it ruptured at its initial stage. Maulana Azad’s love episode took place in Bombay around 1909 when he was already a married man. They must have lived together since 1907, as after the death of his wife, Maulana Azad refers to their thirty-six years of life together. Whether Maulana Azad would have renounced his wife, contemplated another marriage with a

new woman or carried on his intimacy with her clandestinely are all unanswered questions. Maulana Azad points out that it was the physical aspect of love which aroused first the intensity of his passion. He wrote that it is the physical manifestation of love that governs the entire universe. According to Maulana Azad nothing matter in love except its object; everything else is irrelevant and by opening one door, all other doors are closed.

Of his passion for physical love, Maulana Azad burst into a flame of poetic prose in the following passage: “When I opened my eyes, adolescence had already dawned, every thorn in the wilderness of my world was gay as a flower with the dews of ambition and desire. When I looked at myself, I saw a heart filled with quicksilver instead of blood. Heedlessness and inebriation chanted their magic spells, passions filled with the cups, the madness of youth caught me by hands; my heart, loving to surrender itself, accepted as its goal the way shown to it by impulses and desire. In reality, there are three stages, desire, love, and truth; what I mean by love is love in the narrow, impure physical sense, not the absolute love, which embraces all creation. No doubt the (love of mine) was also a lapse. But what shall we say of lapse that casts on the feet of the beloved. The end of all effort is to reach Him. If lapses and intoxication leads us there, why should not a thousand forms of constancy and sobriety be offered up on their altar.”

But Maulana Azad’s love attempts were thwarted. This experience of thwarted love brought in him the anguish of despair and he wandered into a blind alley. Maulana Azad wrote that the “failure of love opened my eyes”. According to Maulana Azad, this love episode gave him a new vision of love. He regarded despair in love as necessary for real advancement in life. The woman who rejected him became for Maulana Azad a personification of distinct moral and intellectual values. Swayed by the flood of emotion,

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Maulana Azad wrote with pardonable exaggeration that it was this experience which entirely shaped his personality to the exclusion of all other influences including his education and family traditions. He wrote what came to him as pain became for him eventually a medicine and a healing power for his wounds.64

MAULANA AZAD’S SKEPTICISM

Immersed in the close world of learning, Maulana Azad craved for an escape from the unusually rigorous scholastic atmosphere and to become a freeman. He could not get peace by just reading Islamic history and theology and preaching it to faithful. During the eighteenth century, the Wahabi ideology was becoming famous. As it opposed the system of Pir, Maulana Khairuddin vindictively opposed the Wahabis. Maulana Azad first under his father’s influence and without any knowledge of their ideology treated them as heretics. But his ignorance was soon dispelled and he found to his dismay that his faith in his father’s lifestyle loosening. At the young age of twelve passing through an emotional and mental crisis, Maulana Azad became impatient to break the shackles of tradition that bounded him. Maulana Khairuddin believed that the relation of the human mind with the world was only moral and intellectual and not emotional or imaginative. But Maulana Azad apprehended more than what religious rituals and the bookish knowledge comprehended. He wanted another kind of existence and therefore there commenced in him a strong reaction against what his father valued and stood for.

At this stage, Maulana Azad was impressed with the writing of Syed Ahmed Khan, which opened a new vista of thought for him.65 He found Syed Ahmed Khan totally opposed to his father’s traditional orthodoxy, which gave him satisfaction.66 He was convinced that a man could not be truly educated unless he studied modern science, philosophy and literature.67 He made it clear to his father that he would not like to succeed him as Pir.

64 Ibid.
66 V.N.Datta, op.cit, p.17.
This rebellion on Azad's part made his father terribly angry. It was a parting of the ways between the father and the son for all times. \(^{68}\) Piri would have brought him social status, fame and wealth. But Maulana Azad was made of different stuff. He chose a new path, hard and independent. All through his life, he attached the veneration shown to Pirs, tombs and other fanatical practices performed in the name of Islam. \(^{70}\)

Syed Ahmed Khan’s religious writings brought Azad closer to the true spirit of Islam which had been obscured by the juristic sects and meaningless controversies raised by the contentious Ulemas in the interpretation of the Quran. \(^{71}\) Syed Ahmed Khan had subjected the Quran to rational criticism and rejected all that was opposed to logic and nature. \(^{72}\) He strongly admired Syed Ahmed Khan for his strong defence of Islam on rational grounds against the secular criticism which aimed at undermining the traditional foundations of belief. Maulana Azad used the term of mujtahid-e-mutlaq (the absolute interpreter) for Syed Ahmed Khan indicating the intellectual debt that he owed to him. He described himself at that stage of his religious development as mujitahid fil mazhab (interpreter within a jurist school). \(^{73}\) He believed that nothing was more inimical to man’s moral and spiritual development than to be bound by the chains of taqlid. \(^{74}\) The overall impact of Syed Ahmed Khan’s writings resulted in the repudiation of his family’s traditional orthodoxy and a complete refocusing of his ideas about Islam. \(^{75}\)

Azad faced the agonizing task of rethinking about his whole religious outlook. Syed Ahmad Khan’s ideas, it turned out, could not satisfy him for long. His mind was further assailed by intellectual doubts and vague forebodings. He began to question the entire basis of religion and its place in life. His restlessness and insatiable curiosity began to probe deeper into the accepted system of religious beliefs. Maulana Azad pointed out that

\(^{69}\) V.N.Datta, op. cit, p.18.
\(^{73}\) Ian Henderson Douglas, op.cit, p. 56-57, n.74.
\(^{75}\) Ibid, p.102.

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from the age of fourteen, he was torn by religious conflicts for about nine years (1902–
1910). He regards this period of nine years as the darkest in his life. Maulana Azad’s
religious outlook had changed due to Syed Ahmed Khan who had shown him that the
reality of Islam was different from what his ancestors had believed it to be. This freed
Maulana Azad from the fetters of his parental religious orthodoxy. He began to question
the validity and justification of conventional and customary religion and would not be
content with facile answers. He thought that religion with its elaborate and complex
paraphernalia was only a creation of man. These doubts led him to question the
existence of God, prophethood, revelation, the immortality of soul etc. He became a
heretic and religion ceased to appeal to him. He was longing to find something new.

He had come to the realization that religion itself, although it was supported to create a
spirit of harmony, was the greatest cause of strife in the social history of man. There
cannot be either multiplicity or contradiction in truth. Where there is opposition and
dispute, there is no truth. He passed through a period of mental anguish and he gave up namaz. He also abandoned celebrating the Id. He could not sleep the whole night
and was emotionally disturbed.

BECOMING FREE

Maulana Azad started writing poems, literary and political articles for Urdu newspapers
and journals at a very early age. His first ghazal was published in a poetic selection called
Armughan-e-Farrukh published from Bombay. At the age of twelve, he became a
publisher and issued in 1900, a poetic journal called Nairang-e-Aalam, which continued

77 Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p.398.
79 Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p.398.
82 Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p.393.
84 Malihabadi, Azad Ki Kahani, p.393.
85 V.N. Datta, op.cit. p.21.
86 Arsh Malsiani, op.cit, p.8.
for eight months.87 But he soon left the poetry and at the age of sixteen, started editing his own paper *Lisan-al-Sidq* which aimed at promoting social reform, development of Urdu, and cultivation of literary taste. His association with Maulana Shibli, a renowned scholar in 1904, widened his social and literary interests. He cultivated his natural talent for writing at home itself. The influence of Shibli and Syed Ahmed Khan’s writings acted as a further stimulant which found its concrete expression in the unending flow of literary output that India was to see in the years to come.

He was not a conformist writer. He refused to be tied to inherited beliefs and became questioner of things taken as established by others. So he adopted the pen name of *Azad* or free.88 Through his journalistic writings, Maulana Azad gave lofty and inspiring message. He also tried to impress the people through his new interpretation of Islam. All these things made him so popular that the people meeting him for the first time were shocked at his tender age and had to be reassured that they were meeting the real Maulana Azad.

Maulana Azad does not relate how he returned to faith and sanity but he uses allegorical phrases to describe belief’s rebirth: “The shock of unilateral love opened my eyes, as if into a different world...Every leaf was like a letter. Flowers opened its lips. Stones rolled up to point out something. The skies came down to resolve my queries. Angels held me by their arms that I might not falter. The sun came to light my way that I might not stumble. All the veils were taken off.”89

**MAULANA AZAD’S ASSOCIATION WITH THE REVOLUTIONARIES**

In 1906, Maulana Azad, eighteen at the time, had attended the Dacca Conference at which the Muslim League was founded.90 At this time, the Swadeshi movement (1905-1908) had started against Lord Curzon’s Partition of Bengal. Maulana Azad, as a member

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90 Rajmohan Gandhi, op.cit, p.220.
of the Muslim League rebelled against the loyalty to the Raj, and joined one of the
Bengal’s revolutionary groups. Maulana Azad came in close touch with a staunch
extremist Shyamsunder Chakrabarti and met other revolutionaries including the firebrand
Aurobindo Ghosh. The early revolutionaries tended to be ‘aggressively Hindu’ and
entertained strong suspicions about the Muslims. Maulana Azad sought to counteract the
distrust of the Muslim community by the Hindu revolutionist. He argued with his new
comrades that the Muslims could be won over and that their indifference would make the
struggle for freedom more difficult. Maulana Azad induced some of his associates to
join the revolutionary movement and he succeeded in setting up secret societies in a few
towns in Northern India.

Intelligence Branch Records yield partial evidence in support of Maulana Azad’s claim
that he had assisted in the spread of extremist revolutionary activity beyond. After he
became well known as the editor of *al-Hilal* (1912), the Intelligence Branch conducted
extensive enquiries to uncover his political antecedents. These showed that he had been
active in the Punjab during 1907-1908. He was an active helper of the ‘extremist party in
Lahore’ and had contact with Amba Prasad, Ajit Singh and other revolutionaries to his
north Indian contacts.

During the war Maulana Azad had carried on a pan-Islamic and anti-British propaganda
through *al-Hilal* and *al-Balagh*. He had championed the cause of the liberation of the
country and even recommended *jihad* for this purpose. He formed the *Hizbullah Party*
“to enlist and organize a body of dedicated Muslims, make an agreement with the
Hindus, and launch a joint struggle against the British.”

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92 Ibid, p.4-5.
93 Rajat Ray, ‘Revolutionaries, Pan-Islamist and Bolsheviks: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the Political
Underworld in Calcutta, 1905-1925’ in Mushir-ul Hasan (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in
94 V.N.Datta, op.cit, p.104.
95 Home (Poll.), 42, History Sheet on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 1912, NAI.
96 Rajmohan Gandhi, op.cit, p.233.
According to Intelligence Reports, Maulana Azad turned the minds of many young students to revolutionary activity. One report records that the "fanatical school boys had been maddened by the subtle incitements of learned, eloquent but hypocritical priest Abul Kalam Azad." These students were going to Turkey for training to wage *jihad* against the British. Maulana Azad was closely in touch with Obeidullah Sindhi who had escaped to Afghanistan in 1915. He was engaged in doing spadework in India for intensifying revolutionary activity. Obeidullah who was a minister in the Provincial Government of India set up in Kabul was sending letters to Maulana Azad.

In Intelligence Reports, Azad is dubbed as an 'extremist' and "a dangerous man." He was also consulted by Maulana Mahmudul Hass'an on the desirability of going to the Middle Eastern countries. Maulana Azad gave financial support to some of the conspirators because of the influence he wielded over the Muslim community in Calcutta. He was expected to reach Kabul to assist Obeidullah in revolutionary activities.

It is evident from the Intelligence Reports that Azad was exterminated from Bengal not because of any incriminating article published in *al-Balagh* which was strictly a religious paper, but for his involvement in the Silk Conspiracy/Letter Case and his close association with some of its leaders, and the Government of India considered his political activity dangerous. He was permitted to stay in Ranchi on the condition that he would stop all political activities, provide guarantees for his behaviour and give identity of his visitors and not leave Ranchi in any case until further orders.

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97 *Foreign & Political, Frontier B-Confidential, A Proceeding*; 1914, p.241-430; Proceeding, 271, NAI.
98 Ibid. Also in *Home (Poll.), A*, June 1919, NAI.
99 Ibid. Letter to Col. C. Wilson from Sir Charles Cleveland, No.3923, XI, 7 December 1916; Appendix to the Silk Letter Conspiracy, NAI.
100 *Home (Poll.), A*, June 1919, NAI. Also in *Home (Poll.), A*, May 1916, NAI.
101 *Home (Poll.), A*, 1919, NAI.
103 *Home (Poll.), A*, 1919, NAI.
PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

Gandhi wanted to see Maulana Azad at Ranchi but the government disallowed him. When Azad was released on 27 December 1919, he found a new world and a new age in India. The country had been plunged into political turmoil in 1919 and it was politically astir as never before. During the period of his enforced speculation and absence from the political scene, the country had to witness the anti-Rowlatt agitation, Satyagraha movement Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Martial Law and its atrocities. A new spirit had been awakened in the country.\(^{104}\)

The year 1919 witnessed scenes of Hindu-Muslim unity when Hindus and Muslims drank water from the same glass. This manifestation of Hindu-Muslim unity disturbed the ruling authority and they took it as a serious challenge to their existence. The confrontation between the people and government during the agitations resulted in open clashes. Then came the tragic episode of the Jallianwala Bagh which marked a turning point in the political history of India. The Martial Law atrocities created terror among the people and they felt humiliated and outraged by high-handed acts like the Crawling Order and compulsory roll call of respectable lawyers at police stations.

People had gradually been driven to the point of exasperation and anger by the government. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood in protest against the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Gandhi returned his *Kaiser-i-Hind* Gold Medal and his Zulu War Medal. People were in a sullen and defiant mood. Gandhi now emerged as a national leader. In his *Autobiography*, Jawaharlal Nehru called the 1919 Amritsar Congress as the first “Gandhi Congress”.\(^{105}\) When the Ali Brothers appeared at the Amritsar Congress session they were received with a thunderous applause and became the ‘darlings of the people’\(^{106}\)


\(^{106}\) V.N. Datta, op.cit., p. 106.
MAULANA AZAD’S ROLE IN THE KHILAFAT AND NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENTS

A major cause of unrest among the Muslims in India at this time was the humiliating treatment meted out to Turkey, the last great Islamic power. This enraged the Indian Muslims. The threatened dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, Greece claiming the whole of Thrace and Italy landing her forces in the Gulf of Adalia, created serious apprehensions in the Muslim mind about the future of their holy places. The Muslims feared that the Sultan of Turkey would be deprived of the authority necessary for the discharge of duties going with his office as Caliph or spiritual head of Islam.

Ever since Turkey had entered the war, the Muslims in India expressed their sympathy with that country and were preaching that the first duty of Muslims was allegiance to the Caliph. Turkey capitulated on 31 October 1918. The Greeks demanded the coastal strip including Smyrna and the Arabs revolted against their sovereign and Caliph. The Indian Muslims led by Dr. M.A. Ansari demanded that all armed forces be withdrawn from the holy places, the Hedjaz, Damascus, Baghdad, Najaf and Karbala.

Maulana Azad had for long been deeply concerned about Turkey and her degraded position. Because of his pro-Turkish leanings his paper al-Hilal had been banned. When he came out of his internment he found that Turkey had been further humiliated. He also realized that the British government had caused estrangement among his countrymen by inflicting on them wanton acts of cruelty. There could be no question for Maulana Azad of supporting the government. Nor could ‘moderation’ appeal to him. He felt attracted to the Khilafat movement and he plunged into it.

