One of the most essential tasks for Gandhi in tackling the Hindu-Muslim problem was to carry the Congress with him over this question. Undoubtedly, outwardly the Congress leadership of all shades and opinion professed loyalty to nationalism that transcended communal loyalty. But the Congress was not a homogeneous body. Even its Hindu members could not speak with one voice over this question. While some of them, because of their training and mental make-up, could rise above their communal affiliations and consider all their problems from national point of view, others in spite of their long association with it could not easily wean themselves away from the exclusive interests of their own community. They were suspicious about the intentions of Muslim leadership both within the Congress and outside in any parley between the leaderships of the two communities to arrive at any amicable settlement. Consequently, they assumed the role of the guardians.
of Hindu interests and sometimes unconsciously identified national interest with Hindu interest and viewed any yielding over the Hindu interest as a calamity for the nation.

Electoral considerations intensified this attitude as they had to compete in elections held on the basis of communal franchise with such leaders in the Hindu community as were claiming to be the champion of the exclusive interest of Hindus. This situation generated ambivalence in the Congress over the Hindu-Muslim question and made it difficult for its leadership to take a clear and definite stand over this issue. Gandhi faced the uphill task of finding a way out of this situation. In the following pages we take up the study of certain types of Hindu leaders of the Congress that reacted to the communal problem in different ways in order to assess the extent to which Gandhi could carry the Congress leadership with him.

One of the topmost leaders of the first category was Motilal Nehru. He was an agnostic and consequently religion held no appeal for him. He was free from common religious prejudices and had among his friends many Muslims. His hospitality made no distinction of race or creed. He was well-versed in Persian literature and was fond of Urdu poetry. His early contacts with British professors of Muir Central College made strong formative influence on his life. It implanted in him an intelligent,
rational and sceptical attitude to life as well as a strong admiration for English culture and English institutions. He was one of the delegates to the Congress session at Allahabad in 1888 but he attended it only as a passive spectator. In 1907 he showed deep interest in politics and presided over the Provincial Conference of the Moderates in Allahabad. He became a member of All-India Congress Committee in 1911 but was drawn towards national politics only after 1912. On 5 February 1919, he launched a new daily paper the "Independent" as a counterblast to the well established local daily paper, "The Leader" which was moderate for Motilal's taste in 1919.

He changed radically after coming in contact with Gandhi though initially Gandhi's technique did not hold great fascination for him. The U.P.Intelligence observed that at the Allahabad meeting of March 1919, where Gandhi was present, "Pandit Motilal Nehru... and other extremist politicians were absent as they showed a decided disinclination to follow Gandhi blindly." But the Rowlatt Act agitation and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre carried him closer to Gandhi. He felt the winds of change in the relations between Hindus and Muslims as a result of the emergence of Gandhi in Indian politics and he gave expression to his feeling in his Presidential Address at the Amritsar session of the Congress of December 1919.

Because of his unconventional approach to Hindu religion and his appreciation of "Muslim Culture", his solution to the communal problem could command greater confidence of the Muslim elite and consequently he was a source of strength to Gandhi in arriving at some understanding with Muslim leaders in any unity conference. In 1925 he was a member of the sub-committee appointed by the committee of the All-Parties Conference which met under the presidency of Gandhi to deal with Hindu-Muslim problem.  

On 31 July 1926 when a series of riots broke out at several places in India he, along with Azad organized "The Indian National Union" consisting of persons having non-communal outlook. However, it met a cold reception both from some Muslim and Hindu sections. The "Muslim outlook" of Lahore called it "The Latest Fraud" of Hindus and so on. Swami Shraddhanand along with other Hindu leaders doubted its utility. Though this attempt records Motilal's earnestness in seeking a solution of the problem, it cast a adverse reflection on the Congress itself, for any attempt to form another non-communal organisation with a view to uniting the two communities was a clear admission of the failure of the Congress to project itself

5. Ibid., p.95.
6. Ibid.
as a non-communal body. Probably Azad and Motilal had come to realise that the Congress was so much under the pressure of leaders seeking the realisation of their sectional interests that it had become ineffective as a body based on reason and justice.

