AGITATION FOR SEPARATE REPRESENTATION, 1907-1918

Since the year 1907, when the Government of India's reform proposals first became known, the Muslims of the Punjab started a struggle to get their proper share in the legislative and administrative machinery of the government. They vigorously agitated to get communal representation and reservation of seats in the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils, municipal and district boards, and public services. But, under the Morley-Minto reforms, they were not granted separate communal representation on the Punjab Legislative Council. Hence, they felt disappointed. However, as the right of communal representation was conceded to their co-religionists in other provinces, the Punjab Muslims intensified their activities to secure this concession. The climax of their struggle was reached in 1916 when they succeeded in securing recognition of the Indian National Congress to their claims. Subsequently, under the Government of India Act of 1919, they were granted separate communal representation on the Provincial Legislative Council. The object of this chapter is to trace the evolution of Muslim agitation for separate representation from 1907 to 1918. How did the British government and other communities respond to this agitation and the growth of Muslim separatism? Was the denial of separate representation to Muslims in 1909 due to the policy of the Punjab Government or the Government of India, or due to the Hindu opposition to the principle of communal representation? Was the Muslim agitation vigorous in the pre-Morley-Minto reforms period or in the post-Morley-Minto reforms period? What were the limitations of Muslim agitation in the latter period, especially after the outbreak of the First World War? An attempt is made in the following pages to answer these questions.

FIRST PHASE, 1907-1909

The Punjab Muslims were increasingly concerned with the adequate safeguarding of their political interests in the Morley-Minto reforms. At each stage in the formation of these reforms
between 1907 and 1909, the Muslim politicians and the Provincial Muslim League played an important part in fighting to ensure their interests. They demanded separate representation on the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils proportionate to their numerical strength.\(^1\) They also demanded the extension of the system of separate representation prevalent in certain municipalities to all municipal towns throughout the Punjab. As pointed out earlier, the Government of India's reform plans first became known in August 1907, when the Government put forward certain provisional and tentative proposals. The most important part of the proposals concerned the enlargement of the legislative councils. The Government of India also took up the cause of Muslim representation on the legislative councils and declared that under the system of election hitherto in force, Hindus largely predominated in almost all the electorates, with the result that comparatively few Muslim members had been elected. Moreover, the system of nomination had frequently failed to secure the appointment of Muslims of the class by whom the community desired to be represented. The Government, therefore, suggested for the consideration of local governments, the adoption of the following two measures: first, in addition to the small number of Muslims who might be able to secure election in the ordinary manner, it seemed desirable in each of the councils to assign a certain number of seats to be filled exclusively by Muslims. Secondly, for the purpose of filling up the latter, or a proportion of them, a special Muslim electorate might be constituted.\(^2\)

The Muslims in the Punjab welcomed these proposals and held meetings to express their feelings of gratitude to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for the recognition of the principle of separate Muslim representation in the proposed reform scheme. By this time the government had also appointed Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk Syed Hussain Bilgrami of Hyderabad as a member of the Indian Council, for

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1 They based their contention of political importance on the fact that the Muslims had been the rulers of India for seven hundred years and contributed very largely towards the defence of the country. Paisa Akhbar, 21 December 1908, SNNP 1909, Vol.I, p. 6.

2 Circular letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to Local Governments and Administrations, 24 August 1907, Morley Papers (32).
which the Muslims further felt obliged to the government. Muhammad Shafi convened a public meeting at Lahore on 14 October 1907 to offer thanks to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. It was a large gathering; Muslims of position of all shades of opinion attended the meeting. The meeting adopted two resolutions. In the first, it placed on record its sense of deep gratification at the opportune and statesmanlike recognition accorded to the principle of separate representation of the Muslim community in the legislative councils, in the spirit of the reply given by Lord Minto to the Simla Deputation. In the second resolution, the meeting thanked the Secretary of State for the appointment of Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk Syed Hussain Milgrami as a member of the India Council. Muhammad Shafi also moved the Muslims of other districts and towns in the Punjab to hold similar meetings and to wire their proceedings to the Government of India. Consequently, public meetings were held at different towns such as Amritsar, Ambala, Sialkot and Delhi, under the auspices of the local Islamia anjumans, where resolutions similar to those of the Lahore meeting were passed. Again, at the inaugural session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League it was decided to submit a representation to the government embodying the views of the Muslim community regarding the reform scheme. A subcommittee consisting of eight members, including Muhammad Shafi, was appointed to draw up the representation. The reform proposals, in fact, reopened the debate on Muslim political activities in the Punjab and stirred Muslims into another round of communal mobilization.

The Punjab Government considered the reform proposals and gathered the opinions of their officials, prominent members of the public and public associations. In a letter addressed to the commissioners of divisions in September 1907, it invited the opinions of important bodies and individuals regarding the reform proposals. The Muslim responded; about forty-five Muslim leaders and Islamia anjumans submitted their opinions on the reform proposals.

1 WRPAP, 16 and 20 October 1907, GOI,HD,Poll B, October 1907, Nos. 80-87; CMG, 19 October 1907, p. 5.
2 WRPAP, 21 and 28 October 1907, GOI, HD, Poll B, October 1907, Nos. 80-87; CMG, 20 October 1907, p. 6; Tribune, 16 October 1907, p. 8.
3 CMG, 5 December 1907, p. 8.
reform proposals were generally welcomed by the Punjab Muslims. They were unanimous in their commendation of the proposal to assign special seats to Muslims on the legislative councils, though some of them urged that the measure of representation offered to them fell short of that which their numbers and influence entitled them to demand. As regards the Imperial Legislative Council, the Muslim opinion was very closely divided, 22 being in favour of the Government of India's proposals and 21 asking for more seats, some for six and some for eight. The weight of authority seemed to be on the side of the latter, among whom were Shah Din, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Muhammad Shafi, Nawab Fateh Ali Khan Qazilbash and the Lahore Anjuman-i-Islamia. As regards the Punjab Legislative Council, Shah Din and Muhammad Shafi were for six Muslims in a Council of 26, three nominated and three elected by payers of income-tax and land revenue and registered graduates. Sheikh Abdul Aziz suggested that there should be seven Muslims in a Council of 24, three elected and four nominated. Nawab Fateh Ali Khan Qazilbash suggested five, two elected and three nominated. Muhammad Shafi and Shah Din considered nomination preferable to election in the Punjab. Muhammad Shafi suggested that the system, already existing in Lahore and some other municipal committees of allotting a fixed number of seats to the Hindus and Muslims, to be voted for by the members thereof separately, should be extended to all municipal towns throughout the Punjab. He pointed out that in those municipalities where a system of promiscuous election prevailed, the Muslim community was not at all properly represented on those municipalities.

While the proposals for the special representation of Muslims were welcomed by the Muslim community, these were, however, criticised by the Punjab Hindus. The latter regarded them as an attempt to set one religion against the other and thus to create a

3 GOL, HD, Public Deposit, November 1907, No. 38.
counterpoise to the influence of the educated middle class. The Hindus protested against communal electorates for the legislative councils and demanded the formation of territorial constituencies. The Punjab Government approved of the proposals for the special representation to Muslims. As regards the question of Muslim electorate, the Lieutenant-Governor, Louis Dane, considered it impossible to form a Muslim electorate and proposed that the Muslim representatives should be nominated by him. The Punjab Government offered no Muslim reservations or separate seats assigned to Muslims in the Provincial Legislative Council. The Government of India with the concurrence of the Lieutenant-Governor, proposed a modified scheme of reforms. It gave the Muslims, except in the Punjab, a fixed number of reserved seats in every council, all of which were to be filled up by separate electorates. Only in the Punjab as a special case, nomination was retained. The Government of India offered two Muslim nominations on the Provincial Legislative Council, one each for the Hindus and Sikhs and three nominations were reserved for other interests not specifically provided for. The city electorate was to consist of three groups representing respectively the cis-Sutlej territory, the central Punjab with the Sikh districts, and the western Punjab in which the population was largely Muslim. The Government of India also raised the Muslim representation on the Imperial Legislative Council from four (two nominated and two elected) to five elected seats, out of which one was allotted to the Punjab Muslims. As regards the formation of Muslim electorate, it laid down that in provinces where election of a regular Muslim electorate was feasible, that method should be adopted; that Muslim