Before 1920, Maulana Azad had defined the collective identity of the Muslim community in terms of Islam. Now with the emergence of Khilafat Movement he received institutional support for his own thinking. The die was cast and there was no turning back! It was during the Non-cooperation movement that he began to think of Hindus and
Muslims forming ‘Ummat-i-Wahidaa’ (one nation). Thereafter, he became a grand agitator and an ardent spokesman of the nationalist cause.\textsuperscript{107}

Maulana Azad wrote that it was not he who sought politics but that politics sought him. He was swept off his feet by the tide of politics. It is necessary to understand Azad’s role in the Khilafat agitation because this laid the foundations for his future development as a great political leader. The Khilafat issue agitated all strata of the Muslim community. Judith Brown who has made an intensive study of the political developments in India since 1915-1922, has divided the Khilafat movement into three distinct phases, the first phase lasting until 1919, the second from the release of the Ali Brothers and Azad at the end of December up to early May 1919, and the third from mid-May to August 1920 when the Khilafat was joined with the agitation of the Punjab into a single movement of Non-Cooperation.\textsuperscript{108}

Initially Khilafat Committee was set up on 19 March 1919 at Bombay with Mian Muhammad Chotani, a rich timber merchant as its President. It was he who paid the travel expenses of the Khilafat delegation to England and extended a major part of the financial support for the agitation in Upper India. The All India Khilafat Conference took place at Lucknow on 21 September 1919. The Khilafat Day was observed on 17 October to focus public attention on the Khilafat. Until November 1919, the Bombay Khilafat Committee controlled the entire campaign and on 23 November it changed its name to Central Khilafat Committee of India. According to Richard Gordon, a Cambridge historian, “North India became the power house of the movement but Bombay was still the treasury.”\textsuperscript{109}

All through Maulana Azad remained closely associated with the Khilafat agitation and

\textsuperscript{107} Ian Henderson Douglas, op.cit., p.172-78 and 234-38.
deeply involved in the programmes launched for giving it a momentum. During the war years, he had shown strong pro-Turkish leanings. When Gandhi took up the Khilafat cause, he found in Maulana Azad a staunch supporter who forcefully argued in favour of the observance of hartal on 9 March 1920. While some prominent Muslim leaders like Ajmal Khan, Abdul Bari and Hasrat Mohani has expressed reservation about Non-cooperation, Maulana Azad had no hesitation of doubts. The plight of Turkey had infuriated him, and he was determined to fight for the restoration of the Khilafat.

He considered himself a citizen of historical Islamic brotherhood which was known as the Turkish Caliphate. When the British and Khilafat collided, Maulana Azad declared his loyalty to the Turkish sovereign. Often in his speeches he referred to the Covenant Prophet Mohammad had brought about between the inhabitants of Medina and the Jews. That Covenant had been negotiated by the parties after the entrance of Mohammad into Medina (627 A.D.)

The object of the agreement was to forge a workable alliance for the common defence of the adherents of the prophet and the Jews against the hostile Quresh who had persecuted the Prophet in Mecca and forced him to immigrate to Medina. By citing the relevant portions from the Quran and Hadith, he enjoined upon the Muslims to join the Hindus against the British and forge what the Covenant had declared “Ummat-i-Wahidaa”.

Maulana Azad set at rest doubts entertained by some of his Muslim colleagues about the propriety of joining the Non-cooperation movement. By his scholarly interpretation of the Quran, he emphasized that the Quran permitted the Muslims joining the Hindus against the British on moral grounds. He enjoyed the full confidence of Gandhi and both supported each other on Non-cooperation. At the All Indian Khilafat Conference held in Calcutta in September 1920, Maulana Azad justified Non-Cooperation by the Islamic edict of Tark-e-mavalat. He emphasized the role the Ulama and Sufis ought to play in

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urging people to support Non-cooperation. Along with Muhammad Ali and Maulana Abdul Majid Badauni, Maulana Azad addressed a meeting in Amritsar on 24 October 1920 and exhorted people not to co-operate with the government that disregarded their religious sentiments.

Gandhi inaugurated the Madrassa Islamia in Nakhuda Jama Mosque at Calcutta where Maulana Azad had made arrangements for the study of Arabic as a part of Non-cooperation programme. Gandhi inaugurated the Madrassa and gave his blessings to this important venture. On 13 December 1920, Azad delivered a highly inspiring speech on how students fired by a spirit of patriotism should join this institution. Azad appointed Husain Ahmad Madni of Deoband (1879-1957), a zealous worker of the Khilafat, as its manager.

Maulana Azad was particularly active in organising the student population for non-cooperation. His erudition and eloquence acted as magic on them. The Congress and the Central Khilafat Committee adopted a common programme of rectifying the Khilafat wrongs and establishing Swaraj. The Khilafat Conference held at Karachi on July 8-10, 1921 endorsed the fatwa urging people not to serve the British army.

In order to check the growing influence of Khilafat leaders, in mid-September 1921, the government arrested Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew, Shri Shankarachary, Husain Ahmad Madni, Nihar Ahmad and Pir Gulam Mujahhid. After Shaukat Ali's arrest, Maulana Azad took over as Secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee on 22 September 1921. He had now to look after the organisation of Khilafat Committee on 22 September 1921.

The major responsibility for propagating the Khilafat and Non-cooperation ideas fell on him. Because of his vast knowledge of Islamic history and culture he was able to serve as guide on many sensitive issues which needed clarification. For intensifying the Non-cooperation campaign, he began to tour the country to hold meetings and give lectures. He went to Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi, Agra and other places to spread the agitation against the government.

Maulana Azad marked the assumption of his office as Secretary of Central Khilafat Committee by publishing an article in his new Urdu weekly Paigham which he launched in collaboration with Abdur Razzaq Malihabadi on 23 September 1921 from Calcutta.114 In the first issue, he summarized the accomplishments of the Central Khilafat Committee - how it had adopted the non cooperation movement programme, mobilized public opinion by organizing meetings in various parts of the country, and raised a fund for furthering the Khilafat cause.

The paper propagated the view that the Muslims could no longer remain the subjects of a government that suppressed religious freedom. It further urged that the real aim of the Khilafat movement was freedom of India for which the Muslims must fight. To achieve this object, the paper exhorted the Muslims to order their life according to the Sharia, pray daily for God’s mercy, promote communal harmony and remain in the vanguard of Non-cooperation.

Maulana Azad attacked the government for arresting the Khilafat leaders. He said that every Muslim in India was committing the same crime for which the leaders had been arrested, that he and others who were outside would most willingly and joyfully go to jail for the same crime, the crime of defying the government and fighting for the liberation of the country from the fetters of foreign rule. He declared that in Islam there was no choice, either the Muslim must remain free or die.115

114 Paigham, 23 September 1921.
115 Ibid.
Reiterating that the arrest of national leaders was unjustified and there was a strong resentment in the country, Maulana Azad called upon the people to follow the example set by the leaders: “We have no sorrow for their arrest, but we should be jealous of their honour and should be more ready than before for the duty which was theirs as well as ours. In 1915 I was interned for nine months. After their internment I said at that time with sorrow that in this path they had stolen a march over me. Today instead of sorrowing, we should congratulate them and shall again say that they have outstepped us all.” Azad’s speeches and articles during the campaign gave us an idea of the principles, which he cherished, on the Khilafat and Non-cooperation.

In the Presidential address delivered to the U.P. Khilafat Conference held at Agra on 25 August 1921, Azad forcefully maintained that the Khilafat issue did not concern only a particular community or class but the whole country and on it really depended the future of India. He stated that the Quran makes a distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims and directs that the non-Muslim nations that attack the Muslims are not to be befriended whereas those that are friendly to them should be invited to work for a common cause. Maulana Azad said in his picturesque diction that it was possible to be friendly, “with a snake or a scorpion but not with the British, it was possible to give milk to a snake on one’s palm, it was out of the question ever to compromise with British.” What the country needed, above all, he emphasized, was Faith, Action and Sacrifice.

In another speech, which was delivered at the Khilafat Conference in Agra on 26 October 1921, Maulana Azad condemned the government action of arresting the Khilafat leaders. He termed this action as downright madness. He reiterated the position he had taken earlier on 28 February 1920 at the Calcutta Khilafat Conference that it was completely irreligious for the Muslim soldiers to serve in the British army and called upon it to resign

118 Ibid, p.59-62. Also in V.N. Datta, op.cit., p.120.
119 Ibid, p.72.
from British service. Maulana Azad argued that it was the army that had enslaved the
country and therefore, it was necessary for the Muslim soldiers to quit the British service
in order to liquidate the Empire. While delivering his presidential speech at Lahore on 21
November 1921 at the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind, he appealed to the soldiers again to
resign from service.120

He also lamented that he had not been arrested by the government. It is clear from his
speeches that Maulana Azad was fiercely attacking the government for its misdeeds.121
He was justifying the co-operation of Hindus and Muslims on the basis of his lucid
interpretation of the Quran and he was organizing the agitation against the British
government, which had given an affront to their religion.

Maulana Azad was speaking less like a pan Islamist now and more like an Indian
passionately devoted to the liberation of his country from foreign rule. His powerful
eloquence had profound impact on the audience. His choice of words was most effective.
His speeches were scholarly in content, vigorous in diction, picturesque in form and rich
in historical references evoking memories of the past that would inspire his audience.

In the speeches, he delivered before the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind at Lahore on 18
November 1921, Maulana Azad had exhibited his erudition by surveying Islamic history
and showing how great religious thinkers and leaders in the past had suffered privations,
tortures and even executions in the cause of Truth.122 He proclaimed that he saw no
reason why the Ulama, the repository of true faith, should not emulate their example by
fighting against oppression perpetrated by the British.

Despite Maulana Azad’s highly inflammatory speeches and his feverish anti-British
activity, the Government did not arrest him. He felt extremely unhappy about his not

120 Ibid, p.139-157.
121 This account is based on analysis of his speeches and articles on the Khilafat published in Paigham and
Khutbat-e-Azad.
being arrested when many of his friends and colleagues were already in jail. But he did not have to wait indefinitely. When the government decided to act, Maulana Azad had some premonition about it. On 8 December 1921, he wrote down a message, which was found lying in his papers after his arrest. The message read as follows: “God knows best how painful it had become for me to stay out of jail. Those who go to jail first do not know the torments of the ones left behind. Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Motilal Nehru have completed their journey while I am still waiting for my destination. That destination is now in sight and my heart is full of joy...”

MAULANA AZAD’S TRIAL

Maulana Azad was arrested on 10 December 1921 at 4.30 pm. He was dictating a letter to his friend, Fazluddin Ahmad at that time. Azad was arrested without a warrant the same day as C. R. Das and they met in jail. The speeches delivered by Maulana Azad in Mirzapur Park at Calcutta on 1 and 15 July 1921 was used as a basis for his arrest. He was produced before the presidency magistrate, M. D. Swinner. He was sentenced to a year’s rigorous imprisonment on 9 February 1922 under section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code. On hearing the sentence, Azad smiled and said: “It is much less than what I had expected.” Maulana Azad’s wife sent a telegram to Gandhi complaining that the punishment awarded to her husband was mild. In his journal Young India dated 23 February 1922 Gandhi hailed the statement as an “oration deserving penal servitude for life.” Azad gave his statement in chaste Urdu some portions of which Mahadev Desai and Durlab Singh translated into English.

Maulana Azad made it clear at the outset that he expected no justice from the law court before which he had appeared because the law courts under the British regime were based on a system in which no magistrate could give justice to the accused person. He condemned the present system of government as pernicious because it used the courts as

123 A.G. Noorani, Indian Political Trials, New Delhi, 1976, p.41.
weapons of vengeance and injustice. Maulana Azad went on to narrate how in history some of the greatest men like Jesus, Socrates and Galileo inspired by high ideas had suffered at the hands of courts. He spoke of the convict’s dock as a “wonderful place where the most righteous as well as the most criminal men are made to stand.” He then thanked the Almighty for the honour done to him by his arrest and trial in the court of law which he left “could be an object of envy for emperors.”

Admitting that he was fighting the British government in the name of liberty and justice and that he was determined to provoke disaffection among people, Maulana Azad said: “I am the first Muslim in India who invited this nation for the first time in 1912 to commit this crime and within three years succeeded in bringing about a revolution in their slavish mentality. Hence, if the Government regards me a criminal and consequently desires to award punishment I earnestly acknowledge that it would not be an unexpected thing and that I will have absolutely no grudge against that.”

Maulana Azad pointed out that the real reason for his arrest was that the government wanted to arrest him before the arrival of the Prince of Wales in Calcutta on 24 December so that there would be no hartal which they thought he would succeed in organizing. The government was convinced that Azad would threaten the peace of the town. Under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, the government declared all the national organizations of volunteers unlawful. Maulana Azad maintained that he expected the government either to withdraw the order banning meetings or to arrest him.

He attacked the government fiercely of depriving the Indians of their fundamental rights of liberty. To Maulana Azad, the promise of liberty to be granted through ‘graduated stages’ by the government was nothing but delaying tactics which added insult to injury. Such a procedure was like an owner of a property “receiving it by bits and a creditor his

127 A. G. Noorani, op.cit, p.164.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid, p. 165.
dues by installments." Analyzing some of the liberal and egalitarian principles of Islam, Azad pointed out that Islam "constitutes a perfect system of freedom and democracy" where cardinal principle is that the "highest right is not might but right itself." Personal monarchy and bureaucratic autocracy, Azad averred, were an anathema to Islam. Azad argued that as a Muslim it was his moral duty to stand up for truth and speak it fearlessly. He said: "To expect from a Mussalman he should not pronounce what is right is to ask him to retire from Islamic life. If you have no right to demand from a person to give up his religion, then certainly you cannot require a Mussalman that he should not call tyranny a tyranny, because both the things are synonymous. . .

"This is that vital organ of Islamic life, which if cut off, terminates the very existence of its best characteristics...In the Quran – the Holy Book of Islam, the Mussalmans have been told that they are witnesses of truth in God’s universe. In the capacity of a nation this is their national character." Maulana Azad saw no justification whatsoever for perpetuation of British rule in India which was based on the exploitation of the people of India. Like Edmund Burke, he believed that liberty is a natural and God-given gift of man and that no country however benevolent has any right to subjugate others because "slavery is slavery and is opposed to the will and canons of God." He maintained that it was his moral duty to fight for the liberty of his country from foreign rule. Maulana Azad reported how the Prophet extracted a promise of righteousness from any person by binding him to obey the Quranic command, "I will always proclaim the truth in whatever condition and wherever I may happen to be."
Maulana Azad declared that to Mussalmans whose religious duties make it imperative on them to accept death rather than hesitate from proclaiming the truth, a case registered under section 124-A, the maximum punishment for which, is seven years, can never be a frightful thing. He cited some examples from Islamic history to show how humble men of lowly order dared to speak the truth against the mighty but surprisingly such cases did not incur the displeasure of the authorities in the past. On the other hand, the Kings often appreciated the dissenting voices and rectified the wrongs, Maulana Azad pointed out that the Islamic governments did not, as a rule, invoke ignoble laws like Section 124-A to crush the liberties of the people.

The struggle against a foreign power, Maulana Azad maintained, had to be waged, according to Islam either by the use of sword or non-violence. He urged that in the present case the struggle had to be carried on in a true spirit of non-violence. Admitting that he bore no grudge for having been involved by the government in a case for punishment, Azad declared that “a true Muslim has either to immolate himself or to live as a free man; no third course is open to him in Islam.”

Maulana Azad made it clear that there was no question of his showing any loyalty to a government that was tyrannical. He declared: “During the last two years not a single day has passed when I had not proclaimed the tyranny of the Government with regard to ‘the Khilafat’ and ‘the Punjab affairs’. I admit having always said that for a Government which is bent on exterminating the Khilafat and is neither prepared to compensate nor is ashamed of the tyrannies of the Punjab there can be no loyalty in the heart of any Indian.”

Maulana Azad spelled out some of the basic principles which had governed his life, the principles which he would never sacrifice: “Continuously in the last twelve years I have

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135 Ibid.
136 Ibid.
137 Ibid. p.173.
been training my community and my country to demand their rights and their liberty. I was only eighteen years old when I first started speaking and writing on this theme. I have consecrated my whole being to it and sacrificed the best of my life, meaning the whole of my youth, to my infatuation for this ideal. For four years, I have suffered internment but even during my internment I never desisted from pursuing my work and inviting people to follow this national goal. This is the mission of my life and if I live at all I elect to live only for this single purpose even as the *Quran* says: “My prayers and my observances and my life and death are all for my Lord, the Lord and the Universe”.

Maulana Azad wanted to be punished for another reason. In his statement, he told the authorities that it was under his Presidentship of the Central Khilafat Conference on 28-29 February 1920 that a resolution was passed wherein it was declared irreligious for any faithful Muslims to serve in the British army. This resolution, he asserted was adopted thrice under his Presidentship. He added, “So I am the proper person to deserve punishment in connection with this crime because I have done nothing except infringement of section 124-A many times by delivering speeches which contain all the things for which I have not been charged.”