The role played by him in the All-Parties Conference in evolving a scheme representing the aspirations of different communities has already been dealt with. However, his efforts towards nation-building through pacts and unity conferences made him realise that the failure of the Congress to tackle the communal problem was due to the fact that they had been approaching it from the wrong side. It dawned upon him that the only way to dissolve communal differences was to evolve a common political and economic programme that cut across communal ties and provided a common platform to people belonging to different communities. It was this realisation that raised in his eyes the value of Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha. All this is evident from his letter written to Dr. Ansari in 1930 only a few weeks before the beginning of the Salt Satyagraha.

He wrote, "As a result of past experience and anxious thought, I have now reached the conclusion that the lines upon which we worked were fundamentally wrong.

7. Supra. Ch. VI, pp. 51-114.
This truth did flash upon our minds from time to time while we worked together and we tried to retrace our steps... but we found ourselves in a vicious circle impossible to get out of that stage. The fact is that we have been appealing to the wrong court all these years. We may go on doing so to the end of eternity but will get no relief...."

"It is now my firm conviction that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be achieved by preaching it. We have to bring it about in a manner which will accomplish it without either Hindus or Muslims realising that they are working for unity. This can only be done on an economic basis and in the course of the fight for freedom from the usurper. When one community is fighting for the right to live which is common to both it is impossible to conceive that the other community will not sooner or later realise the consequences of success or failure. And having those consequences it is equally impossible to conceive that it will not throw itself whole heartedly into the conflict. The master mind has amidst much ridicule and misrepresentation discovered one such economic basis in the breaking of the salt laws. The thing to use his own favourite phrase is "incredibly simple." The only wonder is that no one else ever thought of it. It is impossible to say at this stage whether even so simple a thing will catch
the imagination of the people but if it does, a tremendous victory is assured to both Hindus and Mussalmans. If it does not there is no hope for us and it is idle to talk of Hindu-Muslim unity and constitutional and communal rights." Further, he wrote, "Do you believe that in the present temper of so-called leaders of the two communities it is possible to arrive at any formula? Even if it were possible, which I seriously doubt, how far will the existence of that formula on paper carry us in our conflict with this foreign Government? It requires the stout optimism of an Indian liberal which can read a definite "no" as will a clear "Yes" to believe that the Government's surrender completely the moment such a formula is reached. I have definitely come to hold the opinion that no amount of formula based upon mutual concessions, which those making themselves have no right to make, will bring us any nearer Hindu-Muslim unity than we are at present." 8

Jawahar Lal (1889-1964) like his father, was initially a great admirer of western culture. He received early education at home from an Irish governess and attended famous Harrow Public School in England at the age of 15. Lewis Dickison and Meredith Townsend moulded his early political thinking. He was called to the Bar in 1912 and returned to India more as an Englishman than an Indian.

8. Letter from Motilal to Dr. Ansari dated 17 February 1930, Ansari Papers.
He started practice as a junior to his father at Allahabad High Court. But had no interest in this profession. He was drawn towards the Home Rule League of Tilak and Annie Besant. He met Gandhi in 1916 at the Lucknow session of the Congress but was not much impressed by him. But Gandhi's technique of Satyagraha fascinated him because it worked in the contemporary state of Indian society and assured hope of liberation in the atmosphere of demoralisation that followed the tough measures adopted by the British bureaucracy to break the spirits of the Indians. He decided to throw himself heart and soul into the Non-co-operation movement even against the wishes of his father whom he had adored and unconsciously imitated.

His scientific and rationalistic attitude towards life raised him above religious controversies. Like his father he showed indifference to religion and had no faith in personal God. This saved him from being stirred by religious controversies and enabled him to analyse the communal question with greater objectivity than many Hindu Congress leaders. Consequently he held greater appeal for all those Hindu and Muslim sections who looked upon communal differences as a barrier to India's political and economic progress. His experience of Indian politics

revealed to him that the communal question was not merely a religious question. Nor were the communal riots, according to him, followed from religious disputes. But underlying them, he believed, were deeper causes. Thus reflecting on the causes of the communal riots of 1922 after the withdrawal of Non-co-operation, he said, "It is possible that the sudden bottling up of a great movement contributed to the tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic and futile violence in political struggle was stopped but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble."¹⁰