2 The Lieutenant-Governor proposed a Council of 21 members, out of which 17 were to be nominated and 4 were to be elected. Among the nominated members, not more than 10 were to be officials; the non-officials to represent Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs and other interests. The four elected members were to represent the commercial community, the Punjab University and the larger cities. The Punjab Government communicated its opinion regarding the reform scheme to the Government of India in July 1908. Papers Relating to Constitutional Reforms in India, Vol. I, pp. 5,11-14, 26.
associations would be made use of where electorates could not be 
formed; and that nomination by government was to be adopted where 
neither of the two methods was practicable. It was for the local 
governments to determine, in consultation with the leaders of the 
Muslim community, which plan was to be adopted.\textsuperscript{1}

The Government of India's proposals were, however, 
disappointing for the Punjab Muslims whose demand for six seats in 
the Provincial Legislative Council was not conceded.\textsuperscript{2} Moreover, they 
were not granted separate electorates which were granted to the 
Muslims of other provinces in their councils. Still, the Secretary 
of State's reform scheme, outlined in a despatch of 27 November 1908, 
did not accept even the principle of separate representation to the 
Muslims. Lord Morley threw overboard the Government of India's 
scheme for the representation of communities. Instead, he suggested 
joint electoral colleges to which a fixed proportion of Muslims 
and Hindus in the ratio of population was to be returned; the latter 
were to elect representatives to the provincial legislature.\textsuperscript{3} This 
was a complete departure from the Government of India's proposal for 
separate electorates.\textsuperscript{4} The cardinal points of the Muslim position — 
separate electorates and political importance — had been ignored. 
The Muslims felt that Morley's scheme would result in their interests 
being sacrificed in favour of the Hindus.\textsuperscript{5} They, therefore, took 
strong exception to Morley's suggestion and demanded separate 
representation. The Punjab Muslim leaders emphatically condemned 
mixed electorates, whether in whole or in part.\textsuperscript{6} The Provincial 
Muslim League and its district branches, the Muslim anjumans and the 
press agitated against Morley's scheme. At a public meeting of the 
Hoshiarpur District Muslim League held on 27 February 1909, various 
speakers dealt with Morley's scheme which would favour Hindus at the

\textsuperscript{4} Vakil, Lord Minto, pp. 170-171.
\textsuperscript{5} WRDCI, 9 January 1909, GOI, HD, Poll E, February 1909, Nos. 2-11.
\textsuperscript{6} CMG, 26 October 1909, p. 6.
expense of Muslims; and a resolution to this effect was also passed. The Muslim press unanimously protested what was regarded as a betrayal of the Viceroy's promise to the Muhammadan Deputation. The Paisa Akhbar, the Vakil, the Watan and the Observer thought that Morley had been influenced by the Hindus that the scheme was wanting in arrangements regarding the Muslim representation.

In a series of 'private' and 'confidential' letters to Colonel Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Muhammad Shafi, expressing his own views and conveying the Muslim concern over Morley's scheme, argued in favour of separate electorates and weightage. In his opinion, Morley's scheme had created disaffection among Muslims and was contrary to the promise made by Lord Minto. Like many Muslim leaders, he thought that Morley was not favourably disposed towards their claims and that his pledges were not sincere. He was all praise for Minto's 'statesmanship, strength of purpose, tact, strong sense of fairness and justice', but he never failed to protest against Morley's scheme. He pointed out that the most important change which Morley's scheme contemplated, as regards the constitution of municipal and district boards, was the removal of all 'official' participation in their ordinary administration. Apart from the fact that the presence of the deputy commissioner or other official as president was necessary to keep order and to hold the balance even between the various contending elements in these bodies as well as to the purity and honesty of their administration, marked the political effects of the contemplated reforms. He further pointed out that even in those towns of the Punjab where the system of mixed election prevailed, the president was bound to be either a Hindu barrister or pleader or a Hindu moneylender. Even in the municipal boards where a system of denominational representation prevailed, as there could only be

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1 WRAP, 15 March 1909, GOI, HD, Poll B, April 1909, Nos. 103-110.
3 Muhammad Shafi to Dunlop Smith, 8, 10, 13, 18 and 26 January 1909, Minto Papers (11, 14, 17, 27 and 38).
one president and not two, chances were that he would, in the majority of cases, be a Hindu. Muhammad Shafi warned that by introducing this change the government would 'be handing over administration of Municipal and District Board affairs to our Hindu friends and the first step in the dream of Swaraj will have been achieved by these reforms'.

He pointed out that the real solution of the problem was purely denominational system of election, from the lowest rung of the ladder to its top, and a separate measure of its representation to landowners, as such.

The Amritsar session (December 1908) of the All-India Muslim League, which was attended by a large number of delegates from the Punjab, viewed Morley's electoral colleges scheme with great alarm and disappointment. There was, however, difference of opinion between the Punjab delegates and the Muslim leaders from other provinces in their reactions to Morley's scheme. The Punjab delegates were inclined to be critical of the reform scheme as a whole, because of the lack of adequate safeguards of Muslim interests. On the other hand, the Indian leaders, led by Syed Ali Imam and Muhammad Ali, were anxious to show their gratitude for what had been conceded. On the League resolution to express thanks to Morley and Minto 'for the broad and general policy foreshadowed in the Despatch dealing with the Reform Scheme', there arose a strong difference of opinion. The Punjab leaders such as Muhammad Shafi, Sheikh Abdul Qadir of Delhi and Khawaja Gul Muhammad of Ferozepore, were prepared to thank Minto for his acceptance of the principle of separate electorates. However, they were not prepared to thank Morley, because his electoral colleges scheme was considered to be detrimental to the Muslim interests. Khawaja Ahmad Shah even proposed to suspend the resolution of thanks altogether till such time when the scheme was modified in accordance with the Muslim wishes. The majority of Indian leaders, on the other hand, found nothing improper in conveying thanks (both to Minto and Morley) for what was acceptable to them and pressing their views on points where the Muslims felt

1 Muhammad Shafi to Dunlop Smith, 8 January 1909, Minto Papers (11).
2 Muhammad Shafi to Dunlop Smith, 13 January 1909, Minto Papers (17).
aggrieved. Despite the above differences, the resolution was unanimously passed. Despite the above differences, the resolution was unanimously passed.  

While the Muslims were disappointed over Morely's scheme, the Hindus of the Punjab were jubilant over it. The Punjab Hindu Sabha sent a telegram to Morley, thanking him on behalf of the Hindu community for his reform scheme and objecting to the demands made by the Muslims. The Hindu demanded more representation on the councils than the Muslims. A meeting of the Hoshiarpur Hindus held on 1 March 1909, resolved that as the Hindus were superior to Muslims in point of numbers and wealth, they should be more numerically represented and that, in fact, there should be four representatives for Hindus to one for Muslims. The Sikhs in the Punjab at that time were not well organised politically. Most of the educated Sikhs residing in towns were opposed to the Muslims' demand of separate representation. They desired that the government should be strictly impartial to all communities, and confer no special favours on anyone of them. However, they were anxious to secure adequate representation of their community under the proposed reforms. They urged the government to give special consideration to the question of Sikh representation on the reformed legislative councils on two grounds: first, because they were the rulers of the Punjab before the British occupation; and secondly, they constituted an important element in the British Army.

Like the Punjab Muslims, the Government of India also did not welcome Morley's scheme for electoral colleges. The Indian Government considered the scheme as a device by means of which minorities would be at the mercy of an organised Congress party, and it would be equally objectionable to the Muslims and to the landholders. The Government considered the scheme as an entire abrogation of the pledges given to Muslims by Lord Minto.

References:
Minto himself was as hostile to the electoral colleges scheme as the
Muslims. Louis Dane too saw considerable objections to the
immediate introduction of any general scheme for electoral colleges
or indeed of representative election in any form. He made it clear
to the Government of India that in the Punjab there was a special
danger of introducing system of elections as party cleavage was on
religious lines and parties were proverbially more bigoted, and,
therefore, more politically undesirable. He pointed out that it was
the existence of religious animosity that had obliged the provincial
government to alter the constitution of the committees of several
municipalities so as to prevent friction and disturbance by
introducing independent class voting. It was the equality of parties
mainly between Hindus and Muslims that constituted the special danger
of an elective system in the Punjab. In his opinion, the
representation of landholders and Muslims assigned to the Punjab in
the Imperial Legislative Council should be secured for the present
by a system of nomination by the head of the province.