Clarifying his position on the means to be adopted for the national struggle against the British, Maulana Azad said that in this war of liberty and justice he would adopt the path of non-violence and Non-cooperation. He made it clear that unlike Gandhi he believed in the use of armed force for liberty and justice because “violence is fully in harmony with the natural law of God in these circumstances under which Islam permits the use of such violence.” But so far India was concerned, he thought that “India can only triumph through a non-violent agitation and India’s triumph will be memorable example of the victory of moral force.”

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139 Ibid, p. 175.
140 Ibid, p. 177.
141 Ibid, p. 178.
Maulana Azad maintained that what the authorities regarded as sedition was in reality patriotism in his eyes. He argued: “I am charged with ‘sedition’ but let me understand the meaning of ‘sedition’. Is ‘sedition’ that struggle for freedom which has not as yet been successful? If this is so, I confess frankly, but at the same time let me remind you that this very thing is called patriotism when it is successful. The armed leaders of Ireland were regarded rebels until yesterday but what title would the Great Britain suggest for Dr. Valera and Griffith today?”

Maulana Azad did not lament over the prospects of being sentenced to imprisonment. On the other hand, he regarded it necessary for the attainment of freedom of the country as would be evident from the following: “I had said in these very speeches the seed of liberty can never yield fruit unless fertilized by the water of oppression. The Government has begun fertilization. I had also said, “Don’t be sad over the arrest of Khilafat volunteers. If you really want justice and freedom, get ready for going to the jails”.

The concluding part of Maulana Azad’s statement, like Gandhi’s statement on his trail on 18 March 1922, addressed to the magistrate reflects his passion for liberty and dignity of character: “Mr. Magistrate, I will not take any more time of the court now. It is an interesting and instructive chapter of history which both of us are engaged in preparing. The dock has fallen to our lot and to yours, the magisterial chair. I admit that the chair is as much necessary for this work as this dock. Let us come and finish our role in this memorable drama. The historian is eagerly awaiting it and the future is looking towards us. Allow us to occupy this dock repeatedly and continuously and you may also go on writing the judgment again and again. For some time, this work will continue till the gates of another court of law are flung open. Time will act as its judge and pass the judgment. And that verdict will be final in all respects.”

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142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid.

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In his lengthy statement before the court, Maulana Azad strengthened his argument by historical citations. Moreover, through his own interpretations of the Quran he justified his struggle against the alien rule. It was his mission to fight for the liberation of his country. His statement lacked Gandhi’s brevity and Shaukat Ali’s flamboyance and rhetoric. It did not possess Abdul Bari’s fiery sallies. But it was remarkable for its erudition, gravity of tone, candour and clarity of thought. Translations are inadequate and never reach the force of the original, particularly in the case of Maulana Azad who was a master of chaste, elegant and powerful Urdu prose. Qual-e-Faisal which contained his original Urdu statement delivered before the court is written in a style whose rich eloquence will be more difficult to render in any translation.

Maulana Azad was placed in the European ward of Alipur Central Jail, Calcutta. His other companions were C.R. Das, Subhash Chandra Bose and Birendra Nath Sasmal. During his prison days, Malihabadi compiled a portion of his autobiography, known as Azad Ki Kahani Khud Azad Ki Zubani.

MAULANA AZAD’S OPINION ON THE ABOLITION OF KHILAFAT

During the period of his imprisonment, the political scene was changing fast. A serious riot took place in the village of Chauri Chaura in UP, on 4 February 1922. About 200 demonstrators led by Non-cooperation volunteers attacked a small force of twenty-two policemen. The police opened fire but was overpowered and the agitators set the police station ablaze, burning the entire police force alive excepting two who managed to escape the flames only to be beaten to death. This violence shocked Gandhi and he suspended the Non-cooperation movement. The government had been thinking of taking stern action against Gandhi and sentenced him to imprisonment for six years in March 1922.

Maulana Azad gave Gandhi unstinted support and Gandhi too backed him. They were working together on the same wavelength in their anti-imperial struggle. Azad acted as the ideologue of Khilafat agitation. He gave legitimacy to the movement by justifying it through citations from the Quran. His views on the Khilafat question were embodied in a
long treatise entitled *Masala-e-Khilafat-Wa-Jazirat-ul-Arab* which was published in 1920. Maulana Azad’s thesis was that it would be irreligious to support the British when Turkey was being humiliated and the Khilafat abolished. He put forward the thesis that Islam and Indian nationalism are not incompatible.

Maulana Azad’s remarkable contribution was to bring the Hindus in support of this view and Muslims together on the same platform and he frequently quoted from the *Quran*. He emphasized that Islam did not produce a cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims, but on the contrary, provided a strong base for their unity. When he brought Muslims into Indian politics he built the entire edifice of his ideas on religious grounds.

The abolition of the Khilafat disheartened Muslim leadership in India, but that was not the case with Maulana Azad who took a pragmatic view of the whole matter. He explained his viewpoint in his articles, *The Khilafat Problem and the Turkish Republic* published in *Zamindar* in 1924. He stated that the Turkish government by abolishing the Khilafat of the Ottoman dynasty had rectified a wrong which lay in an artificial division between spiritual and temporal powers. He thought that in reality the Khilafat has ceased to exist since 1922. The object now should be to organize Muslims in India on the foundation of Islamic ethics. Maulana Azad’s exposition of the Khilafat in this light has been regarded as a piece of “cool-headed casuistry.”

The *Ulema* demanded that Indian Muslims be governed according to the principles of *Quran*. In Bihar, Maulana Azad and Azad Sobhani, a lecturer and journalist, conceived the idea of setting up religious courts in the districts which were to administer the *Sharia*. Finally, the idea was to set up such court in other provinces which would then elect an *amir-e-hind*. But due to the opposition of Abdul Bari and the Ali Brothers the idea was dropped.

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145 Gail Minault, op.cit., p.204-205.
146 Robinson, op.cit., p.327.
In October 1923, the Grand National Assembly declared Turkey as a Republic and Mustafa Kamal Pasha abolished the Khilafat on 1 March 1924. The symbol of Khilafat that had united the Hindus and Muslims had now ceased to exist and mistrust and tensions between the two communities started growing fast. The Moplah riots occurred in Malabar in 1921. The years 1922-24 were marked by a series of communal riots which sullied the Hindu-Muslim relations. The Shuddhi, Sanghathan, Tablig, and Tanzim movements launched with the object of converting people from one community to another greatly added to religious strife and tension in the country.

At the Gaya Session in December 1922, the Congress was split into two groups, ‘no-changers’ who were loyal to Gandhi’s programme of Non-cooperation and ‘pro-changers’ who were known as Swarajists. The Swarajists led by Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and Ajmal Khan favoured entry into the Legislative Council by participating in the coming elections in order to wreck them from within. Malaviya also supported Das. Most of the Muslim leaders stood by Gandhi’s programme.

**MAULANA AZAD’S ROLE IN UNITING THE FRACTION-RIDDEN CONGRESS**

When Maulana Azad came out of jail on 1 January 1923, he was distressed to find the whole atmosphere in the country vitiated by the virus of communalism. He felt that for meeting the challenge of communalism it was necessary to renew the spirit of Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi was in jail. Maulana Azad was upset to find a split within the Congress due to sharp differences between the ‘no-changers’ and ‘pro-changers’. The first step to tackle the Hindu-Muslim riots and the Congress split was to call a special Congress Session at Delhi in September 1923. Maulana Azad was elected as its President, and he was the youngest person elected to hold this high office. He was about thirty-five. M.A. Ansari acted as the Secretary. The Congress was facing a crisis like the

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148 Azad mistakenly states that he was released in May 1923. (Tarjuman-al-Quran (English Translation by Syed Ahmed Latif), Vol.1, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, p.24.)
149 In Khutbat-e-Azad, the date of this session is wrongly given as 15 December. (A.K.Azad, Khutbat-e-Azad, p.157.)
one after the Surat Congress split of 1907, when the Moderates and Extremists had fought each other.

Maulana Azad delivered an eloquent Presidential address running into about forty-three pages. At the outset, he offered congratulations to Turkey on her victory and to Mustafa Kamal Pasha for infusing a new spirit among his countrymen. He mentioned with special emphasis that for the sake of the freedom of Turkey, thousands of Indians had gone to jail and suffered privations by resigning their jobs. Pointing that the Non-cooperation had made Indians hold their head high and straighten their backs. Azad extolled the virtues of Non-violence as a technique for liberating Indians from British rule.

He repudiated the notion that Non-cooperation had failed. He elaborated on the benefits that India had derived from it. According to Maulana Azad, non-violence had inspired the Indians with lofty ideals and cultivated among them a spirit of solidarity, sacrifice and patriotism. Azad suggested some concrete steps for political education of the masses by setting up reading rooms, night schools and other institutions for adult education. He believed in the force of mobilizing public opinion by a wide circulation of newspapers.

Maulana Azad emphasized in his speech that Non-cooperation movement was founded on the principles of truth and non-violence, the ideals which both Tolstoy and Gandhi had propagated on moral grounds to fight the wrongs which men were forced to suffer. He assured his countrymen that there was no cause for dismay and urged them to stand united and continue their fight for the righteous cause of freedom. He regretted that Gandhi, the great leader of the Indian people, was in jail. He pointed out that the Turks and Arabs who had enshrined their faith in him and wished him a splendid victory in his fight for truth and justice venerated Gandhi.

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Maulana Azad expressed his anguish over communal riots and forcefully attacked the element that was busy in injecting communal poison into the minds of the common people. He said, “If an angel were to descent from the high heavens and proclaim from the heights of the Qutub Minar to abandon the mission of Hindu-Muslim unity and within twenty four hours Swaraj will be yours, I will refuse the preferred Swaraj and not yield on my stand. The delay of Swaraj will affect Indians but the end of our unity will be the loss of the entire human race.”155

Maulana Azad repudiated the idea of Hindu Sanghathan or Muslim Sanghathan (organization). Only one type of Sanghathan, he declared, was needed and that was the Indian National Congress.156 He warned the British not to obstruct their march to freedom. If they continued to do so, the Indians would be compelled to overthrow the obstacles placed in their way.

Maulana Azad saw the Congress caught up in a dilemma. At the Gaya Congress in September 1922, Das’s resolution which had recommended the principle of Council entry was defeated by the combined strength of the followers of Gandhi and Khilafat leaders who wanted the Non-Cooperation movement to continue. Das resigned on 1 January 1923 and alongwith Motilal Nehru founded the Swaraj Party.

With his sedate realism, Maulana Azad wanted to bridge the gulf between the two rival groups. He was convinced that this conflict would weaken the Congress and help the ruling power. He refused to identify himself with either camp. About the differences in the Congress, Maulana Azad said: “I fail to understand why strict adherence to the creed of Non-cooperation should not accommodate several schools of thought. It is a case of difference in opinion regarding one of the items in the programme where too, it is not really a difference in principles but in details of their application, not in the goals but the

155 Ibid, p.205.
means to be adopted for them. If there is a difference of opinion in the matter, the same significance cannot be attached to it as to a difference in principle."

He tried to reconcile the no-changers and pro-changers, the Gandhites and the Swarajists. He pointed out that both the groups instead of being antagonistic to each other should carry out their plans. There could be no conflict between them so long as both were solidly united in their common goal of freedom of India. As a result of Maulana Azad’s plea, the Congress gave permission to the Swarajists, the pro-changers to fight the Council elections and readmitted the followers of Das, Motilal and Vithalbhai Patel to the Congress fold. Gandhi’s no-changers’ followers included C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel and M.A. Ansari.

Maulana Azad saved the Congress from a split. He reconciled both the groups to a compromise formula and made each group follow the programme it had wanted so. The Congress obtained large majorities in almost all the legislators. It secured forty-five seats in the Legislative Assembly and for the next few years the party functioned as a nationalist opposition at the Centre.

Thus, the fight for Swaraj was carried on both within and outside the Council. Maulana Azad’s success in saving the Congress from split shows his sound political instinct and shrewdness of judgment. Gandhi was released on 5 February 1924 following an attack of appendicitis. He asked his followers, the pro-changers to take up constructive work in towns and villages. He also supported the Swarajists’ Council entry. Thus, he endorsed Maulana Azad’s line.

MAULANA AZAD’S ROLE IN PACIFYING COMMUNAL HATRED
The communal riots in 1924 reached their climax in Kohat (North Western Frontier) on 9 and 10 September 1924. Gandhi was shaken by the communal outrages and to do penance for the sins of his country including his own, he undertook a twenty-one day

fast. The violent communal riots, which occurred between 1923-27, vitiated the political atmosphere in the country. There were eleven communal riots in 1923, eighteen in 1924, sixteen in 1925, thirty-five in 1926 and thirty-one up to November in 1927. In 1926, the first year of Lord Irwin’s term as Viceroy, forty riots took place. Swami Shraddhanand’s murder by a Muslim fanatic further accentuated the religious tension. It is a sad commentary on the development of the period that only eight years earlier Swami Shraddhanand had preached the gospel of Hindu-Muslim unity from the pulpit of the Jama Masjid of Delhi.

A Unity Conference was held on 26 September 1924 at Delhi under the Presidentship of Motilal Nehru and Chairmanship of Muhammad Ali. It was attended by 300 delegates representing different parties. Its aim was to devise ways of combating the rising tide of communalism. The resolutions passed at the Conference provided for the freedom of conscience and religion, condemnation of acts like desecration of places of worship and the prosecution of those who used compulsion in the matter of conversion.\(^{158}\)

Maulana Azad took an active part in this conference and it was largely due to his initiative that the following resolution was passed: “This Conference declares that it is not only wrong against law but also against religion for anyone to take the law into his own hands, either for the purpose of retaliation or punishment, and therefore, declares that all points in dispute shall be decided by reference either to private arbitration or where that is impossible, by reference to a court of law.”\(^{159}\) Maulana Azad declared at this Conference that cow slaughter even for purpose of sacrifice was not an integral part of Islam and that the Muslims were reducing the habit of beef eating for promoting communal harmony.\(^{160}\)


\(^{159}\) Ibid. Also in Mahadeo Desai, op.cit., p.62.

\(^{160}\) Ibid.
The All-Parties Conference met at Bombay on 21 November 1924 at the suggestion of Muhammad Ali, the Congress President, who wanted a united scheme to resolve the Hindu-Muslim rift. Nothing, however, came of this meeting. Another meeting of the All-Parties Conference took place on 23 January 1925 at Delhi to bring about unity among the parties and to draw up a scheme for the representation of communities in the legislatures. But no agreement was arrived at.

As a third party, it was natural for the British to exploit the Hindu-Muslim antagonism and use it to their advantage. The Non-cooperation movement had ended, the Swarajists had entered the Council, and the Congress too had followed suit in 1926. Its representation had been somewhat reduced in number but it was still the largest single group in the Council. The experience of the Congress leaders in the Council was one of bitter disappointment because they found that the British refused to oblige the Indians by promoting in any way the cause of ‘self-government’ or ‘responsible government for India.’

To quell the growing Hindu-Muslim communal tension in the country, Motilal Nehru and Maulana Azad issued a manifesto in the form of a circular letter about the formation of the Indian National Union on 31 July 1926 which was supported by influential leaders like Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, M.A. Ansari, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Lala Duni Chand and Choudhary Khaliquzzaman. The manifesto aimed at organizing those sections of enlightened Indians who agreed that communalism was a negation of nationalism and that continued national conflicts would lead “to our utter political, economic and social ruin.”

Maulana Azad’s object was to isolate and weaken the mischievous elements in society, which were poisoning the minds of Hindus and Muslims by spreading hatred among them through nefarious propaganda against each other. The membership of the

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162 Ibid.
163 Ibid.
proposed Indian National Union would be open to those individuals who did not belong to any communal organization. The Union was to be truly national and was also intended to be a non-political platform. It was also supposed to give training to village *Panchayats* to settle disputes arising among different sections or individuals belonging to the village community.

A preliminary meeting to finalize the objects of Indian National Union took place on 10 December 1926 in Delhi. The draft rules and regulations of the Union were defined as follows: (1) to promote and foster the growth of a United Indian Nation and to remove all causes of inter-communal discord and separatist tendencies; and (2) to launch a vigorous propaganda in order to foster the spirit of true nationalism and genuine patriotism among the people of India and to create an atmosphere in the country that would "facilitate a settlement of all communal issues in a noble spirit of compromise and good will."164

The office of the Union was to remain in Delhi with Lala Shankar Lal as its Secretary. Membership of the Union was open to anyone not under the age of 18 years and the annual subscription was one rupee. A pledge for enrolment of membership was to be signed by an individual whose guiding principle was to foster communal amity.

The inauguration of the Indian National Union was viewed with mixed feelings.165 In Congress circles the proposal was commended but the Hindu newspapers in Punjab distrusted the Union and condemned it as another sinister move to sacrifice Hindu interests to appease rabid Muslim communalists.166

Politically the period from 1923 to 1927 was at low ebb. The communal riots flared up and the worst of them took place in Calcutta for about six weeks in April and May 1926. C.R. Das's death in 1925 was a terrible loss to the country. Maulana Azad had great

164 *Ibid*, p.94.
165 *Ibid*.
166 *Ibid*. 

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admiration for Das and regarded him a statesman par excellence. He thought that Das’s Bengal Pact which had won the enthusiastic support of the Muslim intelligentsia was a tour de force. Das had firmly believed that so long as Muslims are not strongly represented in public life and services, there could be no possibility of Hindu-Muslim understanding.

Maulana Azad published articles in *al-Hilal* and *Zamindar* on Das’s contribution to Indian Nationalism. According to Maulana Azad, Das was not an idealist but a man of action who never mistook a shadow for the substance. Maulana Azad emphasized Das’s liberality towards Muslims in Bengal as he offered to reserve eighty per cent of the new appointments in Calcutta Corporation. He strongly felt that Das’ passing away at a time when Hindu-Muslim antagonism was vitiating the climate of the county was a great blow to the cause of secularism. With Das’s demise and Gandhi’s withdrawal from active politics in 1926, the forces of unity and secularism were weakened.

The appointment of the Simon Commission in 1927 to examine the constitutional question of India induced the Indian leaders to formulate a scheme of Indian constitution acceptable to all the parties. Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State of India, asked the Swarajists to produce a Constitution “which carries behind it a fair measure of general agreement among the great people of India.” From 1927 onwards, it was the constitutional question which dominated Indian politics and various attempts were made by Indian political parties to resolve it.

The communal problem had become a bugbear for Indian leadership and seemed to defy any solution during the 1920s and 1930s. The Nehru Report (1928), Jinnah’s Fourteen Points (March 1929), and the All-Parties Conference (December 1929), the Simon Commission proposals (May 1930) and the three Round Table Conferences (November 1930 to January 1932) could not settle the communal problem which in Gandhi’s words

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168 Ibid, p.25.
became a “problem of problems.” The basic question was of Muslim representation as a minority community in the new constitutional arrangements that were to be made at the provincial and central level.

Historians have generally attributed the partition of India to the failure of Congress-League Interim Government experiment and the recrudescence of communal riots in 1946 or to the Lahore Resolution of 1940 which made a demand for a separate Muslim homeland. The failure to form the Congress-League Coalition ministry in UP in 1937 is also regarded as a real divide between the Congress and the League which paved the way for the creation of Pakistan. But the crucial period of the late twenties and early thirties when the seeds of partition were actually sown is usually ignored. It is in this period when the real parting of ways between the Congress and the Muslim League took place.

In order to understand how Hindu-Muslim rift widened in Indian politics, it would be helpful to focus on the Nehru Report because it was on this document of historical importance that all discussions for settling the constitutional question ultimately hinged. The Nehru Report was published on 15 August 1928. The Report accepted two of the Delhi Proposals (1927) about the formation of North-West Frontier Province and Sind and rejected separate electorate and the principle of weightage. It recommended the unitary form of government at the Centre. The Nehru Report took the view that adult franchise would solve the problem of Muslim representation in India because it was based on the assumption that if cultural autonomy and religious liberty were guaranteed, the communal problem would be solved.

The Nehru Report debarred Muslims from reservation of seats in provinces where they constituted a majority. The Report worked on the principle that “a minority must remain a minority, whether any seats were reserved or not.” Jawaharlal Nehru assured Dr. Syed Mahmud in his letter of 30 June 1928 that a detailed examination of the Muslim

169 Mushir-ul-Hasan (ed.), Muslims and the Congress, Manohar, New Delhi, p.266.
170 The All Parties Conference, 1928, Report of the Committee Appointed by the Conference to determine the Principles for Constitution for India, 1928, p.43.
population in Bengal and Punjab shows that the Muslims were “certain of electoral majority at least equivalent to their number.” According to R. Coupland, the constitution as recommended by the Nehru Report was “dominated by the tradition of unitary government exhibited by British rule.”

On the whole the Muslims of Bengal and Punjab welcomed the Report but Shaukat Ali, Hasrat Mohani and Muhammad Ali vehemently opposed it on the ground that the Muslims were denied the federal form of government and one-third representation in the Legislature. Aga Khan and Mohammad Shafi rejected the Report saying that separate electorates were the only way to safeguard the interests of the Muslims.

In his letter of 26 April 1929, Shaukat Ali complained to Syed Mahmud about the “rift which the cursed Nehru Report has created amongst us Muslims” and the ‘infidelity of the Hindus who have betrayed in Muslim interests.” The nationalist Muslims like Maulana Azad, Ansari, Syed Mahmud and Saifuddin Kitchlew supported the Report.

At the All-Parties Conference in Calcutta in the last week of December 1928, Jinnah described in Nehru Report as “neither helpful nor fruitful in any way.” He suggested three amendments – (1) In the Central Legislature, Muslims should be given one-third of the seats. (2) The residuary powers should vest in the Provinces and not in the Centre. (3) The Muslims in Punjab and Bengal be represented on the basis of population for ten years if adult franchise was not introduced, subject to subsequent revision of this principle.

At the Conference, Jinnah declared that Hindu-Muslim settlement was essential to the political progress of the country. He said: “I am not speaking as a Mussalmans but as an

172 R. Coupland, *The Constitutional Problem in India*, p.94.
Indian. And it is my desire to see that we get seven crores of Mussalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom.”

The Hindu Mahasabha leaders and the Sikh representatives from Punjab rejected Jinnah’s amendment. After this, Jinnah is reported to have wept and said to a friend, Jamshed, “This is parting of the ways.”

This was Jinnah’s formal farewell to Indian nationalism. The *entente cordiale* that had existed between the Congress and the League came to an end. The Ali Brothers left the Congress and joined the reactionary wing of the League which was led by Aga Khan and Muhammad Shafi. Jinnah submitted Fourteen Points to the First Round Table Conference which were supported by the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind*.

The result of the failure of Indian leadership to submit an agreed constitutional plan was the Ramsay MacDonald’s Award on 16 August 1932, which retained separate electorates and the provision of a Muslim majority in Punjab and Bengal. The Hindu Mahasabha rejected it; the Muslims thought it a ‘distinct advance’ but the Congress adopted a neutral attitude towards it, neither accepting nor rejecting it.

It is evident from the above account that a great opportunity was lost by Indian leadership to settle the Hindu-Muslim problem through constitutional means. Absorbed in constructive work activities, Gandhi was looking to the Almighty for the light, hoping that He would show him the right path. He declared “I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands and has been transferred to God’s hands.”

Jawaharlal Nehru, a radical youth committed to socialism believed that the communal problem was essentially an economic issue.

The Muslim leaders as representatives of their community wanted some concrete steps for the protection of their minority rights. They were dissatisfied with the Nehru Report. They wondered why the Delhi proposals of 20 March 1927, which had been formulated among others by Jinnah, Muhammad Shafi and the Raja of Mahmudabad and accepted

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175 David Page, op.cit. p.191.
later by the Congress Working Committee in May 1927, were being discarded. Motilal would not budge an inch from his position and regarded Jinnah as a big obstacle in the solution of the problem.

In retrospect, it seems that due to the intransigence of Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikh groups from Punjab, the Congress refused to meet the Muslim demands. Jawaharlal Nehru admitted later that there were political reactionaries in the Congress who were “communalists under national cloak.”

Men of such a mould would not conceded Muslim demands. The Congress leaders like Gandhi, Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru believed that concessions to Muslims would not solve the communal problem. It was not the satisfaction of minority demands that was important in their calculation but the fight for India’s independence which would bring in the masses to unite for a common goal. It seems that whenever the Congress was confronted with the monstrosity of communalism the only way it saw for meeting the challenge was to launch a Civil Disobedience movement.

Because of the sectarian attitude of the Muslim League on the minority problem, the nationalist Muslims broke away from it and founded on 27 July 1929 the All India Nationalist Muslim Party with Azad as its convener. Other prominent members of the group were M.A. Ansari, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, the Raja of Mahmudabad, T.A.K. Sherwani and Choudhary Khaliquzzaman. The aims of the party were:

1. To promote among the Muslims of India the spirit of nationalism and to develop a mentality above communalism and to inspire into them confidence in Indian national ideals.

2. To induce the Muslims to take their proper share in national struggle; and

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3. To create such relations between majority and minority communities as would lead the former to consider the right of minorities in a spirit of broad-minded patriotism and the latter in that of true nationalism.\(^{180}\)

Maulana Azad and Ansari published a manifesto on behalf of the Nationalist Party explaining its main objective. In April 1931 at a conference of Muslim Congress members in Lucknow a resolution was adopted calling for adult franchise, abolition of separate electorates and guarantees for the protection of national languages and religious minorities. The other important recommendation was the reservation of seats; minorities which constituted less than 30 per cent of a province’s population should have the right to additional seats. These efforts to come to an agreement with the League on the minority question failed once again. The National Muslims Party did not have an independent identity and was guided by the Congress ideology and programme.

**MAULANA AZAD’S ROLE IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

The Congress had declared complete independence as its goal at the Madras Congress of 1927. Gandhi launched two Civil Disobedience movements at short intervals (1930-31 and 1932). The British government announced the consideration of constitutional problems which needed to be resolved before preparing India for self-government. Much debate went on among the official and non-official circles regarding the form of government suitable for India.

The British declared that it was the communal problem that really thwarted the question of India’s political advancement. In fact, the British made full capital out of it because of the differences on this issue among the political parties. On the communal question, a deadlock seemed to have been created. The Simon Commission Report was published on 23-24 June 1930. It omitted any mention of Dominion Status as the goal of India. However, it did suggest among other things maximum devolution of responsibility to provincial ministries and a strong government at the centre but it maintained that the Governor-General’s executive would not be responsible to the Assembly.

Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, announced on 31 October 1929 Round Table Conference and said that the national issue of Indian constitutional progress was the attainment of Dominion Status. The Congress challenged the statement and asked for clarification whether a Dominion Status was to be granted immediately. The Congress Session at Lahore in December 1929 declared independence of the country as its goal and authorized the All India Congress Committee to start Civil Disobedience movement whenever it thought it necessary. The Congress insisted on the government to accept the Nehru Report. Gandhi was convinced that the government was indulging in delaying tactics to hoodwink the Indian people. He launched the Civil Disobedience campaign on 12 March 1930 with a view to paralyzing the government by mass performance of specific illegal acts like violating the Salt Tax, boycott of English goods, etc. Gandhi was arrested and taken to Yeravada jail in May 1930.

Over 60,000 persons courted arrest in the first six months. The movement damaged the British economic interests, reducing the Indian imports from England considerably, especially textiles and yarn where the reduction was nearly to the extent of 31 to 45 per cent. Azad was also arrested on 21 August 1930. In the Civil Disobedience, the nationalist Muslim groups such as the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind, Ahrar Party of Punjab, and Khudai Khidmatgar Organization of North-West Frontier Province cooperated with the Congress. The Civil Disobedience was a popular movement and was strong particularly in Bihar, Orissa, UP, Bengal and Bombay. It acquired rural adherents, and the women participation in it was quite striking.

Gandhi could not attend this Conference which took place in London on 12 November 1930. It could not resolve the communal problem. Gandhi was let out on 26 January 1931. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed on 5 March 1931 under which the British government agreed to release the prisoners and the Congress to suspend the Civil Disobedience. Maulana Azad was released on 11 May 1932. Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference on 7 September 1931. He insisted on the premise that the
Round Table Conference should draw up a scheme for a responsible government at the Centre as in the Provinces with immediate effect. He tabled the Congress scheme which was a reproduction of the Nehru Report. He admitted his utter failure to bring about any agreed settlement acceptable to the parties concerned.

The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald announced the Communal Award which introduced separate electorates for the depressed and backward classes and allowed reservation of seats for Muslims. Gandhi undertook a fast unto death on 20 September 1932 in Yeravada jail against the Award. Ultimately, an agreement was reached by what is known as the Poona Pact which reserved certain seats for the depressed classes.

Within three weeks of Gandhi’s return in January 1932 he was again back in prison. During his absence from India, the government clamped a number of severe and drastic Ordinances and made a number of arrests including those of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Syed Mahmud and others. The Civil Disobedience was resumed on 1 January 1932. The Viceroy had refused to grant an interview to Gandhi for negotiations. According to official statistics 14,800 arrests were made in January and 17,800 in February. Gandhi was released on 8 March 1933 and at his recommendation Mr. M.S. Aney, the Acting President of the Congress suspended the Civil Disobedience movement.

Maulana Azad was upset over the Communal Award. He was deeply concerned about the minority problem and he took the initiative of bringing about an agreement among the communities on the communal question and he was supported in it by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Syed Mahmud and Shaukat Ali. Gandhi was in jail at that time. These leaders tried to persuade the Muslim League to arrive at a settlement on the basis of the acceptance of the Thirteen Points (out of Jinnah’s Fourteen) and Muhammad Ali’s formula. But this effort proved fruitless.
Due to Malaviya's initiative the Unity Conference held at Allahabad on 3 November 1932 did not oppose the concessions made to the Muslims by the Communal Award. It also accepted the separation of Sind with certain conditions. But at the All-Parties Muslim Conference in Allahabad on 11 December 1932, prominent Muslim leaders from Punjab rejected the Award. The British government too accepted the Muslim representation in the federal chambers and the separation of Sind.181

The British used Jinnah's Fourteen Points to inflame the existing religious differences. The three Round Table Conferences provided the material for the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament whose proposal formed the basis of the Government of India Act 1935. India was to become a federal state, though what is known as the federal part of the Act never came into operation.

The Act of 1935 established effective responsible government in the provinces giving it controls over a large number of subjects. Of course, communal representation and safeguarding of interests of the minority communities were ensured. A White Paper was published on the recommendation of Simon Commission but there was no mention of Dominion status. Both the Congress and the League strongly criticized the Act. Nevertheless, the Act brought peace to the country for the present and the political parties decided to work it out by contesting the elections which they found round the corner.

After the Khilafat movement, Azad was actively engaged in promoting the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. He supported the Nehru Report but thought that it could be accepted only with certain modifications. He was instrumental in the establishment of Indian National Union and was the moving spirit behind the formation of All India Nationalist Muslim Party. He participated in the meeting of Unity Conferences to bridge the difference between Hindus and Muslims and negotiated with the League leaders for

the settlement of communal issues. He was now a confirmed nationalist whose watchwords were freedom, national unity and cultural harmony.

In his *Autobiography*, Jawaharlal Nehru has discussed the role of nationalist Muslims in Indian politics. He wrote: “The collapse and elimination of Nationalist Muslims as a group—as individuals they are, of course, important leaders of the Congress – forms a pitiful story.”\(^{182}\) Nehru thought that the nationalist Muslims had practically lost their political hold on the masses by 1934. He added: “They (the Nationalist Muslims) were all upper middle class folk, and there were no dynamic personalities amongst them – they lost touch with the masses...Indeed they never went to the masses.”\(^ {183}\) This is true, that among the Muslims in the Congress, there was no mass leader. The exception was Abdul Ghaffar Khan who had a large following in the North-West Frontier Province.

The Muslim communal leaders gained popular support by rousing fears in the minds of their co-religionists about their future being threatened by the Hindu-majority rule. The Congress, on the other hand, failed to offer any alternative course to allay these fears. The nationalist Muslims were supposed to act as a pressure group on the Congress but they failed in this role because they were not listened to by Congress leadership.

When Ansari expressed his misgivings about the Civil Disobedience movement in February 1931, he was snubbed by Gandhi and he had to resign as President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee. Later, the Congress policy of approaching Jinnah directly over their heads weakened their influence. Motilal boasted that Ansari dared not defy him on his Report.