After some time Lord Morley realised that his scheme had not
been well received. Of the various objections to it, two were most
prominently put forward by the critics of his scheme. First, that
proportional representation on a purely numerical basis violated the
assurance given to the Muhammadan Deputation in 1906; and secondly,
that in electoral colleges Hindus might carry the elections against
Muslims. Morley was partially convinced when moving the second
reading of the India Councils Bill on 23 February 1909, he told the
House of Lords that the Muslims demanded three things: first, the
election of their own representatives to the councils in all the
stages; secondly, a number of seats somewhat in excess of their
numerical strength; and thirdly, if a Hindu member was appointed
on the Viceroy's Executive Council, a Muslim member should also be
appointed on the Council. As regards the first two demands, Morley

1 See Minto to Morley, 12 January 1909; Telegrams, Viceroy to
Secretary of State, 8 and 9 January 1909, Morley Papers (19,31);
GOI,HD,Public A, February 1909, Nos. 205-244.
2 Punjab Government to Government of India, 25 January 1909, GOI,
HD,Public A, February 1909, Nos.205-244. Also see GOI,HD,
Public A, August 1909, Nos. 182-184.
3 Westi, Lord Minto, p. 175.
declared that 'we are quite ready and intend to meet in full'. But
he outrightly rejected the third demand. He made it clear that the
appointment of a Indian member to the Viceroy's Council was not
supposed to be a racial one and it would go to a suitable Indian
member whoever he might be.¹ In this way, Morley conceded that
Muslims were entitled to elect their representatives according to
their numerical strength, and that all those representatives were to
be returned by separate Muslim electorates 'in all the stages'.
Morley's statement was received with relief by the Punjab Muslims.
But at the same time they protested against the rejection of their
afore-mentioned third demand. A Muslim mass meeting at Lahore
tendered its grateful thanks to Minto and Morley for separate
representation, and trusted that representation would be commensurate
with their numbers and importance. The meeting regretted Morley's
refusal to appoint a Muslim member on the Viceroy's Council, proved
for reconsideration and hoped that in future nominations, Muslim
claims would be considered.² A public meeting at Sialkot on 31 March
1909, also adopted similar resolutions.³

However, now the Punjab Hindus denounced Morley's statement.
They vigorously protested against the separate representation of
Muslims on the lines announced by Morley. The Hindustan, a Hindu
paper, wrote that by promising to give Muslims separate
representation and seats in excess of their numerical strength,
Morley had divided the Indian nation. It would raise a strong wall
between Hindus and Muslims, and would render it impossible for them
to unite.⁴ At a largely attended meeting of the Lahore Hindus held
on 21 March 1909, the following resolutions were passed: (1)
protesting against the formation of separate electorates for Muslims,
and (2) advocating, in case of differential treatment being accorded,
the Punjab Hindus, in consequence of their numbers and influence, be

Also see GOI, HD, Public A, August 1909, Nos. 182-184.
² Telegram, Muhammad Shafi to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy,
³ Punjab Government to Government of India, 3 May 1909,
put on a footing of equality with the Muslims as regards representation on the councils. The public meetings of the Hindus of Gujranwala and Delhi also condemned separate electorates and passed similar resolutions as of the Lahore meeting. The Punjab Hindu Sabha which was formed at Lahore on 16 December 1906 to watch and safeguard the interests of the Hindus, too protested against special concessions or excessive representations to other communities and stated that if these were allowed, they would rather forego benefits of the reform scheme. It presented an address to Lord Minto at Lahore on 3 April 1909. But Lord Minto expressed his regret at the line of argument adopted by the Sabha. The Hindus felt disappointed with Minto's reply which was regarded by them as an intention on the part of government to shower special favours on Muslims. In a memorial submitted to the Punjab Government on 9 June 1909, the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee demanded that the interests of the Hindus and Sikhs as minorities be safeguarded by allowing separate electorates or failing in that in some other

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3 Tribune, 24 August 1906, p. 3; 19 December 1906, p. 5. Bhai Parmanda, however, gives the information that the Punjab Hindu Sabha was founded in January 1907. See Indra Prakash (ed.), A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha (Delhi 1952), p. 11, quoted in B.R. Purohit, Hindu Revivalism and Hindu Nationalism (Sauragar 1965), p. 126; and Majumdar, Indian Political Associations, p. 256.
suitable means and by extra representation over and above that given to the Muslims. But the Punjab Government did not give any importance to this memorial as the Provincial Congress Committee only represented a section of the educated Hindu community.\(^1\)

Notwithstanding Morley's declaration in the House of Lords, the anxiety of the Punjab Muslims for adequate representation in the councils was not over. The Indian Councils Bill which was then before Parliament in no way met the Muslim demands in full. The discrepancy between Morley's declaration and government's intention became evident when the Bill was moved in the House of Commons on 1 April 1909 for a second time. The Bill was inconsistent with Morley's declaration. It was based on the Government of India's despatch of October 1908. Only a few seats were reserved for the Muslims in the Imperial and Provincial Councils over and above those which they might win in the mixed electorates. Their number in most cases was less than the Muslims might claim on the grounds of their proportion of the population and they were to be filled in part by separate electorates and in part by nomination. Moreover, on 19 April 1909 C.H.E. Hobhouse, while speaking for the Under-Secretary of State for India, on the Bill in the House of Commons, first denied the pledge given by Morley by reading telegram from Minto stating that some representation would be provided for Muslims through general electorates while a certain number of seats would be reserved which were to be filled by Muslims alone. But, under pressure in the House of Commons, Hobhouse confirmed the Secretary of State's pledge saying that wherever elections were found possible they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Muslim community.\(^2\) The publication of these conflicting and contradictory statements, however, re-kindled Muslim agitation in the Punjab. Hobhouse's first statement alarmed the Muslims. The Punjab Provincial Muslim League reaffirmed its previous resolution urging separate and adequate representation for Muslims.

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in the reform scheme. The League had read with concern Hobhouse's statement and regarded it as clearly contrary to Morley's pledges. It emphatically protested against any departure from those pledges, breach of which would cause great disappointment among Muslims. It pointed out that separate representation at all stages was the only effective safeguard of their interests on the proposed councils.¹

Muhammad Shafi once again wrote to Dunlop Smith pointing out that non-fulfilment of the pledge of separate and adequate Muslim representation would cause deep disappointment among the Muslims and would be regarded by the Hindu agitators as a sign of weakness on the part of government. He suggested that in the case of the Punjab where the Muslims formed a majority of the population and have much political importance than their numerical strength, six or at least five out of ten seats should be allotted to them. Out of these, one should be elected by the Muslim municipal commissioners voting separately, a second by an electoral college made up of Muslim landlords paying a certain amount of land revenue, a third member should be elected by the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, and the remaining two or three members might be nominated by the Punjab Government.² Muhammad Shafi was, however, careful enough not to prejudice the Viceroy's mind against the Muslims and the Muslim League. In another communication to Dunlop Smith, he drew a favourable picture of Muslim politics, observing that while the interests of the Muslims were in line with those of the British, but they were separate from and often antagonistic to those of the Hindus. He further observed that the Muslims 'constitute the one stable element in the political atmosphere of the country - an element on the solidarity and steadfastness of which, at all times, the British Government may safely and fully rely'. Therefore, he reasoned that the real and adequate representation of the Muslims on the expanded councils was not only necessary for the protection

¹ Telegram, Muhammad Shafi to the Private Secretary to Viceroy, 25 April 1909, GDI, HD, Public A, August 1909, Nos. 182-184.
² Muhammad Shafi to Dunlop Smith, 30 April 1909, Minto Papers (157).
of the vital interests of the community itself but it was essential to the stability and permanence of the British rule in India.¹

The executive committee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League submitted a memorial to the Punjab Government on 19 June 1909, which was possibly called forth by way of counter-blast to the memorial of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. The executive committee demanded that Muslim share in the affairs of the province should not be calculated keeping in mind their numbers alone. It recalled the political importance of the community and their loyal services to the Empire. While claiming on these grounds due recognition of minority rights, elsewhere it asked that weight might be given to the fact that the followers of Islam formed a majority of the Punjab population. It invited the attention of the government to the problem of Muslim representation on the municipal and district boards in the Punjab. Now as the municipalities would be conceded the privilege of electing some members to the Provincial Legislative Council, the executive committee urged that the system of separate communal representation might be extended to all the local bodies throughout the Punjab. It also demanded adequate representation of the Muslim community in the Senate of the Punjab University. It further pointed out that, on the numerical basis alone, the Punjab Muslims were entitled to more than one-half of the non-official seats on the Provincial Council. The committee demanded at least seven out of fourteen non-official seats on the Council. In case the government thought fit to introduce the system of election in the Punjab, the committee urged that unless separate electorates were constituted for the purpose of allowing the Muslim community to elect its own representatives, the interests of the community would not be properly safeguarded. These electorates might consist of: (a) Muslim members of municipal and district boards; (b) Muslim landowners paying Rs. 200 or more annually in land revenue; (c) Muslims paying income-tax on Rs. 2000 per annum; (d) the Punjab Provincial Muslim League with its district branch

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¹ Muhammad Shafi to Dunlop Smith, 18 June 1909, G0I,HD, Public A, August 1909, Nos. 182-184.
Leagues; and (e) Muslim graduates of over five years' standing.  