Even the loyalty of nationalist Muslims in the Congress began to be questioned and their community did not hesitate to vilify them. Perhaps men of such idealism and strong convictions as nationalist Muslims who suffered much at the hand of their own

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\(^{182}\) Jawaharlal Nehru, *op.cit.*, p.139.
\(^{183}\) Ibid.
community and became suspect in the eyes of others could never be found. They sacrificed so much and gained so little, but they never swerved from the path they had chosen.

Maulana Azad too was reviled and castigated by his co-religionists and his *bona fides* began to be questioned in the Congress. To understand the character and force of India’s struggle for freedom it is necessary to realize the predicament of nationalist Muslims like Maulana Azad who were remarkable men but who were prevented from playing an effective role of which they were really capable by the wrong turn events took in the late twenties and early thirties.

**MAULANA AZAD AS CONGRESS PRESIDENT**

After M.A. Ansari’s death in 1936, the Congress depended mainly on Azad for guidance on the problems concerning Muslims. From now onwards he emerges as a front-rank political leader. He was elected a member of the Congress Working Committee on 16 April 1936 under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru and became with Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad a member of the Parliamentary Sub-Committee which came to be known as ‘High Command.’ As a member of this Committee it became his responsibility to supervise the working of the legislature and ministries in the provinces. The Muslim majority provinces, Bengal, Punjab and North-West Frontier were put under his charge. Later UP was also placed under his supervision.

The Congress contested the elections in February 1937 to combat the 1935 Act, which resulted in a striking Congress success securing an overall majority in five provinces and emerging as the single strongest party in two others. Over 54 per cent of the electorate went to the polls and out of the total of 1581 seats in the Provincial Assemblies, the Congress won as many as 711. The Congress won 26 out of 58 Muslim seats contested against the total of 485 reserved separate seats. The non-Congress Muslims won 424 seats. The Muslim League contested a little less than half the seat reserved for Muslims in separate constituencies and won about sixty per cent of them. The Congress was able to
form ministries in seven provinces: UP, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras and North-West Frontier. Assam had a Congress ministry in September 1938, after the first cabinet was thrown out and Sind formed a cabinet supported by the Congress Party. The League was extremely weak in Muslim majority provinces and was routed in Punjab. It failed to form ministries even in Sind, and North-West Frontier Province. However, it showed better results in UP, and Bengal. It won 108 out of 482 total Muslim seats but was nowhere able to form a ministry.

In his political thinking Maulana Azad had been close to C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru. He firmly believed in settling political issues through negotiations. He had succeeded in resolving differences between the ‘No-Changers’ and ‘Pro-Changers’ in 1923-24. On the Nehru Report, too, he had tried to bring together the contending parties. As a politician, his mind was always active in devising alternatives for resolving political issues. On the formation of provincial ministries after the election in 1937, he was keen on the Congress and the League sharing power in the experiment of self-government. In his view this opportunity for working together might prove helpful in resolving the communal question.184

Increasingly dissatisfied with what he considered the smugness and obtuseness of Indian politics, Jinnah went to London in 1930 and practiced there at the Privy Council. He was later persuaded to return to India by Liaquat Ali Khan to reorganize the Muslim League. When a prominent Congress leader told Nehru that Jinnah was practicing law at the Privy Council, he is reported to have said, ‘good riddance’. This comment was carried to Jinnah who felt enraged so much at this that he returned to India to settle his accounts with Nehru.185 Whatever be the reasons for Jinnah’s return, he started taking active part in Indian politics and began to reorganize the Muslim League.

As a leader of the Independent Party, Jinnah congratulated the ‘Hindu-Brethren’ for protecting the rights of depressed classes on 1 February 1935. He complimented Gandhi for serving the cause of the minorities by his ‘fast unto death’ which compelled the government to come to a settlement known as the “Poona Pact.” Jinnah’s speeches before the elections reflect his abiding faith in Gladstonian liberalism, and his political idiom was not religious but secular and constitutional. At this stage of his political career, he thought in terms of the political rights of minorities. The Mullahs and Moulvis nowhere existed in his political vocabulary.

In the election manifesto of the League prepared under his direction the emphasis was on the cultivation of ‘Victorian Liberalism’ among people which means the preservation of their democratic rights of equality and justice. Jinnah fought the elections on the basis of co-operation with the Congress. He said, “There is really no substantial difference between the League and the Congress and we shall always be glad to co-operate with the Congress in their constructive programme.”

The 1937 electoral manifestoes of the Congress and the League did not had any substantial differences on social and economic matters such as industrial development, uplift of the rural population, relief from rural indebtedness and civil liberty. The Congress manifesto was drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru. In the League manifesto special emphasis was laid on fighting the reactionary forces (meaning the National Agricultural Party), upholding the ideas of ‘Victorian Liberalism’, nationalizing the Indian army and reducing the cost of administration.

The League manifesto stressed the need for co-operation with the Congress in self-rule. The only difference lay in its insistence on separate electorates and protection and

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185 V.N.Datta, Madanlal Dhingra and Revolutionary Movement, New Delhi, 1978, Appendix-III, p.94.
188 Sharif Al Mujahid, ibid, p.486.
promotion of Urdu.\textsuperscript{189} The League’s demand for safeguarding the minority rights cannot be regarded as communalism. There was nothing in the League’s programme to obstruct a political “entente” between the Congress and the League.

Nehru’s letter to Dr. Rajendra Prasad dated 21 July 1937 is very significant on the Congress-League relations.\textsuperscript{190} Nehru makes it clear that there was no conflict between the Congress and the League during the elections and the desire was to avoid it.\textsuperscript{191} According to him, the tussle was wholly with the government party meaning (the National Agricultural Party) and there was hardly any problem in practice “in promoting good relations with the League.” Nehru wrote that he even “supported the League candidate if he was not reactionary.”\textsuperscript{192}

Hailing the Lucknow Pact of 1916 as a unique demonstration of the purpose, earnestness and co-operation between the two great sections of the people of India, the League manifesto emphasized that from that time onward the Muslims had stood shoulder to shoulder with the Hindus in the task of the attainment of self-government.\textsuperscript{193} The manifesto further stated that the Muslims did not lag behind in patriotic co-operation with the Hindus and hoped that they “can rely on the majority with a complete sense of confidence.”\textsuperscript{194} It is in this background of cordiality of relationship between the two political parties before the 1937 elections testified by both Jinnah and Nehru that Azad’s efforts for a negotiated settlement on the ministry formation in UP have to be seen.

It is now acknowledged that for Congress-League coalition in Bombay, Jinnah approached K.M. Munshi who later became a minister in the cabinet but his offer was turned down by the ‘High Command.’\textsuperscript{195} Even after a fierce controversy with Nehru on the
this issue, Jinnah approached B.G. Kher, the Premier in Bombay for Congress-League coalition. Jinnah’s lieutenant, Khaliquzzaman, a prominent Muslim League leader of UP, who, was a staunch Congressman earlier, was closely associated with Nehru, approached the Congress for a coalition ministry in UP. He could not have come up without Jinnah’s approval with an offer to negotiate with the Congress on the formation of a coalition ministry. Jinnah himself was in favour of a coalition ministry in Bombay. As a member of the Congress Parliamentary Board, Azad met Khaliquzzaman on 5 July 1937 and initiated the talks for the Congress-League ministry in UP.196 Thereafter, he held several meetings with Khaliquzzaman on this issue.

According to Khaliquzzaman, the Muslim League Parliamentary Board had authorized him to continue talks with the Congress provided (1) The Muslim League Legislature Party did not join the Congress in wrecking the Constitution. (2) The Congress and the League were to agree upon a programme in accordance with the programme of the League. (3) The Communal Award and separate electorate in the local self-governing bodies were to continue till an all-India settlement of the communal problem was arrived at.197

It is believed that Khaliquzzaman negotiated behind Jinnah’s back or that Jinnah would have wriggled out because he was not consulted is contrary to facts. Jinnah of 1937 cannot be regarded as a die-heart communalist. He had accepted the principle of an All-India Federation at the Round Table Conference in 1930. During the interim period before the 1935 Act, Congress and Muslim League had combined against the government.

In 1937, the Muslim League was a small organization run with inadequate resources both in terms of men and material. After the elections it was natural for the League to think of sharing power with the Congress in UP, when both the parties had fought the elections on

196 Choudhary Khaliquzzaman, op.cit. p.160-162.
197 Ibid.

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a common platform with more or less identical programmes on the major social and economic issues.

After the elections, the Congress emerged as the strongest party to form an independent ministry in UP. But out of the 64 Provincial Assembly seats reserved for Muslims chosen by separate electorate, 26 were won by Muslim League, 28 by independent Muslims, 9 by the National Agricultural Party and only 1 by the Congress. Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim defected from the League to join the Congress later.

Khaliquzzaman, leader of the Muslim League Party in UP, was negotiating on the coalition-ministry formation with Maulana Azad in July 1937. What Sri Prakasa, a detached observer of contemporary events, who became later the Governor of Bombay, wrote that Maulana Azad was deeply committed to the formation of coalition Ministry in UP. On Pant’s query how many ministerial seats the League would want, Khaliquzzaman replied ‘2 out of 6, 3 out of 8.’

The conditions stipulated by the Congress for the League joining the Ministry came as a rude shock to Khaliquzzaman. According to these conditions the Muslim League group in UP. Provincial Legislature would cease to function as a separate group and become a part of the Congress party and Muslim League and the Muslim League Parliamentary Board would also be dissolved.

What the Congress wanted was the merging of the League with the Congress. When Maulana Azad proposed these conditions to Khaliquzzaman he said, “You want me to sign the death warrant of the Muslim League.” These were impossible demands which no political party worth the name could accept unless it had decided to liquidate itself.

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198 R.Coupland, op.cit., p.111.
199 Khaliquzzaman, op.cit., p.187-188. Also in Oral Transcript of Sri Prakasa, NMML.
200 Ibid.
201 Ibid.
These conditions were a clear threat to the League that they must abandon their separate political identity before they could think of sharing power with the Congress.

Khaliquzzaman made an alternative proposal which were as such: (1) on communal matters the League should have complete freedom of action; and (2) in the Ministry there should be two members of the League, himself and Nawab Ismail Khan. The Congress rejected this proposal and the UP. Congress Ministry was formed with two Muslims, one, the only Congress Muslim elected and the other who had deserted the League to become a minister.

Thus, a good opportunity of active co-operation between the Congress and League was lost for which the country was to pay a being price later. If the coalition ministry supported by the League could work satisfactorily in Bengal and later the Unionist Ministry in Punjab with the Congress alliance, why it could not do so in UP. It is possible that the irritating problems like the future of Urdu, \textit{Vande Mataram}, music before mosques; the unfurling of national flag and Gandhi's Basis Education could have been resolved by a mutual spirit of give-and-take. Recalling how the Congress rule had harassed the Muslims, Jinnah told Lord Mountbatten in early 1947, "Well, look, what they did to us in 1938-39 they oppressed us."

A successful working of the Congress-League coalition would have prevented the possibility of the division of the country. The Iqbal-Jinnah correspondence shows that the poet-philosopher was urging Jinnah in May 1937 to fight for the establishment of an autonomous Muslim state in north-western India but Jinnah was rather cool to this proposal. The Aligarh professors prepared a comprehensive thesis on the two-nation theory and submitted it to Jinnah. This they did to strengthen his hands for building up a separate state of Muslim majority areas but Jinnah was not inclined to encourage it.

\footnote{202 Ibid, p.162-163.}
\footnote{203 Larry Collins and Dominque Lapiere, \textit{Mountbatten and the Partition of India}, Vol.I, OUP, New Delhi, 1982, p.43.}
\footnote{204 C.M.Naim (ed.), \textit{Iqbal, Jinnah and Pakistan: Vision and Reality}, New York, 1979, p.88-89.}
Jinnah had left the Congress during the Non-cooperation on the Mahatma’s mixing religion with politics. The rejection of the UP coalition proposals by the Congress was a bitter pill for him to swallow and at the Lucknow Muslim League Conference which took place in the middle of October 1937, after the talks on the coalition issues had failed, he chose what Gandhi then called ‘a war path.’ In Jinnah’s politics, the conference, in fact, marks the beginning of a new militant phase based on strong mistrust of the aims and objectives of the Congress Party. Leaders like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan of Punjab, Sir Fazl-ul-Haq of Bengal and Sir M. Saddullah of Assam gave Jinnah fullest support by advising the members of their respective parties to join the League.

The UP Muslim leadership including Shaukat Ali, Khaliquzzaman and Liaquat Ali using Aligarh Muslim intellectuals as their base infused an entirely new spirit in the League.205 A few months after the Lucknow conference, 40 League branches were set up in UP and the League membership rose to 100,000. Jinnah became a symbol of Muslim destiny and began to be greeted in the country as a spokesman of the urges and aspirations of the Muslims. There was a swift and striking increase in his popularity. He said, “Muslims can expect neither justice nor fair play under Congress government.”206 In the light of the Muslim League’s growing popularity, “no weighty consequences followed the failure of UP talks.”207 The failure of these talks strengthened the arguments in favour of a separate Muslim state.208

A perusal of the condition laid down by the Congress for the coalition ministry shows that the Congress was not at all serious about any compromise with the League swayed by its euphoria over its election success; it refused to compromise with the League and showed lack of political realism. In the words of the Raja of Mahmudabad, the Congress

206 V.N.Datta, Maulana Azad, p.151.
wanted the League “to commit suicide at the steps of Anand Bhawan.” The real decision on the coalition ministry rested with the members of the Congress Parliamentary Subcommittee like Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and the leader of UP Legislative Party, Govind Ballabh Pant. Intellectually and temperamentally Jawaharlal Nehru loathed the idea of negotiating with any communal organization particularly the League which he condemned as a reactionary organization led by feudal landlords for their vested interests.

Nehru had been one of the chief organizers of his party elections in UP. Because of his high political stature in the country and his closeness to Gandhi his word on political matters carried great weight on the Congress-League coalition in UP, his letter to Prasad shows clearly that he was firmly opposed to it from the beginning. In this letter, he was influenced by what Azad called ‘theoretical consideration’.

Nehru wrote that he did not like to use his own expression, “angling for ministries.” He opposed the idea of giving two ministerial berths to the League. He “disliked the bargaining of seats.” He asked: “What about those who severed their connections with the League and joined us? He anticipated “risk of conflict” by “this bargaining” in his own party. To give greater emphasis to the matter, which strongly agitated his mind, Nehru stated very emphatically that he was “repelled by this talk on opportunistic basis.” In reality, Nehru favoured the entry into the cabinet of his friend Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and Hafiz Ibrahim who had defected from the League for merging itself with the Congress were stringent, the underlying idea being to prevent the League from accepting these terms.

Nehru wanted nothing short of winding up of the League. Khaliquzzaman was willing to negotiate further but the Congress withdrew its offer. Khaliquzzaman wanted to call another meeting of the Muslim League Legislature Party to consider the matter further.

209 Rajendra Prasad Papers, op.cit.
210 Ibid.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
On the Congress League coalition Nehru had consulted Dr. K.M. Ashraf, Acharya Kripalani, Narendra Deva, members of the Congress Socialist Party and Purshottamdas Tandon, a staunch Hindu revivalist who too refused co-operation with the League. Khaliquzzaman calls this group a motley crowd of the Leftists and a Hindu reactionary, and thinks that Nehru was influenced on the coalition issue by their views. M.C. Chagla holds Nehru responsible for not allowing the coalition in UP.  

Thus, Maulana Azad’s efforts for a Congress-League coalition did not succeed. His wise counsel was disregarded though he had Gandhi’s support on this issue. Sri Prakasa in his letter to Khaliquzzaman says that Maulana Azad who was ‘zonal dictator’ at the time could not overcome his regrets on the failure of the Congress-League coalition. Khaliquzzaman further points out that Maulana Azad being influenced by Nehru took away the Jamiat-ul-Ulema from the League on 17 May 1937 which sealed the fate of further negotiations with the Congress for any political understanding.

Before the 1937 elections, the League had worked for safeguarding the minority interests of the Muslims but after the elections it began to think of a separate homeland. A man of moderate disposition, Khaliquzzaman had made earnest efforts to bring about a rapprochement between the Congress and the League. Khaliquzzaman said, “I ran from pillar to post, begging the Congress leadership to realize the dangers they were courting but this was taken as a weakness.”

After the failure of these talks on the coalition, Jinnah was altogether a different man. Bellicose in his speeches, he refused to have anything to do with the Congress. Now Gandhi, Nehru, Subhash Bose and Prasad were desperately keen to open unity talks with Jinnah but he was not willing to listen to them. The great opportunity for collaboration of

213 M.C. Chagla, Roses and December, Bombay, 1973, p. 81-82.
214 Rajmohan Gandhi, India Wins Errors, p. 23.
215 Ibid.
216 Khaliquzzaman, op. cit, p. 187-188.
217 Ibid.
the two parties in the task of safeguarding the minority interests within the political framework of united India was lost. The Congress policy on the coalition issue was to put it in Hodson’s words, “a blunder of the first order.”

Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy, while analyzing the circumstances leading to the partition also thought that the Congress attitude towards the UP coalition problem was most unreasonable. Recalling the events, he said in an interview: “Instead of having enough sense to have coalition government and bringing in the Muslim League (and even at the worst if they did not do that, they should have gone out of the way to give the Muslims the best possible treatment), they (the Congress) in fact, did not allow them in anywhere and opposed them. They convinced the Muslim League that was the kind of treatment they in fact would get if they did not try and stand out for independence.”

The year 1940 opened with Maulana Azad’s election as President of Indian National Congress on 17 March and the Muslim League’s Resolution of 23 March for a secure separate homeland. Earlier, Maulana Azad had presided over the Congress session at Delhi in September 1923. When Subhash Chandra Bose was contesting the Presidential election against Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Gandhi proposed Maulana Azad’s name. Maulana Azad agreed first but later withdrew on 21 January 1939 leaving Bose and Pattabhi Sitaramayya to contest.

As was his wont, Maulana Azad avoided embroiling himself in any such controversy. But now when critical decisions were to be taken there were sound reasons for Maulana Azad being called upon to take up Presidentship of the Congress. He was known for his quiet temper, sobriety of judgment and physiographic tact to grasp the essentials of political problems. He was elected President of the Congress at Ramgarh (in Chotta Nagpur area in Bihar) by 1864 votes against M.N. Roy who polled only 183.

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219 Hodson, op.cit., p.67.  
220 Larry Collins & Dominique Lapiere, op.cit., p.22.
Gandhi was keen on Maulana Azad’s election to the Presidency as he thought that in the prevailing atmosphere of communal tension this might help in curbing the growth of communalism.\textsuperscript{221} Meanwhile, Subhash Chandra Bose declared his candidature for the second term of Presidency. The right-wing leadership in the Congress headed by Gandhi opposed this move because they disapproved of Bose’s militant policy on national issues.

Maulana Azad supported the right-wing leadership in its fight with Bose. He did not think that it was the proper time for an open confrontation with the British. In his letter to Nehru dated 17 April 1939 Azad wrote: “I consider the affair of Subhash Babu to be neither a struggle between the right and left, not the question of a composite and homogeneous working committee. It is only a matter of Subhash and some of his supporters. It matters little in what form tangle comes to an end; we have to consider these questions independently and specifically, in order to reach a solution.”\textsuperscript{222}

However, Azad remained at the helm of the Congress for about six years at a critical juncture in the country’s history when momentous political decisions were taken. He took up his new responsibility with great élan. He reconstituted the Congress Working Committee and brought back Nehru who had been excluded in Prasad’s Committee. He also included C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Asaf Ali as members. He delivered an eloquent and forceful Presidential address at Ramgarh on 19 March 1940, which dealt with vital national and international issues.

This address was marked by passionate energy as well as logical clarity and precision.\textsuperscript{223} He delivered his speech in chaste Urdu and it was translated into English by Nehru. Maulana Azad liked Nehru’s translation of his speech which showed how Nehru had captured the true spirit of the original and rendered it into English with felicity and accuracy of phrasing. Maulana Azad thought that the English translation was a real

\textsuperscript{222} Jawaharlal Nehru, \textit{A Bunch of Old Letters}, p.381-382.
improvement on his original text which he attributed to Nehru’s first rate intellect and exceptional talents.224

In his address, Maulana Azad focused mainly on India’s immediate political problems in the context of the prevailing international crisis. He strongly attacked the rise of fascism in Europe but showed no mercy for British imperialism either since it continued to deny the right of self-determination to the subject people. He declared that India’s fight was not directed against the British people but British imperialism which even at that critical moment withheld from the people their fundamental rights.225

About the future of India, Maulana Azad made it clear that his country was no longer willing to be duped by any British assurances of ‘safeguards’ or ‘promises of concessions’ after the termination of the war. Maulana Azad dispelled the impression from the minds of his countrymen that the ‘third Power’ - meaning Britain, was going to quit India. The need of the hour, he felt, was to see the goal clearly and to unite the people to fight the battle for India’s freedom.226

Maulana Azad also covered the communal problem at great length. He admitted its stark reality but said that it had been created by the British for serving their sinister designs. He firmly believed in the unity of Hindu-Muslim composite culture. According to Maulana Azad, Hindus and Muslims professed different religious faiths but as a nation they were one, an integral part of the common heritage for which any nation could be legitimately proud. He pointed out that there was no contradiction in being a good Indian and a devout Muslim, in owning the common heritage of Islam and India.

He said emphatically that the inexorable logic of history had fused the Hindus and Muslims into a nation and no power on earth could sunder that indissoluble bond. On the Hindu-Muslim question, he declared: “Full eleven centuries have passed by since then.

Islam has now as great a claim on the soil of India as Hinduism. If Hinduism has been the religion of the people here for several thousands of years; Islam also has been their religion for a thousand years. Just as a Hindu can say with pride that he is an Indian and a Hindu, so also we can say with equal pride that we are Indians and follow Islam."  

Azad then assured the Muslims that their fears of being swamped by the Hindus were groundless because the strength of any community did not depend on the sheer brutality of its numbers but on its own internal resources to stand for its rightful place in national life.  

Discussing how the Muslim interests would be protected, Azad explained two basic principles, which he maintained, had guided the Congress policy throughout its history.

1. Whatever Constitution is adopted for India, there must be the fullest guarantees in it for the rights and interests of minorities.

2. The minorities should judge for themselves what safeguards are necessary for the protection of their rights and interests. The majority should not decide this. Therefore, the decision in this respect must depend upon the consent of the minorities and not on a majority vote.

Maulana Azad firmly believed that the rights of minorities could be protected in a federation which he explained as follows: "The recognized minorities have a right, if they so please, to choose their representative by their votes. Their representative will not have to rely upon the votes of any other community except their own. So far as the question of the rights and interests of the minorities is concerned, the decision will not depend upon the majority of votes in the Constituent Assembly. It will be subject to the consent of the minority. If unanimity is not achieved on any question, then an impartial tribunal, to which the minority have also consented, will decide the matter. This last proviso merely  

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227 Ibid, p.298.
228 Ibid, p.292.
in the nature of a provision for a possible contingency is most unlikely to be required. If a more practical proposal is made, there can be no objection to that."  

Maulana Azad reminded the British government that with the formation of the ministries in 1937, the Congress had stretched forth its hand of cooperation to the government but they were forced to withdraw it after the unilateral declaration of war. The question facing the Indian people, Maulana Azad asked, was “where do we go from here?” Maulana Azad thought that not much had been lost yet and the situation could be salvaged provided the government understood the political climate in the country.  

Placing his faith in the leadership of Gandhi, Maulana Azad hoped that the deadlock between the Congress and the government could still be resolved.

On Hindu-Muslim unity and composite culture of which he was a symbol, Azad delivered some strikingly lyrical passages remarkable for their intellectual range, convictions and sensitivity. Maulana Azad said: “I would remind my co-religionists that I stand today exactly where I stood in 1912 when I addressed them on this question (Hindu-Muslim unity). I have given thought to the innumerable things which have helped since then. My eyes and my mind did not fail to watch them and to think about them. I was in their midst and I examined every circumstance with care. I can not belie my experience, I repeat today what I had said throughout the entire period that the ninety nine millions of Indian Muslim have no right course of action except the one to which I invited them in 1912.”  

On the theme of composite culture, there appears in his diction a kind of bold and noble purity as he invoked the idea of human brotherhood forged between the two great streams of Indian civilization, that is, Hinduism and Islam. The following passage shows his pride as an heir to India’s rich cultural heritage. “I am a Muslim and proud of the fact.

Islam's splendid traditions of thirteen hundred years are my inheritance. I am unwilling to lose even the smallest part of this inheritance. In addition, I am proud of being an Indian. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality... I am indispensable in this noble edifice. Without me this splendid structure of India is incomplete. I am an essential element which has gone to build India. I can never surrender this claim.\(^{233}\)

Maulana Azad admired the virtues of composite culture but he condemned strongly the Hindu and Muslim tendency to revive exclusively their own narrow past to the neglect of rich heritage of common culture which they have jointly evolved through the centuries. He warned: “If the Hindus think of reviving their thousand years old way of life, then they must be living under an illusion. Similarly, if the Muslims believe in adopting their hundred years old beliefs which they had brought from Persia and Middle East then they are mistaken.”\(^{234}\)

Maulana Azad believed that ‘revivalism’ of the true spirit of religion may be justified but any idea of reproducing the old social and cultural pattern of life was fraught with dangerous consequences for the progress of any society.\(^{235}\)

Maulana Azad emphasized that for the freedom of their country, unity and discipline, the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was absolutely necessary.\(^{236}\) The Presidential address delivered by Maulana Azad was a firm grasp of contemporary national and international issues which reflected his strong denunciation of fascism and British imperialism, his deep concern for Hindu-Muslim unity, his firm faith in Gandhi’s leadership and his still lurking hope of resolving the Indian political question with the British through negotiations and goodwill on both sides.

\(^{233}\) Ibid, p.299.  
\(^{234}\) Ibid.  
\(^{235}\) Ibid.  
\(^{236}\) Ibid, p.284, 300.
To check the rising tide of communalism, the Congress launched a Muslim mass contact programme. The idea of this campaign was initiated by Nehru, to which the Congress lent its approval in October 1937. In this campaign the Congress was supported by the Ahrars, Khudai Khidmatgars and the socialists. Dr. K.M. Ashraf was put in charge of the Muslim mass contact campaign. The campaign had success initially in some parts of UP, Bihar, Bengal and Punjab. It failed to generate Muslim confidence in the Congress in rural areas. From the beginning Gandhi had strong reservations about it.

Maulana Azad too worked for the Muslim mass contact programme and enlisted for it the support of Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind. It was the alliance of the right wing in the Congress with the Hindu Mahasabha which wrecked the campaign. With the termination of the tenure of Nehru’s Presidentship of the Congress, all zeal for it was gone. Dr. Ashraf complained that he was sitting idle in his office doing nothing. The upshot was that this campaign, though inspired by good intentions, proved ill-conceived and unproductive and further aggravated the already deteriorating relations between the Congress and the League.

When the Congress was in office, the Muslim League launched a virulent tirade against it by condemning it as a purely Hindu organization and oppressing the Muslim by its anti-Muslim programmes and policies. The League approached the government for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the alleged atrocities on the Muslims. The League published the Pirpur Report at the end of 1938 which highlighted the oppression inflicted on the Muslim during Congress rule. As a member of the Congress Parliamentary Board, Azad knew the working of the ministries and he found that the League’s allegations of the Congress discriminatory attitude towards Muslims were absolutely baseless. Azad condemned the Pirpur Report which he thought had made all sorts of false allegations.

238 Ibid.
239 Bimal Prasad, ibid, p.314-335.
On the outbreak of War, the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow declared on 3 September 1939 “War has broken out between His Majesty and Germany and that a state of war-emergency has existed.” In this way, India went into the war as a belligerent country against Germany. This unilateral declaration of war without consulting the Congress and the League was strongly resented by the political parties in India. The Congress voiced a strong protest against it. By its resolution of 14 September 1939, the Congress Working Committee insisted that the issue of war and peace must be decided by the Indian people and no outside authority could impose any decision on them nor could the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends.

The Congress emphasized that if Britain was fighting for democracy, it must give the right of self-determination to the people of India. It firmly believed that no genuine support for defence would be possible without the establishment of self government in India. The Congress asked the British government to specify precisely its war aims in regard to “democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged.” The Committee posed the question: “Do they (the British government) included the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people?”

Maulana Azad protested that without consulting the Congress, Britain had the impudence to push the country into war. He made it clear that British rule was not to be tolerated any longer. He said: “So far as the question of war is concerned our position is quite clear. We see the face of British imperialism as clearly now as we did in the last war. Our case is crystal clear. We do not wish to see British imperialism triumphant and stronger and thus lengthen the period of our own subjection to it. We absolutely refuse to do so.”

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240 R.Coupland, op.cit., p.211.
241 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
In his statement of 17 October, the Viceroy declared Dominion Status, as enunciated by Lord Irwin in 1929, to be the goal of British policy in India. But the immediate step for associating Indian opinion with the prosecution of war seemed to be “the establishment of a consultative group representative of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian princes over which the Governor General would preside.”

The Congress Working Committee, at a meeting held at Wardha on 22 October 1939, regarded the Viceroy’s statement as “in every way unfortunate” and called upon the Congress ministries to tender their resignation. By November 1938 all the ministries resigned. Jinnah declared 23 December 1939 as ‘Day of Deliverance’ and thanksgiving and a mark of relief that the Hindu Raj as established by the Congress regime had at last come to an end. The resignation of the Congress ministries in 1939 was a hasty and ill-conceived act which was likely to damage the Congress and the country. There was still a possibility of further negotiations with the government. This decision of the Congress left an open field for the League to strengthen itself and captured power in Bengal, Punjab, Sind and North-West Frontier Province which it could not have dreamt of earlier.

The war took a serious turn for the Allied Powers during April 1940 to December 1942. Holland, Belgium and France had collapsed by mid-April 1940. France sought armistice and the British were forced to evacuate Dunkirk. The Allied powers were engaged in a desperate fight for their survival. The US declared war against the Axis powers towards the end of 1941.

The first problem that confronted the Congress under Azad’s Presidency was to define its attitude towards the European War, which provoked much controversy in the Congress and brought it almost on the verge of a split. Gandhi’s attitude of non-participation of India in the war was firm. A pacifist by conviction, he was not prepared to involve India into war. Non-violence was an article of faith with him. He would not entertain using armed force even for defending the freedom of his country against a threat of aggression.

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244 Ibid.
He made it plain that his non-participation in it was not based on political expediency but strictly on moral grounds. He would not lend support to British efforts in war even though such a positive response should draw his country closer to freedom. Such bargaining counters were alien to his temperament. But other Congress leaders did not share Gandhi’s views on non-violence and India’s non-participation in the war.

At Ramgarh session of the Congress, the issue of Civil Disobedience was evaded but faith in Gandhi’s leadership was strongly affirmed. At the Wardha Congress Session, 17-20 June 1940 things took a different turn altogether. There was no meeting round between Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee on India’s participation in the war. The Congress Working Committee resolved that it could not make non-violence a matter of policy in meeting external aggression.245

It stated further that “Gandhiji should be free to pursue his great ideal in his own way and therefore absolve him from responsibility for the programme and activity which the Congress has to pursue under the conditions at present prevailing in India and the world in regard to external aggression and internal disorder.”246

The question of the Congress attitude on war came up again at the Congress Working Committee meeting in Delhi, on 3 July-7 July 1940. The Committee decided to support provided the British made an immediate unequivocal declaration of the full independence of India. To support the British war efforts, the Congress demanded the setting up of a provisional national government which “commands the confidence of all the elected elements in the Central Legislature and secure the closest co-operation of the responsible governments in the Provinces.”247

246 Ibid.
The underlying idea was that India would take up armed defence if her national demands were conceded. It was a bargaining counter. In sum, it meant the Congress assurance to the British: "we will support you in the war if our demands are met." This resolution was drafted by C. Rajagopalachari and supported by Azad and Patel. Gandhi said that Patel was ‘Rajaji’s greatest prize’ who lent his support to the Delhi Resolution. Abdul Ghaffar Khan resigned in protest against the resolution.

The All India Congress Committee meeting held at Poona on 27 and 28 July 1940 confirmed the Delhi Resolution by 95 votes to 47, the opinion in the Congress Working Committee being divided. At the meeting Azad said “The Indian National Congress is a political organization pledged to win the political independence of the country. It is not an institution for organizing world peace.”