In a communication to the Government of India, the Punjab Government dealt with the memorial of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. While convinced that the expedient of separate communal representation introduced in certain municipalities had been, and was still, necessary in those particular cases, Louis Dane was disposed to regard the more general system of mixed elections with ward and not class constituencies as the ideal one which would be preserved wherever possible. The Punjab Government did not feel the necessity to discuss the appeal of the Muslim League for a larger appointment of the seats to Muslims on the Senate of the Punjab University as the reform scheme was only very indirectly connected with the constitution of the Senate. The request that seven out of fourteen non-official seats on the Provincial Council be reserved for Muslims, would fetter the liberty of nomination reserved to the local government. The Government further observed that it was quite possible that the Muslims might find themselves in the enjoyment of that measure of representation, 'but it is out of the question to give any guarantee that it will be so'.  

The Punjab Government was thus not inclined to accept the League's demands in full. However, the manner in which the Punjab Muslims had given expression to their desire to have separate representation on the proposed councils, established the fact that there was no difference of opinion among the local Muslims on this issue. The All-India Muslim League had, however, adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards the reform scheme. Syed Ali Imam, chairman of the sub-committee on reform policy of the League appointed at its Amritsar session, had openly declared in favour of a scheme of partly separate and partly mixed electorates. His unsuccessful attempt at the Lucknow meeting of the League on 10 and 11 July 1909, to modify

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1 Punjab Government to Government of India, 24 June 1909, and its enclosure, Muhammad Shafi, General Secretary, Punjab Provincial Muslim League, to M.H. Fenton, Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, GOI, HD, Public A, August 1909, Nos. 182-184. Also see Paisa Akhbar, 22 May 1909, quoted in Malik, A Book of Readings, p. 273.
3 CMG, 26 October 1909, p. 6.
the League demands for separate electorates produced sharp reactions among the Punjab Muslim leaders. He was attacked as a traitor to the community. The Punjab Provincial Muslim League emphatically dissented from the modifications suggested by him and reiterated its demand for absolutely separate electorates.  

Muhammad Shafi thus criticised Syed Ali Imam:

"Ali Imam stands alone in his advocacy of a peculiar scheme of partly separate, partly mixed electorates. Such a scheme will, we are convinced, fail to secure for our community that representation to which, in all fairness, it is fully entitled, and will, I venture to think, make the position of the Government itself more difficult than ever."

The Government of India, on the other hand, offered to compromise with the Muslim leaders. It tried to get agreement among the Muslim leaders and to bring the 'extreme separatists' round to its own view that participation in general electorates was to the advantage of the community itself. It called the All-India Muslim League leaders to Simla on 26 June 1909 for a meeting with the officials and the Viceroy. Muhammad Shafi who was present at the meeting, arguing from the results of the elections of municipalities and district boards in the Punjab, said that the Muslims would have very little chance unless there was a separate election. He was afraid that there was a danger of being misled; several factors, besides population, had to be considered. He said that in the Punjab such things as wealth, education and organisation affected the constituencies. He illustrated the difficulties of a Muslim who happened to be in the hands of a Hindu moneylender, the latter constituting one of the most powerful classes. As the Muslims were indebted to the Hindu moneylenders, the candidates returned through joint electorates would not be able to stand up for Muslim rights and interests. Further, with three-fourths Hindus and only one-fourth of Muslims forming the electorate who would be returning them, they would have to sing to the tune of their Hindu voters in order to

1 CMG, 26 October 1909, p. 6; Rahman, From Consultation to Confrontation, pp. 132,143. Also see Robinson, Separatism among Indian Muslims, pp. 158-160; Rizvi, 'Muslim Politics and Government Policy', p. 293.

2 CMG, 26 October 1909, p. 6.
retain their seats. Hence, Muhammad Shafi refused to accept the government's terms for general electorates, while Syed Ali Imam attempted to carry the Muslim League with the government proposals.

Anyhow, the constitution of the Punjab Legislative Council which the Government of India recommended to the Secretary of State in a public despatch on 22 July 1909, was almost the same which it had recommended in July 1908. The Council was to consist of twenty-six members, out of which only five were to be elected. Out of the five elected members, one was to be elected by the Senate of the Punjab University, one by the Punjab Chamber of Commerce and three by members, other than those appointed ex-officio, of the cis-Sutlej group, the central group and the western group of municipal and cantonment committees. The Government avoided giving figures for Muslim representation by election in the Punjab since so much depended on nomination. While in other provinces, the provisions for nomination were removed and the Muslims were granted separate electorates for their reserved seats, the only exception being the Punjab where, if the Muslims were not able to get their men elected, it was felt that government could use its nominations to redress the balance. The number of Muslim elected seats in the Imperial Legislative Council was increased from five to six, out of which five were to be filled by purely Muslim electorates from other provinces, while the sixth was to be filled by nomination from amongst the Punjab Muslims. In order to satisfy the Muslims the Government of India urged the local government to adopt the plan of communal electorates for local bodies, viz., district boards and municipalities.

The Muslims of the Punjab deprecated the proposed scheme of

elected representation in the Provincial Legislative Council, limiting the number of elected seats to five only, as inadequate and detrimental to the interests of the Punjab. They considered the proposed mode of election very harmful to the interests of the Muslim community. They urged for the fulfilment of the promises given to them by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for the bestowal of adequate and effective representation by means of separate electorates. Just as the Muslims of other provinces were given separate electorates for a fixed number of seats in their councils, the Punjab Muslims also demanded adequate representation by means of separate electorates. Besides, they objected to the mode of nomination proposed for eighty per cent of the seats of the Provincial Council as the nominated members could not be their representatives in a true sense of the word. There was anxiety and alarm in Muslim political circles at the reform scheme. The annual meeting of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League held in October 1909, expressed strong dissatisfaction at the proposed scheme of mixed electorates for the Punjab and reiterated its earlier demands. The various resolutions passed and the speeches delivered by the representative Muslims from all parts of the province at the meeting, indicated that the Muslim community in the Punjab was highly disappointed at the reform scheme prepared for this province. All the speakers gave expression to the feeling of surprise at the fact that it was in this province alone that Muslims were not given the right of electing their own urban representatives of the Provincial Council. Similar resolutions like those of the Lahore meeting were passed by the Amritsar and Multan District Muslim Leagues. The articles and letters from correspondents which appeared in the columns of the Observer, the Paisa Akhbar, the Watan, the Vakil and the Nazim-ul-Hind, indicated that the feeling was not only

1 Under the Indian Councils Act 19 per cent of the total number of elected seats were reserved for the Muslims in Bombay, 10 per cent in Madras, 16 per cent in Bengal, 19 per cent in the United Provinces and 23.5 per cent in Eastern Bengal and Assam. GOI, HD, Public A, December 1909, Nos. 70-162; CMG, 26 September 1909, p. 3.

2 CMG, 26 September 1909, p. 3.
strong but was growing in volume.\(^1\)

Muhammad Shafi once again made strong complaints to the Punjab Government regarding the evils of mixed electorates.\(^2\) The Punjab Government, however, tried to remove some of the misunderstandings of Muslims as regards the arrangements for the constitution of the local Legislative Council. The Government rejected the Muslim demand for separate communal electorates for the five elected seats on the Provincial Council. The Lieutenant-Governor believed that the Muslim claim would mean giving the privilege of election to Muslims, while withholding it from Hindus and Sikhs. As the Muslims, including Muhammad Shafi, had submitted earlier that the time was not ripe for the introduction of a general system of election in the Punjab, the Lieutenant-Governor had, therefore, given to the elective principle a very limited scope in the arrangements for the Punjab Council. The Government, however, assured the Muslims that if election in the five constituencies resulted in the return of an undue preponderance of members of one or other faith, the nomination system would enable the Government to correct such inequalities and to adjust the composition of Council with the reference to the results of the election so as to secure a proper representation of each religion. The Lieutenant-Governor believed that the arrangement was likely to prove more beneficial to the Muslims than to any other community. The Government assured the Muslims that their views as to the persons whom they thought fit to represent their special interests, would receive consideration when the Lieutenant-Governor came to nominate the non-elected unofficial members.\(^3\)

Nevertheless, the Punjab Muslims could not be pacified with these assurances. Muhammad Shafi at once made another representation to the local government. He pointed out that the Lieutenant-Governor himself was strongly in favour of the retention of the system of nomination so far as this province was concerned and the Provincial Muslim League had only adopted his opinion. Muhammad Shafi was

\(^1\) CMG, 24 October 1909, p. 5; 26 October 1909, p. 6; 9 November 1909, p. 9; Paisa Akhbar, 11, 23, 25, 27 and 28 October 1909, quoted in Malik, A Book of Readings, pp. 274-283; Muhammad Shafi to M.W.Fenton, 2 October 1909, GOI, HD, Public A, November 1909, Nos. 213-214.


\(^3\) Punjab Government to Muhammad Shafi, 8 October 1909, ibid.
sure that had the Government of India acted in accordance with the wishes of the local government and the opinion expressed by the League, the demand for separate communal electorates would not have arisen. In that case the Muslim community would have had the assurance that, as in the past, at least one-half of the non-official seats would be filled up by the nomination of their representatives on the Provincial Council. But the Government of India had thought fit to introduce the elective system as regards a portion of the non-official seats on Provincial Council. In consequence, the situation was entirely changed and the Muslim leaders were bound to take cognizance of the altered state of things. Muhammad Shafi pointed out the conflict of interests between the Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly in the urban constituencies of the province.\(^1\) He cautioned the government against the expected alliance of Hindus and Sikhs against Muslims in the election of the urban interests to the Provincial Council. He pointed out that the Christian element in the urban electorates being a doubtful factor, it was clear that the Muslim electors would be in a minority in all the three electorates and their urban interests would find no representation on the Council.\(^2\) To avoid this, he suggested to raise the number of urban representatives on the Council from three to four and to allow the Muslim municipal commissioners and members of the cantonment committees to elect two

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Hindus & Sikhs & Muslims & Christians & Others \\
\hline
Cis-Sutlej Group & 33 & 2 & 31 & 8 & - \\
Central Group & 28 & 5 & 31 & 7 & 1 \\
Western Group & 17 & 13 & 23 & 4 & 2 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Composition of electorates in the three urban constituencies of the Punjab in 1909}
\end{table}


\(^{2}\) Table: Composition of electorates in the three urban constituencies of the Punjab in 1909

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\end{tabular}
\caption{Composition of electorates in the three urban constituencies of the Punjab in 1909}
\end{table}

out of four representatives.\(^1\)

The Punjab Government, on the other hand, maintained that if the Muslims and Christians combined in the cis-Sutlej or central group, there was no reason why a Muslim or Christian should not be elected in one or both of these groups. The Government now realised its mistaken policy of introducing election to the Provincial Council. It felt convinced with Muhammad Shafi's point of view that no trouble would have arisen if a system of nomination on recommendations had been adopted for the urban groups. But Louis Dane would not at this stage upset what had been proposed earlier. He suggested to the Government of India that, if necessary, the rules for the election could be altered afterwards.\(^2\) The Government of India from the very beginning, did not like the dual policy of the Punjab Government adopted towards the reform scheme.\(^3\) It had always regarded it as anomalous that the Punjab should be regarded as fit to elect to important municipalities and unfit to elect members of the Legislative Council. It did not believe that 'the system we are introducing into the Punjab will hold its ground long'.\(^4\) Lord Minto himself believed that 'there is a good deal in what Muhammad Shafi says and we may have considerable trouble over it due to Punjab Government's advice which apparently they now see, is mistaken though they do not seem to have grasped the electoral principles we have been endeavouring to follow'.\(^5\) But now as the system of representation for the Punjab Muslims was settled in accordance with the Lieutenant-Governor's advice and as the system was about to be introduced, the Government of India did not think


\(^3\) The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab on several occasions was opposed to any further extension of election in the Province.


\(^5\) Lord Minto minute, 26 October 1909, GOL, HD, Public A, November 1909, Nos. 213-214.
that it was possible to make any change in it at this stage.¹

Under the rules and regulations of the Indian Councils Act, as approved by the Secretary of State, which were published in November 1909, the constitution of the Punjab Legislative Council was the same as that of the Government of India's despatch of July 1909.² The rules and regulations were generally well received by the Muslims of other provinces, because they got separate electorates,³ but by the Punjab Muslims with reservations as their demands were not fulfilled. The Punjab Muslim press condemned the reform scheme as inadequate and unsatisfactory, and suggested that the regulations should be so amended as to give adequate separate representation to the community. The Paisa Akhbar, under a leader entitled "Disregard of the claims of the Punjab Muhammadans in the Reform Scheme", pointed out reform disabilities imposed upon the community.⁴ The Provincial Muslim League, however, submitted reluctantly. The executive committee of the League convened an extraordinary meeting on 25 November 1909 to consider the reform regulations. The meeting adopted three resolutions. In the first, the committee gratefully recognised that the councils regulations constituted a distinct improvement on the scheme as originally framed and fulfilled the pledges given by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. In the next two resolutions, the committee observed that the feelings of satisfaction and gratification created by the grant of separate representation to the Muslim community in the various provinces would have been enhanced had the Punjab Muslims been granted the privilege of separate representation on the Imperial and Provincial Councils.⁵ Thus, the Provincial Muslim League, though irascible at the government's denial of granting the privilege of separate representation, outwardly felt obliged to the government for what had been granted.

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3 GOI, HD, Public Deposit, January 1911, No. 54.
5 CMG, 28 November 1909, p. 9.
to their co-religionists in other provinces. At the Delhi session (January 1910) of the All-India Muslim League the various speakers, speaking on the reform scheme, also dealt with disappointment which had been felt in the Muslim Punjab at the denial to them of the right of separate representation on the Imperial and Provincial Councils, in spite of the fact that the need for it was more insistent there than elsewhere. The Punjab Muslim leaders looked upon such a policy as not only in the highest degree prejudicial to Punjabi Muslims but also as exceedingly impolitic.¹

Notwithstanding their grievances against the Reform Scheme, the Punjab Muslims readily fought the elections to the Provincial Legislative Council held under the Morley-Minto reforms in December 1909. The Provincial Muslim League put its candidates for the three municipal and cantonment seats and the Punjab University seat. The League candidates were successful in three municipal seats, while in the contest for the University seat both Muhammad Shafi and Fazl-i-Husain lost to Shadi Lal.² The success of the Muslim candidates in the municipal seats was, however, marginal and in certain cases accidental, either to the cancellation of certain Hindu votes or by drawing of lots in the event of a tie.³ Moreover, the Muslim candidates were supported by the European voters and they also took advantage of the division among the Hindus who had fielded more than one candidate.⁴ The Muslim papers, however, treated the elections outcome as a result of sheer chance. They urged the government to grant separate electorates so that in future the outcome would not be subject to the 'winds of fate' and

² Besides, the Punjab Government nominated four Muslims to the Provincial Council. The Government also subsequently appointed two Muslims to represent the Punjab landlords and Muslims on the Imperial Council.
³ In the cis-Sutlej group, Khawaja Ahad Shah was declared elected by a lot as he and his Hindu rival had got equal number of votes. In the central and western groups, Khawaja Yusaf Shah and Seth Adamji Mamoonji were elected only by a margin of one vote.
the Muslim victory the result of 'sheer accident'.

The results of the Punjab Council elections were analysed at the Delhi session of the All-India Muslim League. In his welcome address, Hakim Ajmal Khan cautioned the Muslims against premature elation at their successes in the Punjab elections, successes which were purely accidental and due to various circumstances - the usual phenomenon of Muslim solidarity and Hindu differences being two of them. He regretted that though forming the majority of the population of the Punjab, the Muslims curiously found themselves in the minority in every one of the five electorates on which the right of choosing representatives for the Council had been conferred. He believed that this disparity was due to two causes: first, to the exclusion of district boards from the electoral groups; and secondly, to insufficient Muslim representation on municipal boards. He urged the government 'to bear this point in mind on the occasion of the next elections, and that steps be taken to remove an obvious anomaly'.