Soon after the Poona Congress, Azad received a letter from all but four members of the Congress Working Committee saying that they doubted whether they should continue as members of the Congress Working Committee because of their disagreement with the Congress on India’s participation in the war. They would continue to be members so long as the difference had no immediate effect on the Congress policy but in case the British government accepted the terms of Delhi Poona offer or Congress participation in war efforts, they would have no alternative but to resign. Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Asaf Ali did not sign this letter. This letter written by the majority of the members of the Congress Working Committee knocked out the basis for Delhi Poona offer of the Congress to the government.

Maulana Azad felt deeply hurt at this letter from his colleagues who, he thought, could have talked over the matter with him or called another meeting of the Working Committee.

248 Amrit Bazaar Patrika, 28 July 1940.
249 Pattabhi Sitaramayya, op.cit., p.201.
250 V.N.Datta, Maulana Azad, p.162.
Committee for it.253 Almost a similar situation had confronted Subhash Chandra Bose. The letter from his colleagues threatened Maulana Azad’s position as President and warned him not to negotiate with the government for India’s participation in the war. It asserted a firm confidence in Gandhi’s leadership. He was no Subhash who would revolt, quit the Congress and organize another party. He did not had a large following. He knew that even Nehru who shared his views and who enjoyed great popularity among the masses would not go that far. He would not tackle a problem that was too much for him. He did not show the strength to take up cudgels with the Congress leadership. He had no option left but to yield.

Not by any means an idealist, Maulana Azad’s approach to politics was pragmatic. When Nehru expressed his reservations about launching Satyagraha on the ground that this would be contrary to the Shan (dignity) of India to take undue advantage when Britain was involved in war, Maulana Azad wrote a strong letter on 28 May 1940.

“I do not know what is the Shan of India? What is the considered decision? I want to know. We can’t grope in the dark like blind men. We should adopt a way with open eyes even if it embarrasses England...You interpret the Ramgarh decision against the honour and dignity of India. I do not understand how this confused and illogical conception could find a way to your mind.”254

Maulana Azad believed in non-violence only as a matter of policy, not as an article of faith. He justified even the use of armed force for the cause of liberty. In his attitude towards the present war, Maulana Azad’s sympathies were entirely with the Allies who were fighting Nazism. At this critical juncture, he disfavoured any Civil Disobedience movement. He was conscious of the growth of the strength of Muslim League which was demanding a separate homeland.

As one who had an acute historical sense reinforced by his knowledge of Bismarckian diplomacy and the study of the Balkans, he thought that negotiations with the British when they were involved in a desperate situation for their survival might prove advantageous to India politically and also curb the ascendancy of communal politics. Like Rajagopalachari, he regarded the Congress mainly as a political organization meant to fight for the liberation of his country and achieve self-rule. Therefore, at this critical stage when circumstances seemed favourable to India, he thought that parleys and negotiations might help in resolving the Indian political problem. The immediate need was to demand, as the Congress did, a provisional national government enjoying the confidence of the people.

On July 9, 1940 Jinnah reacted strongly against the Delhi Congress Resolution of 7 July 1940 which had demanded the setting up of a national government. He condemned this Congress move as a sinister design to establish Hindu Raj. Azad sent his clarification in a telegram to Jinnah: “I have read your statement of July 9. The Delhi Resolution of the Congress means by national government a composite cabinet not limited to any single party. But is it the position of the League that they can agree to any provisional arrangement not based on two nations scheme? If so, please clarify by wire.”

In his reply, Jinnah rebuked Azad: “I have received your telegram. I cannot reciprocate confidence. I refuse to discuss with you by correspondence or otherwise as you have completely forfeited the confidence of Muslim India. Cannot you realize you are made a Muslim show-boy Congress President to give it colour that it is national and deceive foreign countries. You represent neither Muslims nor Hindus. The Congress is a Hindu body. If you have self-respect resign at once. You have done your worst against the League so far. I know you have hopelessly failed. Give it up.”

256 Khaliquzzaman, op.cit., p.250. Even Khaliquzzaman, Jinnah’s favourite regards this telegram as impolite.
On the Delhi-Poona offer, Azad and his supporters could not have their way and were forced to retreat. As a pragmatist, he realized that the non-violence could not be a policy against external aggression and it would not become a cardinal principle in deciding about political action in a world governed by human willfulness. Rajagopalachari had told Gandhi that he was ‘obsessed with non-violence’, and that ‘his vision had got blurred’.

Gandhi was determined to disallow the Congress from participating in the war and this view was to influence the entire Congress policy during the war. He may have thought that Allied powers were going to lose the war. So, when Lord Linlithgow invited Maulana Azad as Congress President to discuss with him the August Offer, he declined the invitation on 10 August 1940, even without consulting his colleagues. He knew that the Congress had denied him the authority to negotiate with the government. Was it for nothing that Jinnah had called him the show-boy (Congress President)?

**AUGUST OFFER**

Encouraged by the conciliatory attitude of the Congress which was reflected in the Delhi-Poona offer and by his anxiety to enlist India support for war, Linlithgow made the August 8 offer inviting the Congress to join the new Advisory Defence Council and the Governor-General Council, but as regards self-government, there was to be no constitutional advance until after the War. R. J. Moore has shown in his studies that this proposal was drawn up by Winston Churchill, the Prime Minister.

The proposal recommended an extended executive council in which the Congress representative would be included. The Muslim League received a pledge that the British: “would not transfer power to any system of government where authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India’s national life.”257 By this declaration the Muslims had something like “the veto on constitutional advances that the 1935 Act had given to the provinces. Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Punjab Premier, thought that this

declaration had “removed the spectre of Hindu Raj.”\textsuperscript{258} The August Offer said nothing about national government but a firm no to the Congress demand for independence, and gave a mere promise for constitution-making after the War.

Gandhi regarded Maulana Azad’s refusal to meet the Viceroy as “God inspired.”\textsuperscript{259} He feared that there might be a settlement between the Congress and the government. At the Wardha Congress on 18 August, the August Offer was rejected and regarded as ‘opposed to the best interests of the country’. In Congress circles there was a talk about suspending the Working Committee and electing Rajendra Prasad as Congress President.\textsuperscript{260} Obviously, this was a reaction against Maulana Azad’s views on non-violence. In mid-September 1940, the AICC met at Bombay and affirmed its full confidence in Gandhi’s leadership.

The Congress resolved on 15 September 1940 that it firmly “believed in the policy of non-violence not only in the struggle for Swaraj but also in so far as this may be possible of application in a free India.” By this resolution, the Congress was thrown back on Gandhi’s pacifism and non-cooperation. The Muslim League neither accepted nor rejected the August Offer, but the League’s cooperation in the conduct of the War was still made “conditional on the Viceroy’s acceptance of the ‘fifty-fifty’ principle.”\textsuperscript{261}

Gandhi launched a limited Satyagraha movement on 18 September 1940. The immediate issue on which the movement was started was to protect civil liberty, i.e. the right to the freedom of speech. In practice, it meant the right to propagate that India does not believe in the war waged by the Allied powers and dissuading people from assisting in the war efforts. Maulana Azad was arrested on 31 December 1940 and sentenced to imprisonment for two years. By May 1941 about 14,000 Congressmen had been put in prison.


\textsuperscript{261} R. Coupland, op.cit., p.246.
The Viceroy had expanded in July 1941 his Council to 15, of which eleven were Indian. Due to the advancing tide of the Japanese conquest in the East and the pressure of the Indian members of the Viceroy’s Executive Council on the government to adopt conciliatory attitude towards the Congress, all the Satyagrahis were released. Maulana Azad came out of the gaol somewhat frustrated. He felt as though nothing had been gained in the cause of India’s freedom since the beginning of the War.262

The Congress Working Committee met at Bardoli in the Surat district of Gujarat on 23 to 30 December 1941 and at Wardha on 13 and 14 January 1942. The Japanese were advancing on India and the danger of their penetration in the country was real. The issue of non-violence and non-participation of India in the war came up again at Bardoli. Gandhi was again inflexible in his commitment to non-violence. The impression created by the Bardoli resolution was that the Delhi-Poona Offer was being revived again by the Congress.263

The Bardoli Congress resolved that the ‘Bombay Resolution of 16 September 1940 still holds today.’ Gandhi realized that the Bombay Resolution was contrary to his views on non-violence and he resigned from the leadership of the Congress. He wrote to Maulana Azad that he found: “great error in the interpretation of Bombay Resolution. I had interpreted it to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all war on the ground principally of non-violence.

The discovery of this error makes it impossible for me to lead the Congress. The resolution contemplated material association with British in the war effort as a price for guaranteed independence of India. If such was my view and I believed in the use of non-violence for gaining independence I would consider my self guilty of unpatriotic conduct.

263 Bhupen Qanungo, op.cit., p.440.
It is my certain belief that only non-violence can save India and the world from self-extinction."\(^{264}\)

So Gandhi resigned from the Congress leadership and decided to continue Civil Disobedience for "free speech against all war with such Congressmen and other whom I select."\(^{265}\) Abdul Ghaffar Khan also resigned from the Congress Working Committee. Explaining the differences between Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee, Maulana Azad said that Gandhi would not like to obtain India's freedom by participation in the war. He declared: "But I am prepared to accept the independence of my country at any moment. The only thing is that it should be real independence."\(^{266}\)

**CRIPPS PROPOSAL**

The winter of 1941-42 brought the war close to the Indian borders due to the Japanese advance. This impending danger of invasion combined with Roosevelt's and Chiang Kai Shek's efforts made the British government take another initiative to resolve the Indian problem. Churchill was in the United States and Attlee was in charge of the Cabinet. Sir Stafford Cripps whose diplomatic success with the Russians had enhanced his reputation and who was Lord Privy Seal and leader of the House of Lords, came to India to negotiate with the Indian leaders, a settlement of the political question.

Maulana Azad was a hard negotiator. As Congress President, he held consultations with Sir Stafford.\(^{267}\) He carried the impression from his talks that the Indian question could be resolved. He was prepared to accept certain limitations on the normal powers of the Defence Minister but he was firm on the question of national government which he thought should function as a cabinet with the Viceroy as a constitutional head. It seemed to him that Cripps was making a positive response to the Congress proposals but this

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\(^{264}\) *Rajendra Prasad Papers: Gandhi to Azad, 30 December 1941, File No.2 – A/41, NAI.

\(^{265}\) Ibid.

\(^{266}\) *The Hindu*, 16 January 1942.

hope proved an illusion.

The Congress rejected the Cripps proposals because they provided nothing tangible and immediate and left things to the future. The Congress insisted that the new government must immediately have full powers of the Dominion Status and strongly urged for giving more powers to the executive council and reducing the role of the Secretary of State. The Congress also objected to the provincial option and the inclusion of the princes instead of the people of the states in the constitution making body. The actual breakdown of the Cripps proposal which is evident from Maulana Azad-Cripps correspondence was not on the formula about defence responsibilities but on the Congress demand that the national government must be a cabinet government with full powers and not merely a continuation of the Viceroy's Council.

The Cripps proposals were meant to act as a sop to the Indian aspirations and at the same time to mollify public opinion in USA and England. The Amery diaries show that Churchill and Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India were pulling strings from behind. Moore also has shown how Linlithgow prompted Cripps to withdraw the offer. At one time, Churchill called for the resignation of Cripps 'from the war council with impunity.'

But the Cripps proposals conceded Pakistan in principle in recommending that once the constitution was drawn up any province might opt out from the Indian Union and become a separate dominion. Such a political concession to the League, was not acceptable to Maulana Azad. Percival Spear thought that the rejection of the Cripps Offer was a prelude to Pakistan. The implication is that the Congress should have shared power with the League which might have settled the communal problems and paved the way to self-rule after the war.

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268 R.J. Moore, ibid, p.72.
To Maulana Azad the question of national government with certain limitations in view of Britain’s precarious military position was of paramount importance. That is why he rejected the Cripps proposals. These proposals might have led to the balkanization of India which the Congress could not have accepted. The failure of the Cripps proposal was a prelude to Quit Indian movement. According the Moore, once again Churchill barred the road to India’s freedom.\textsuperscript{270}

**QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT AND MAULANA AZAD**

Increasingly dissatisfied with the British attitude, the Congress demanded their withdrawal from the Cripps proposal and threatened to launch a new Civil Disobedience movement. The All India Congress Committee passed the Quit India Resolution on 8 August 1942 and only 13 votes were cast against it. Maulana Azad and Nehru had serious reservations about launching a Civil Disobedience movement. They wished to cooperate in the war provided they had real responsibility. However, Gandhi held different views and in early July told Maulana Azad that they could not work together.\textsuperscript{271} In fact, Gandhi demanded Azad’s resignation but Patel intervened and averted the crisis.\textsuperscript{272} Nehru moved the Quit India Resolution and Maulana Azad also fell in line with him. Gandhi declared at the meeting: “There is no question of one more chance. This is an open rebellion.” Nehru had coined the phrase ‘open rebellion’. The closing words of Gandhi’s speech were ‘Do or Die’.

Justice Wickenden’s report shows that Gandhi started the movement due to the failure of Individual Satyagraha, and Cripps Mission, the growing Muslim demand for Pakistan, the presence of American troops in India and the Japanese victories.\textsuperscript{273} He chose the time which he thought appropriate for forcing Britain to concede freedom to India. But the overwhelming consideration, as noted earlier, which weighed with him, was to save India

\textsuperscript{270} R.J.Moore, op.cit., p.104.
\textsuperscript{272} Ibid.
from the ravages of war and keeping her out of it. He knew that the country was not non-violent and anticipated violence as a consequence of his movement.

In his press interview to the Congress worker, Maulana Azad said in Delhi on 17 July 1942: “Gandhiji has been made to promise that the new movement will not be stopped merely for the reason that violence might be displayed. However, Congressmen should never resort to or encourage violence.”

The government took stern action by arresting the members of the Congress Working Committee including Maulana Azad, Nehru, Patel, Asaf Ali, Syed Mahmud and Narendra Deva and on 9 August they were dispatched to Ahmednagar fort.

Violent disturbances flared up in rural areas of UP and Bihar where railway stations were burnt, communications disrupted and policemen killed. It was the left-wing element in the Congress that stimulated a violent form of revolutionary activity. In his letter to the Prime Minister Churchill, Linlithgow, the Viceroy, wrote on 31 August 1942, “I am engaged here in meeting by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security.” Churchill even told the King in desperation that he would give up India after the war though he changed his mind on the termination of the war when he was out of power.

The Quit India movement was ruthlessly suppressed with 1000 lives lost and 60,000 people arrested. From a larger angle the movement had profound results as it sowed the seeds of the ultimate British withdrawal from India. The prestige of British rule received a rude jolt given by this movement.

275 Ibid.
But some ironies which attended this movement cannot be escaped. Gandhi’s non-violence turned into violence and with the Congress leaders in jail, the Muslim League got a golden opportunity to seize power. By 1945, the League enjoyed the status of being the party controlling government in Sind, North-West Frontier Province, Bengal and even in the Hindu majority province of Assam. When the Congress leaders were released, they saw in the League their potential rival.

Maulana Azad was arrested on 9 August 1942 in the early morning at Bhulabhai Desai’s residence where he usually stayed. He was taken to Ahmednagar Fort where he remained till April 1945. Thereafter, he was removed to Bankura in Bengal and released on 15 June 1945. During this period of his prison life, his wife died at Calcutta. When she was seriously ill the Government of India was inclined to release him but he declined. In his prison life he wrote a bunch of letters published later as Ghubar-e-Khatir, considered by literary critics to be a masterpiece of Urdu prose.

Maulana Azad’s health lay shattered in prison. He had lost forty pounds in weight. After his release, he contemplated relaxing and recuperating but that hope remained unfulfilled. As Congress President, hectic political activity was to consume his entire time. He went to his hometown Calcutta from Bankura. He knew that his wife Zuleikha was no more there to receive him. On reaching Calcutta, he went first to his wife’s grave where he said the fateha.