The introduction of the reform scheme under the Morley-Minto reforms in the Punjab was an event of great importance. The various stages through which the scheme passed served as powerful incentive to further efforts, and resulted in an unprecedented outburst of political activity among the Punjab Muslims. Numerous meetings were held all over the province under the auspices of the Provincial Muslim League and its district branches, and representations were made to the government, praying for the protection of Muslim interests in the spirit of the famous pledge of Lord Minto to the Simla Deputation. The Muslims had never been so united on any point as they had been on the issue that they should be given separate and adequate representation on the legislative councils. Throughout the controversy to which the reform proposals gave rise, the Punjab Muslims were animated with the desire of...

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safeguarding their rights and interests in so far as would give them an assured position in the political institutions. However, the Hindus and Sikhs started a counter-agitation against the Muslim claim for special importance and privileges. The Hindus were especially engaged in working up a concerted movement against the separate representation of Muslims on the councils. They protested against the formation of separate electorates for Muslims and advocated, in case of differential treatment being accorded, the Punjab Hindus be put on a footing of equality with Muslims as regards representation on the councils. They also advocated that the interests of the Hindus and Sikhs as minorities be safeguarded by allowing separate electorates or by extra representation over and above, and that the representation of Hindus should at least be equal with that of Muslims, while the Sikhs ought to be granted adequate representation besides.

In the evolution of the Morley-Minto reforms, the Punjab Muslims were successful in representing their claims before the government. Between 1907 and 1909, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and its branches agitated to convince the government of their claim of separate representation taking into account both their proportion of the population and the community's political importance. The Punjab Muslims were, however, unsuccessful to persuade the British government to accept their all demands. Under the Morley-Minto reforms, as they were finally framed, they were neither granted separate representation nor communal electorates in the Provincial Legislative Council. This was obviously due to the insistence of the Punjab Government who considered the province as politically and constitutionally less developed. The Government, therefore, did not like to introduce election in the Provincial Council on a broader basis. Moreover, the Government believed that the granting of separate representation to Muslims would raise similar demands from the Hindus and Sikhs. The Government of India,

on the other hand, was in favour of granting separate electorates to the Punjab Muslims.

SECOND PHASE, 1910-1918

Following the introduction of the Morley-Minto reforms, the Punjab Muslims intensified their agitation to secure separate representation on the Provincial Legislative Council which had been denied to them under the reforms. They demanded the extension of the system of separate representation to all the municipal and district boards in the Punjab. They also demanded adequate representation in the public services and on the Senate of the Punjab University. The Punjab Provincial Muslim League at its meetings held at Lahore on 30 June and 19 October 1912, reiterated its earlier demands regarding separate representation by adopting various resolutions. The League also urged upon the government to appoint a sufficient number of Muslim representatives on the Royal Commission on the Public Services in India which was then under consideration.

The Muslim press did much to push on the communal propaganda and advocated the cause of the community in the Punjab. While pointing out the necessity of remaining loyal to the British government, the Muslim papers strongly pleaded for separate representation on the Legislative Council, municipal and district boards and public services. The Paisa Akhbar, the Observer, the Vakil and the Watan played a major role. The Observer suggested three methods for communal representation on the Provincial Council. First, the government might follow the rules regulating the general elections of most of the first class municipalities and grant communal electorates to both Hindus and Muslims. Secondly, the example of other provinces might be followed and separate...
representation granted to the Muslims alone by the constitution of separate Muslim electorates. Thirdly, the existing electorates might be required to return Hindus and Muslims alternatively.¹ The Paisa Akhbar pointed out two important grievances of the community: first, the number of Muslim officials in all departments of the government service was extremely low in proportion to their population; and secondly, the Muslims were not granted the right of separate electorates in all the municipal and district boards and it was owing to this fact that their number was so small in the said committees. It pointed out that the demand for separate representation on municipal and district boards formed an essential part of the programme of the Muslim League and the necessity and expediency of the same had been recognised by government by granting separate representation on certain municipalities in the Punjab.²

The Royal Commission upon Decentralisation in India supported communal representation for the local bodies in the Punjab. The Commission found that the system had worked well in some Punjab municipalities.³ The number of elected Muslim members on those ten municipal committees in which separate representation prevailed, was 45 as against 57 Hindus and 2 Sikhs. On the contrary, the number of Muslim members on those sixty-seven committees in which a system of mixed electorates still prevailed, was 170 as against 262 Hindus and 38 Sikhs.⁴ However, as to the merits of communal representation, there were differences of opinion between the Hindus and Muslims. The former objected to it on two grounds: first, the separate elections by castes and creeds would introduce a new element of discord and disunion; and secondly, the communal representation

¹ Observer, 20 January 1912, SNNP 1912, p. 50.
⁴ By April 1910, the system of separate representation was in force in ten municipalities; Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, Hoshiarpur, Tarn Taran (Amritsar), Shujabad (Multan), Rewari (Gurgaon), Ambala, Shujapur (Gurdaspur) and Jandiala (Amritsar), PLCP, 8 April 1910; CMG, 10 April 1910, p. 7.
⁵ PLCP, 8 April 1910; CMG, 10 April 1910, p. 7.
already introduced in some municipalities had been responsible for
the strained relations between the two communities in the Punjab.¹

The Hindus suggested that the first step towards a Hindu-Muslim
entente would be the abandonment of communal representation on
municipal and district boards.²

The Punjab Government believed that where faction feeling
was great, class representation sometimes tended to accentuate
rather than allay that feeling. At Multan, for instance, the
system of communal representation had not relieved the tension
as late as March 1913. The Government recognised that separate
electorates had a tendency to secure the election of extremists
on both sides.³ The Government felt it impossible to make any
finite pronouncement as to the desirability of extending that
system ‘of which the inherent drawbacks are so very obvious’.⁴
Hence, Louis Dane did not recommend to the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge,
any extension of the system of communal representation on municipal
and district boards in the Punjab.⁵ Lord Hardinge, however, while
replying to an address of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League at
Lahore on 11 April 1911, confirmed the pledges given by Morley and
Minto to Muslims.⁶

The Muslim claim to separate electorates was followed by
similar claims of the Sikhs and Hindus. The Sikhs started demanding
separate representation for their community. In a memorial submitted
to the Government of India, they demanded reservation of seats and
special Sikh electorates on the Imperial and Provincial Councils
and on all the municipal and district boards in the Punjab.⁷

¹ Panj abee, 28 April 1910, SNMP 1910, Vol. I, p. 399; Tribune,
³ CMG, 18 March 1913, p. 9.
⁴ PLCE, 8 April 1910; CMG, 10 April 1910, p. 7.
⁵ Confidential note by L. Porter on ‘Communal Representation of
Muhammadans on Municipal and District Boards’, and enclosed
in Harcourt Butler to Lord Hardinge, 16 January 1912,
Hardinge Papers (34).
⁶ Strictly Confidential Annual Report of the Native Papers
published in the Punjab for 1911, GOI, HD, Poll B, October 1912,
Nos. 2-3; Paisa Akhbar, 3 April 1911, quoted in Malik, A Book
of Readings, p. 287; Zaidi (ed.), Evolution of Muslim Political
⁷ Resolutions passed by the Lahore Sri Guru Singh Sabha on 11
August 1912, and enclosed in S. Sewaram Singh, Secretary, Sri Guru
Singh Sabha, Lahore, to Government of India, 13 August 1912, GOI,
HD, Public A, September 1912, Nos. 142-145. Also see resolutions
passed by the Amritsar Sri Guru Singh Sabha on 14 July 1912,
Tribune, 22 July 1912.
Aryas and Hindus too became desirous of obtaining the above privilege. The Arya leaders put forward the suggestion that their co-religionists should establish a political association which should represent to government that as they formed a separate community, they should be separately represented on the Provincial Council and municipal and district boards.¹