**SIMLA CONFERENCE**

The political deadlock had lasted through the War. At the end of the War, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy, made a new offer to Indian political parties. Wavell called a meeting of Indian leaders at Simla on 25 June 1945 to resolve the Indian problem. His first object was the formation of a new Executive Council as contemplated in the Cripps proposals. The question was how the Executive Council was to be composed.
Jinnah wanted all five Muslim members in the Council of fourteen to be members of the Muslim League. In other words, every Muslim on the Executive Council had to be from the Muslim League.\textsuperscript{276} Jinnah declared that the Muslim League alone represented the Muslims and no other party had the right to nominate a Muslim on the Council. Neither the Viceroy nor the Congress accepted this view.

Maulana Azad repudiated Jinnah's contention of nominating all the Muslims on the Council.\textsuperscript{277} He emphasized that to yield to Jinnah's demand would mean reducing the Congress to a communal organization, a position which he was not prepared to accept.\textsuperscript{278} He said that the issue was political but was being given a religious turn to mislead the people. Challenging the League's contention that Muslim League was the sole representative of the Muslims, Maulana Azad said that in the Muslim majority province of Punjab, the Unionist Ministry was in power; in North-West Frontier it was the Congress that ruled and in Sind Congress support had brought a Non-League ministry into the saddle.\textsuperscript{279}

When pressed by correspondents to confirm whether he had agreed to the inclusion of Non-Congress Muslims in the Council, Maulana Azad said that for resolving the deadlock if the League agree to the inclusion of able Muslim nationalists who belonged neither to the League nor the Congress, he would not insist on the inclusion of Congress Muslim nationalists in the Council.\textsuperscript{280} He added that if the League had approved his proposal he would have persuaded his colleagues to accept it. Maulana Azad went so far as to suggest that the League should accept the right of the Congress to choose whomever it wanted but in practice the Congress would not do so. This proposal shows that Maulana Azad was willing to stay out of power. Whether or not the Congress would accept such a proposal was another matter.

\textsuperscript{277} The \textit{Hindustan Times}, 18 July 1945.
\textsuperscript{278} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{279} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid.
He blamed Wavell for not dealing firmly with the League.281 He would have liked Wavell to proceed in the matter and constitute the Executive Council with or without the League. Maulana Azad said, "Those who are prepared to go forward should be allowed to go and those who wish to be kept out should be left out."282

Wavell being a soldier was comparatively straightforward and well-intentioned in his attempts to solve the problem. He put the cards on the table but lacked what Attlee called 'suppleness in dealing with political problems.'283 Wavell and Maulana Azad got on well with each other. Attlee thought Wavell was a 'curious silent bird.'284 Maulana Azad too was reserved by nature. Wavell found Maulana Azad, "honest, moderate and a gentleman but not a strong character."285 He wrote to King George VI on 8 July 1946 that Azad was a gentleman who stood for good sense and moderation "as far as he was able, in spite of poor health and a naturally weak character."286 Maulana Azad was also struck by Wavell's sincerity of purpose and frankness. Wavell records that in his presence at Simla, Maulana Azad stretched forth his hand to shake it with Jinnah but he refused.287

Jinnah's view was that if other political parties start claiming to represent Muslims, this would seriously hit his position as the sole spokesman of Muslims and thereby weaken his authority to establish his claim for a separate homeland. The Simla Conference failed not on the basis of conflicting political objectives but on account of the communal question, which created division among different Indian groups. Jinnah was willing to tolerate the continuation of British rule rather than have a Congress monopoly of power. He scuttled the Simla Conference by his intransigence.

281 Ibid, 21 July 1945.
283 R.J.Moore, op.cit., p.149.
284 Ibid.
Azad made the last ditch effort to retain the unity of country and avoid the creation of Pakistan. From 1942 to 1947 Cripps met Indians almost at every critical turn whenever any constitutional issue arose about India. He drafted almost every statement, suggested alterations and held frequent consultations with Indian political leaders. Cripps viewed the Congress President, Azad as “the foundation and basis of India’s future destiny.” 288

CABINET MISSION

With the advent of the Labour Party in power in England, the Indian national leaders in the Congress Party became optimistic about India’s future and thought that the Labour Government would fulfill their commitment to the cause of India’s self-rule. Azad regarded the Labour Party in power as “an event of historic importance and a prelude to a constitutional settlement.” 289 In the words of the Secretary of State, Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Cabinet Mission was “dispatched to India with the object of taking immediate and positive steps to provide full self-government for India.” 290

The Mission was to hold discussions with the elected representatives of British India and the Indian states in order to arrive at an agreement about the forming of a constitution, setting up of constitution-making machinery and an interim government having the support of the main Indian parties. The Cabinet Mission arrived in India on 23 March 1946 with a three men team, the Secretary of State of India, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and A.V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty. The Mission announced their plan on 6 March 1946.

Maulana Azad took special interest in the Cabinet Mission proposals and thought them reasonable enough for resolving the Indian problem. The democratic process had been set in motion and elections were held for the provincial assemblies in 1945. The Congress

288 R.J.Moore, op.cit., p.75.
289 Ibid, p.60.
290 V.N.Datta, op.cit., p.172.
won over 91.3 percent of the general votes and the League nearly 75 per cent of the Muslim votes, thereby securing all the Muslim seats.\textsuperscript{291}

The Congress emerged victorious in all the non-Muslim majority provinces, Assam, UP, Bombay, Madras, Orissa, the Central Provinces and Bihar and also in the Muslim majority province of North West Frontier. The Muslim League formed governments in Bengal and Sind but was frustrated in Punjab. Thus, the League governed only in two provinces and its strategy lay in toppling the coalition government of Punjab. The election results showed that the League had gained a spectacular success. While in 1937, the League had won only 4.4 percent of the Muslim votes in 1946, it captured about 75 per cent. On the basis of these election results Jinnah could declare with confidence that only the League represented the Muslims and no one else had the right to speak on their behalf.

The Cabinet Mission proposals provided a compromise between “Jinnah’s sovereign Pakistan and Congress’s strong and organic Centre.” The Cabinet Mission scheme was a modification of the Cripps Proposals. It envisaged a federal union controlling defence, foreign affairs and communications. The states were to be included in the federal union after negotiations. The powers of the federal union were reduced and the individual provinces had the liberty to form a subordinate union of their own. Each of these was to decide for itself the powers it would exercise outside the range of federal subjects. On the basis of this arrangement, a Constituent Assembly would be convened to complete the constitution-making process. The Cabinet Mission Plan opened an avenue for reconciling united India with Muslims autonomy though the powers of the federal government were reduced and the provinces were at liberty to form subordinate groups of their own.

The Muslim League accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan on 6 June 1946 in the belief that the formation of Pakistan was inherent in the grouping of the Muslim areas in sections B

\textsuperscript{291} Ayesha Jalal, op.cit., p.101.
The Congress accepted the Plan with reservations and queries on 24 May 1946 and 25 June 1946. The Congress was entirely opposed to any executive or legislative machinery for groups of provinces - the three tier system which the Cabinet Mission regarded as an essential feature of the Plan. Maulana Azad made it clear to Wavell that North West Frontier, Assam and the Sikhs in Punjab were entirely opposed to the compulsory grouping of provinces.

Clarifying the position to Maulana Azad, Wavell wrote that grouping of provinces "was not compulsory in the statement of 16 May 1946 but the decision for it has been left to the elected representatives of the groups sitting together in sections." To Jinnah, prior formation of the Muslim groups was fundamental so that once the groups were formed he could negotiate with the Congress groups but to the prior acceptance of an All-India Union was fundamental. To the Cabinet Mission the grouping of provinces was the crux of the problem which could be modified only by an inter-party arrangement. The chief concern of the Congress was to gain power at the Centre. The League’s fear was that in an all-India federation the four Muslim majority provinces would be outweighed by the seven Hindu majority provinces.

The Congress was opposed to the grouping of provinces and this issue soon came out in the open. Gandhi mistrusted Maulana Azad because he had been carrying on negotiations with the Cabinet Mission without the knowledge of his colleagues. Maulana Azad was replaced by Nehru as President of the Congress. In his speech to the All India Congress Committee on 7 July 1946, Nehru said: "We are not bound by a single thing except that we have decided to go into the Constituent Assembly."

At a press conference on 10 July, Nehru elaborated upon his AICC speech: "We have

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295 Hodson, op.cit., p.145.
agreed to go into the Constituent Assembly and we have agreed to nothing else...what we do there, we are entirely and absolutely free to determine... The big probability is that from any approach to the question, there will be no grouping. Speaking in betting language, there was 4 to 1 chance of the North-West Frontier Province deciding against grouping. The group B collapses. It is highly likely that Assam will decide against grouping with Bengal, although I would not like to say what the initial decision may be, since it is evenly balanced. But there is going to be finally no grouping there, because Assam will not tolerate it under any circumstances.  

Nehru added later that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly “completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise.” After Nehru’s statement, Jinnah protested against complete repudiation of the basic terms on which the long term scheme rested. The Cabinet Mission tried to clarify that the parties could not go outside its terms in the Constituent Assembly. Jinnah condemned the “pettifogging and haggling attitude of the Congress.” He issued a strong statement, “I find we have exhausted all reason. It is no use looking to any other sources for help and assurance. There is no other tribunal to which we can go. The only tribunal is the Muslims. This day we bid goodbye to Constituent Assembly and Constitutional methods.” Jinnah went further and said, “Today we have forged a pistol and are in a position to use it.”

INTERIM GOVERNMENT
The Congress was invited by Wavell to enter into the Interim Government on 10 August 1946. Jinnah protested against the formation of the Interim Government. He declared 16 August as a Direct Action Day. Within three days of its declaration, 20,000 people were killed and seriously injured in Calcutta. Communal riots flared up in different parts of the country. The brutal killings brought the country almost on the verge of a civil war.

297 Ibid, p.158.
301 Hodson, op.cit., p.166.
The Muslim League had called in the mullahs and pirs, who held meetings in and around the mosques and aroused the dormant passions of the Muslims against the Congress, provoking them into violence.\(^{302}\)

Nehru's emotional outburst on the grouping question did incalculable harm to the possibility of cooperative working of the Cabinet Mission Plan. It was taken by Jinnah as a declaration to wipe out their identity as a separate independent unit in the All-India Federation. Michael Brecher, Nehru's biographer, regards Nehru's statement as the "most fiery and provocative statement in his forty years of public life."\(^{303}\) Mosley wrote that Nehru's remarks were a direct act of sabotage.\(^{304}\) Maulana Azad's reactions to Cabinet Mission Plan were completely opposed to Nehru's. Maulana Azad thought that Nehru's provocative speech turned the tables by giving Jinnah the handle to withdraw his commitment to the Cabinet Mission Plan.\(^{305}\) S. Gopal however, rejects Azad's contentions as stated in *India Wins Freedom*.\(^{306}\)

Another opportunity for settling the constitutional crisis was lost in this way by the Congress through its tactless handling. The Congress tried to salvage the situation by issuing certain clarification on the Cabinet proposals but it was too late. From the *Transfer of Power* volumes, it must be said in favour of Azad that all through he was working behind the scenes to make the Cabinet Mission proposals acceptable.

Like most of his Congress colleagues, Azad was firmly opposed to the partition of the country which he thought would create more problems instead of solving them. He realized that the Cabinet Mission Plan was the best option available. On the basis of this understanding, he lent it full support as is evident from his correspondence with Wavell. Maulana Azad made it clear to Wavell that the Congress would not accept parity with the

\(^{302}\) Jalal, op.cit., p.217.
League in the formation of government as this would lead to perpetual conflicts.\textsuperscript{307} He wanted an immediate declaration from the government about complete independence with the Viceroy remaining only as its constitutional head.\textsuperscript{308}

Maulana Azad thought the Cabinet Mission Plan despite some limitation was a sound formula to work on for preventing partition. Even after Nehru's provocative statement on the Constituent Assembly, Maulana Azad continued his efforts to save the Cabinet Mission proposals although they had already been rejected by the League. He held the view that the decentralization of power in a federal government with autonomous units which the Cabinet Mission proposals offered was the only feasible alternative to Pakistan. Maulana Azad also admitted the right of a province to step out under certain conditions.\textsuperscript{309} The League joined the Interim Government in October 1946. Maulana Azad was convinced that once the League had come in the Cabinet, the question of its withdrawal from it would not arise. He knew Jinnah's tactics.

**MAULANA AZAD'S EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE UNITY OF THE COUNTRY**

Maulana Azad felt so desperately involved in the idea of preserving the unity of India that he carried on negotiations with the Cabinet Mission even without the knowledge of Gandhi and Congress Working Committee which shocked Gandhi so much when he came to know about it he could not sleep for a whole night. According to Sudhir Ghosh, such dealings on the part of the Congress President meant to Gandhi a "moral death to the Congress."\textsuperscript{310} Maulana Azad had assured the Cabinet Mission that he could get the Congress Working Committee agree to a single Federation which would be broken down into parts legislating separately for optional subjects.\textsuperscript{311}

\textsuperscript{307} N.Mansergh & EWR.Lumby, op.cit., p.171-172.
\textsuperscript{308} Ibid, p.163-164, 169.
\textsuperscript{309} Hodson, op.cit., p.108.
\textsuperscript{311} Mansergh & Lumby, op.cit., p.145, 149 & 150.
He suggested discussions between the Congress and League representatives on the basis that “the Congress started from the position he had described and that the Muslim League started from the position that they wanted two legislatures on the second tier.” Maulana Azad made this move on his own and did not want anything to be said about it to Gandhi. When Gandhi asked Maulana Azad whether he had been writing to the Cabinet Mission on his own, Maulana Azad denied it. Ghosh notes that the copy of Maulana Azad’s letter to the Mission was lying at that time just at a little remove on Gandhi’s desk.

F. F. Turnbull’s Minutes dated 13 February 1947 show Maulana Azad’s sustained endeavour to see the Cabinet Mission proposal through. Turnbull wrote, “Azad is more than anyone else the person who sought to get the Cabinet Mission proposals accepted and he tends to outrun what his colleagues on the Working Committee are prepared to accept.”

A man of moderate disposition, Maulana Azad was not influential enough to change the attitude of his colleagues towards the Cabinet Mission Plan. Wavell had hinted at it in his letter to King George VI. Maulana Azad had ceased to be the Congress President. He told Lord Mountbatten that if he had not relinquished his office as President of the Congress, he might have saved the country from partition. He suggested to Mountbatten to take up the Cabinet Mission proposals and work for their acceptance by the parties concerned and in case of dispute on their interpretation he should use his personal influence to bring about an agreement between the contending parties.

Maulana Azad’s advice to Congress leadership was disregarded and his hopes for the preservation of the unity of India were shattered. The Mountbatten Plan of Partition was accepted by the Congress Working Committee on 2 June 1947. The atmosphere in the Committee was tense. Abdul Ghaffar Khan voted against the Partition Plan and said: “We

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312 Ibid, p.149.
315 Ibid, p.142.
have been destroyed (Hum to tabha ho gaye). You are throwing us to the wolves.\textsuperscript{316} Maulana Azad whispered to him with bitter irony, “You should now join the League.”\textsuperscript{317} For the rest sitting in a corner, he uttered not a word and was puffing away at his endless cigarettes.

Thus, the Congress leadership was caught up in 1947 in a flurry of events beyond their control and had to accept partition since it could offer no alternative proposal acceptable to all concerned. To some leaders in the Congress only \textit{Ram-Rahim} approach could resolve the communal problem which was threatening to split the country; to others it was an economic issue requiring long-term action. To Azad who seemed to have a clearer understanding of communal politics, the immediate requirement was sharing power with the minorities and safeguarding their interests.

The basic questions were: “How do you treat the minorities? What status do you give them in Free India?”\textsuperscript{318} It was this crucial issue that provided the League the real ammunition for its politics. Maulana Azad believed that political problems are not resolved by utopianism or pious resolutions. The leadership must be in touch with the ground realities and be prepared to work out compromises which would promote the well-being of the society as a whole.

In his political approach, Maulana Azad knew what objectives could be achieved in the given circumstances and how far miscalculations and mistakes caused by hurry or stress of conflicts could be harmful. For him, politics was not to be adjusted to human reasoning alone but to human nature in its totality. That is why; he showed extraordinary sagacity in understating contemporary politics. At many critical points his standpoint turned out to be right and it was vindicated by subsequent developments.

\textsuperscript{316} Abdul Ghaffar Khan, \textit{Thrown to the Wolves}, Calcutta, 1961, p.97.
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{318} V.N.Datta, \textit{Maulana Azad}, p.177.