In October 1912, the Punjab Government amended the constitution of the Punjab Legislative Council. The number of elected members was increased from 5 to 8, three seats being filled by the district boards of cis-Sutlej, central and western groups, and the number of nominated members was reduced from 19 to 16. The revised council regulations considerably extended the franchise for municipal members and gave seats for election by the district boards.² But again, this time the separate electorates of Muslims were not constituted. The elections to the Punjab Legislative Council were held on 16 December 1912. Out of the eight elected seats, five Hindus, one Muslim, one Sikh and one European were elected. It was a complete Hindu-Sikh victory. The Hindus captured all the three municipal seats, the district boards seat for the central group and the University seat, while the Sikh candidate won the cis-Sutlej district boards seat. The only successful Muslim candidate was Malik Muhammad Amin Khan who won the western district boards seat, while the Chamber of Commerce returned a European.³ The Muslims suffered defeat in the elections partly due to the splitting of their votes and partly due to the casting of Muslim votes in favour

2 The revised regulations extended the franchise to 9 municipalities in the eastern group, 5 in the central and 7 in the western group. In addition, they granted franchise to the district boards, though to a limited extent. C.A. Barron, Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, to the General Secretary, Punjab Hindu Sabha, Lahore, 8 August 1912, GOI, HD, Public A, September 1912, Nos. 9-10; Panjabee, 22 October 1912, SNFP 1912, p. 898; GOI, HD, Poll B, November 1912, No. 60; PAR, 1912-13, p. 21.
of the Hindu candidates.\footnote{In the central district boards seat two Muslim candidates were in the field, Raja Ikrarn Ullah Khan and Sheikh Nizam-ud-Din. The latter candidate was nominee of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. \textit{Panjabee}, 19 December 1912, \textit{SNNF} 1912, pp. 23-24; \textit{Paisa Akhbar}, 19 December 1912, quoted in Malik, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 295-296.}

Not surprisingly, the complete Hindu sweep of the Council elections led to an angry demand from the Muslim politicians for an end to the system of mixed electorates which prevailed in the Punjab. They used the result of the elections as an argument in favour of separate representation. Immediately after the election results were announced, an extraordinary meeting of the executive committee of the Provincial Muslim League was convened at Lahore on 17 December 1912. The meeting was attended by a large number of local members and representatives of other towns. Some of the Muslim candidates who were defeated at the elections, went hot-foot to the meeting. A resolution was forthwith passed, condemning the system of mixed electorates and demanding communal representation on the Provincial Council and municipal and district boards.\footnote{CMG, 18 December 1912, p. 6; \textit{Tribune}, 19 December 1912; \textit{Panjabee}, 19 December 1912, \textit{SNNF} 1912, pp. 23-25.}

A letter was drafted to the Government of India which was subsequently published in the \textit{Civil & Military Gazette}. It condemned mixed representation, asked for the establishment of communal electorates and requested that the Lieutenant-Governor should nominate a suitable number of Muslims on the Council to off-set the election results and assure the Muslim community adequate representation.\footnote{Reinhardt, 'The Legislative Council of the Punjab', p. 227.} The various District Muslim Leagues and the Islamia anjumans sent telegrams to the Viceroy, deploring the election results, protesting against mixed electorates and urging for compensation by nomination.\footnote{GCI,\(\text{MD}\),Public A, January 1913, Nos. 26-31; GCI,\(\text{MD}\),Public A, January 1913, Nos. 61-64.} Louis Dane too was desirious of securing an adequate representation of Muslim
interests on the Council. Accordingly, he consulted three Muslim organisations, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam and the Anjuman-i-Islamia; on the basis of their recommendations, he made his non-official nominations on the Provincial Council. He nominated no Hindu, but four Muslims and two Sikhs. The Council thus had a total non-official constitution of five Hindus, five Muslims, three Sikhs and one European. It may be mentioned that in the old Council there were seven Muslims, three Hindus and two Sikhs. In other words, the new Council had a smaller Muslim, larger Hindu and slightly larger Sikh element than in the old body.

The succession of Michael O'Dwyer as the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in May 1913, in place of Louis Dane, marked a turning point in the policy of the Punjab Government towards communal representation. Michael O'Dwyer's policy was to give more representation to rural population than to the urban, because he considered that the urban representation, being mainly Hindu, was disproportionate to Muslim claims. Unlike Louis Dane, he considered that the system of communal representation which prevailed in many municipalities, generally abated the communal feeling in the province. Before the expiry of the second term of the Punjab Legislative Council, its constitution was again amended. The Council membership was increased by four seats: two seats were added to the district boards, one to the municipalities and one being the official nomination. The policy of granting more seats to the

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1 Punjab Government to Government of India, 27 December 1912, GOI, HD, Public A, January 1913, Nos. 61-64; FICR, 4 January 1913; Faiqa Akhber, 7 and 13 January 1913, quoted in Malik, A Book of Readings, pp. 296-297; PAR, 1912-13, p. 21.


district boards than municipalities was in direct consonance with
the policy of the Punjab Government to give weightage to rural
interests, who formed about ninety per cent of the total population
of the province and were providing a large number of recruits to the
fighting forces of the Indian Army in the First World War. It was
the rural population that the Government wished to see better
represented in the Council. On the other hand, better education in
larger municipalities entitled to consideration which was conceded
by increasing one seat. Under the revised constitution, elections
to the Punjab Legislative Council were held on 17 April 1916. This
time the Muslims got more success than the 1912 elections. Out of
the eleven elected seats, they won five seats. Three Muslims were
elected from the Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi groups of district
boards, one from the central group B of municipalities and one from
the University seat. The success of Fazl-in-Husain who was elected
unopposed from the University, was mainly due to the fact that by
this time his former rival, Shadi Lal, had become a judge of the
Chief Court and the nomination papers of his immediate rival, Raja
Harnam Singh, were rejected on the ground that he belonged to the
Kapurthala State.

Since the outbreak of the World War, the Muslim agitation for
separate representation had received a set-back as the Punjab Muslims
generally avoided discussing political issues during the continuation
of the War. However, by the year 1916, the granting of separate
electorates to their co-religionists in the municipalities of the
United Provinces and the prospect of post-war reforms in India
created by the World War itself, revived the Punjab Muslims' agitation for separate representation. They now demanded that the
principle of separate Muslim electorates conceded to the United
Provinces municipalities should be extended to all municipalities.

1 Punjab Government to Government of India, 29 January 1916, GOI,
HD, Public A, April 1916, Nos. 195-206 & K.W.
2 L. French to S. R. Highnell, 5 October 1916, GOI, HD, Public Deposit,
February 1917, No. 32; Paisa Akhbar, 4 May 1916, quoted in Malik,
A Book of Readings, pp. 306-308.
3 Paisa Akhbar, 4 May 1916, quoted in Malik, op. cit., pp. 306-308;
Prof. Diwan Chand Sharma, 'The Truth about Mian Fazl-i-Husain',
Modern Review, Vol. 81, June 1937, p. 643; Ram Murti Uppal,
and local bodies throughout the Punjab. In the future post-war reforms, they urged for the adequate representation of the community, and in the Provincial Legislative Council the Muslims should be granted separate communal representation in proportion to their population.\(^1\)

It may be noted here that since the outbreak of the World War, there had occurred a split in the Punjab Muslims' ranks. The Muslim political body in the province was practically divided into two groups; the Old Party and the Young Party Muslims. The Old Party Muslims were those who were prepared to defend Muslim interests at all costs, but by remaining loyal to the government. The Young Party Muslims did not subscribe to this viewpoint and wanted to keep good relations with other communities. The Young Party Muslims who had the support of the All-India Muslim League, in the beginning of 1916, succeeded in establishing a new Punjab Provincial Muslim League as a rival body to the already existing one which was dominated by the Old Party. The Young Party Muslims collaborated with the All-India Muslim League in arriving at the Lucknow Pact with the Indian National Congress in December 1916. The Lucknow Pact or the Congress-League Scheme of post-war reforms as it is also known, conceded separate electorates and fifty per cent of elected Indian seats on the Provincial Legislative Council to the Punjab Muslims.\(^2\) While the Young Party Muslims promptly identified with the Pact, the Old Party leaders condemned the Pact on the ground that it did not grant representation to the Punjab Muslims in proportion to their population.\(^3\)

However, towards the close of the year 1916, as the prospect of post-war reforms were being discussed by the educated public opinion all over the country and the matter was engaging the attention of the government, the Old Party Muslims abandoned their policy of avoiding discussion on the post-war reforms during the

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1 CKG, 28 November 1916, p. 9; 29 November 1916, p. 7; Paisa Akhbar, 23 March 1917, quoted in Malik, A Book of Readings, pp. 312-315.
3 For the criticism of the Lucknow Pact see below pp. 257-261.
continuation of the War. 'Under the changed conditions', observed Muhammad Shafi, leader of the Old Party, it had become their duty to break the silence which they had hitherto rightly maintained. As regards the methods in putting forward their proposals relating to post-war reforms, Shafi suggested that, while their policy should be progressive, it was practical statesmanship to pitch their demands neither too high nor too low. Thus, the Old Party Muslims henceforth adopted a moderate policy in discussing the post-war reform proposals. As regards their demand of separate representation of the Muslims, it was the same as had been conceded in the Lucknow Pact. But they laid stress on the special claim of the community for representation on the legislative councils not only on the basis of its population proportion but also on the political importance and the war-services rendered to the defence of the British Empire.

On the occasion of the visit of Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, to Lahore in April 1917, the Old Party Muslims presented an address under the auspices of the old Punjab Provincial Muslim League, the Anjuman-i-Islamia and the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam. The address, after alluding to the loyalty and devoted service on the part of the Punjab Muslims who in common with the rest of their Indian co-religionists were placed in a difficult position on account of the part taken by 'Turkey in the World War, expressed the hope that 'whatever constitutional and other reforms may be introduced in this country after the war, Your Excellency's Government will be graciously pleased to remember the just claims of the Muslim community and will grant them their due share in the rights and privileges that may be conferred on the people of this ancient land'. However, about the Muslims' claim for special privileges, the Viceroy, in his reply, said that the policy of the government was to provide equal opportunities for all classes. 'When it can be shown that the opportunities are not equal, there is a case for the Government to

1 CMG, 29 December 1916, p. 7.
2 Ibid.
3 See the various resolutions passed by the Conference of the Old Punjab Provincial Muslim League held at Lahore on 26 November 1916, CMG, 29 December 1916, p. 7.
4 The address was presented to the Viceroy on 13 April 1917. Tribune, 14 April 1917, pp. 2-4. Also see Paisa Akhbar, 5 April 1918, quoted in Malik, A Book of Readings, p. 317.
help, but when they are equal, then it is for the community to take action and the Government is powerless'. The Punjab Hindus took serious exceptions to the Muslims' claim for special privileges. The Tribune wrote: 'Spoon-feeding is not very conducive to full development; and communities should now cease to ask for special privileges if they desire full and free self-government'.

The Secretary of State's Declaration of 20 August 1917 that the British government had decided to take 'substantial steps' in the direction of 'the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire', precipitated the Muslim anxiety for the adequate representation of the community in the future reforms. On the occasion of Edwin Montagu's visit to India in November 1917, the various Muslim associations of the Punjab, including the old and the new Muslim Leagues, while arrogating to themselves the privilege of suggesting schemes of reforms for the future government, urged for the safeguarding of Muslim interests in the future reforms. Both the Old Party and the Young Party Muslims, in their addresses, pressed for the special and peculiar claims of the Muslim community in the contemplated constitutional and administrative developments, commensurate not only with their numerical strength but also with their political importance and the services rendered to the Empire in the World War. As regards separate Muslim representation, they reminded of Lord Minto's pledge and Lord Hardinge's satisfaction of it, and demanded separate electorates and adequate representation on the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils. They also demanded that the system of separate communal representation for Muslims through their own electorates should be extended to all municipal and district boards in the Punjab as this system was helpful to eliminate racial strife and bitterness.

1 Tribune, 15 April 1917, p. 2.
2 Ibid.
3 Tribune, 22 August 1917, p. 1.
4 See Tribune, 17 November 1917, p. 4; 18 November 1917, p. 2; East India (Constitutional Reforms): Addresses presented in India to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Honourable the Secretary of State for India (London 1918),Cd.9178, pp. 1-4; Copies of Memoranda and Addresses on Constitutional Reforms in India submitted to H.E. The Viceroy and to The Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India (Calcutta 1917).
So far as the question of abolishing the principle of representation of minorities in the municipal committees was concerned, the Punjab Muslim community was absolutely against it. The Punjab Muslims strongly protested against the proposal in the Government of India's resolution on local self-government to end separate representation of minorities by election. The Government of India's resolution on local self-government dated 16 May 1918, urged for the extension of elective system in the local bodies. As regards the special representation of minorities, the Government of India preferred that this should be effected by retaining the practice of nomination rather than by introducing some system of communal or proportional representation.\(^1\) The Muslim papers in the Punjab took serious objection to this proposal and urged the people to show their opposition to the measure.\(^2\) The Municipal Gazette wrote that it had greatly disappointed Muslims to see that the resolution ignored the golden principle of separate representation of minorities.\(^3\) The Punjab Muslims declared that the necessary representation of various communities on the local bodies could be secured only on the basis of communal and proportional representation. They, however, endorsed the proposal of extending the principle of election in the municipalities as embodied in the resolution.\(^4\)

The Montague-Chelmsford Report on constitutional reforms published in July 1918, did not recommend separate communal representation to the Punjab Muslims. The Report rather condemned the communal electorates as they were 'opposed to the teachings of history', calculated to 'perpatuate class divisions' and 'stereotype existing relations'. The Report, therefore, regarded any system of communal electorates 'as a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle'. In case of maintaining separate electorates for the Muslims, the authors of the Report, however, felt

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1 Tribune, 17 July 1918, p. 4.
2 Fortnightly Report (hereinafter FR) (Fb), June 1918, GOL, HD, Poll Deposit, August 1918, No. 31.
3 Municipal Gazette (Lahore), 12 June 1918, SNKP 1918, p. 324.
4 See resolution adopted by the Council of the All-India Muslim Association at its meeting held at Lahore on 14 July 1918, Tribune, 17 July 1918, p. 4.
themselves bound by promises given and renewed by Secretaries of State and Viceroys. But they did not propose to set up communal representation for Muslims in any province where they formed a majority of the voters. The Report caused much dissatisfaction among the Punjab Muslims who had always regarded separate representation and communal electorates as their only adequate safeguards. They strongly protested against the remarks of the Report regarding communal electorates and asked for their extension to all legislative councils and municipal and district boards.

The Report of the Southborough Commission which was appointed under the provisions of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report to deal with the question of franchise and the division of subjects, however, provided for the communal representation of the Punjab Muslims. In the Punjab, where the Muslims formed a majority of the population, they formed a minority of electors. As there was general agreement between the Hindus and Muslims embodied in the Lucknow Pact in favour of communal representation for Muslims in the Punjab and as the Punjab Government had also urged the same step, the Franchise Committee of the Southborough Commission recommended that effect should be given to that system. The Franchise Committee consequently provided for the preparation of separate Muslim and non-Muslim electoral rolls, and for separate Muslim constituencies. In allocating the proportion of Muslim and non-Muslim seats, the Committee generally urged to follow the agreement reached in Lucknow Pact, under which certain proportions were fixed for the amount of Muslim representation in the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils. As the great majority of Punjabi witnesses and the representatives of associations, political and non-political alike, not excluding those in which Hindu interests preponderated, adhered to this compact, the Committee thought that any departure from its terms would revive in an...
aggravated form a controversy which it had done much to compose. The Punjab Government had also recommended the Committee to adhere to the compact. The Committee, therefore, accepted the compact as a guide in allocating the proportion of Muslim representation in the councils.¹ The recommendations of the Southborough Commission were finally incorporated in the Government of India Act of 1919, whereby the Punjab Muslims were granted separate representation on the Provincial Legislative Council. The proportion of Muslim representation on the Council was fixed on the basis of the Lucknow Pact, i.e., one-half of the elected members.²

Thus, the Muslims of the Punjab succeeded in getting the concession which they had failed to get under the Morley-Minto reforms. Now they got their separate electorates and were brought at par with the Muslims of other provinces. It may, however, be noted that during the years 1910-1918, their agitation for separate representation was not so vigorous as it was during the years 1906-1909. This was obviously due to two reasons: first, the Punjab Muslims generally avoided discussing political issues during the continuation of the World War; and secondly, there were divisions in the Muslim ranks. While the Punjab Government recognised the necessity of separate representation to Muslims on account of their contribution to the war-efforts, mainly by providing recruits to the Indian Army, and as a reward of their loyalty during the War, the Government of India conceded the right of separate representation to Muslims as they did not form a majority of electors in the Punjab.

¹ Indian Constitutional Reforms: Reports of The Franchise and the Committee on Divisions of Functions (Calcutta 1919), pp. 9-10.