Like his father he came to realize that the absence of an appropriate political, social or economic programme having an appeal for the masses of both the communities created a void or vacuum in the Indian public life that gave opportunity to the communal leadership to exploit the situation. So, in his autobiography he observed, "The want of clear ideals and objectives in our struggle for freedom undoubtedly helped the spread of communalism. The masses saw no clear connection between their day-to-day sufferings and the fight for Swaraj. They fought well enough at times by instinct but that was a feeble weapon which could be easily blunted or even turned aside for other

purposes. There was no reason behind it, and in periods of reaction it was not difficult for the communalists to play upon this feeling and exploit in the name of religion.**

Consequently, he did not rely on unity conferences for the settlement of Hindu-Muslim question, though on Gandhi's historical fast over this question in 1924, he issued a joint statement along with Purshottamdas Tandon and Major Ali Sokta appealing to the nation to leave mutual quarrels so as to save Gandhi's life.** However, he was sceptical about its success since the genuine Hindu-Muslim unity was not on the surface. "Some pious and good resolutions," he observed,"were passed, but the basic problem remained unsolved." It could not be solved by those conferences," he added "for a solution could not be reached by the majority of votes but by virtual unanimity, and there were always extremists of various groups present whose idea of a solution was a complete submission of all others to their views. Indeed one was led to doubt whether some of the prominent communalists desired a solution at all. Many of them were political reactionaries, and there was no common ground between them and those who desired radical political change."**

Like Gandhi he also believed that "religious passions have little to do with reason or consideration or adjustments, as they are easy to fan when a third party in control can play off one group against another." Otherwise, he added, that music question could be solved "with mutual considerations for each other's feelings."

Similarly, like Gandhi, he felt that "communal problem was pushed on by the communal leaders at the top, and it was reflected in the stiffening up of the political communal demands. Because of the communal tension, Muslim political reactionaries, who had taken a back seat during all these years of non-co-operation, emerged into prominence, helped in the process by the British Government."

Nehru also realised that "many a Congressman was a communalist under his national cloak." He expressed similar views in his presidential address to the U.P. Provincial Conference in 1928. "Communalism," he said, "would not go by pious resolutions and endless talk of unity, when examined it would be found that in essence it was the desire among intellectuals for the loaves and fishes of office."

He was, therefore, of the view that once "the attention of the masses was directed to the economic facts which mattered, they would

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15. Ibid.
automatically turn away from communalism and pseudo-religious mentality. Consequently he considered the acceptance of the goal of socialism as the best solution of the communal problem.

C.R. Dass (1870-1925) a graduate of Presidency College, Calcutta went to England for I.C.S. but could not succeed and joined Bar in 1894. During anti-partition days he was a co-worker of S.N. Banerjea, B.C. Pal and Aurbindo and associated himself with "New India" and "Bande Matram". He rose to All-India fame by virtue of his ardent patriotism, sterling sincerity and oratorical power. According to J. Coatman, he was a "man of powerful intellect and great force of character." At the Amritsar session of the Congress in 1919 his controversy with Gandhi over the issue of the acceptance of the Reforms generated great heat and kept the atmosphere of the Conference tense till a compromise was reached. In 1920 at a special session of the Congress at Calcutta he opposed the boycott of legislatures which was a part of Gandhi's programme of Non-co-operation. But he failed to carry with him the majority of the delegates over this issue and the programme of the boycott of the Councils was accepted by the Congress at Calcutta.

However, three months later he accepted Gandhi's lead and plunged himself whole heartedly into the Non-co-operation movement leaving his practice of 50,000 per month. He was the president-elect for the Ahmedabad session of the Congress in 1921 but was arrested before it was held. However, he presided over the Gaya session in 1922. Like other topmost leaders of the Congress, he too, grappled with the communal problem in order to create national unity. The irreconcilability of the communal conflict in the Punjab strained his nerves to such an extent that he was once compelled to say that "instead of wasting time over attempts to settle the sordid claims of the contending factions, he and his party would rather devote their energy towards Swaraj programme, leaving the Punjab to welter in its own sin."\textsuperscript{22} His earnestness in seeking solution of the communal problem is revealed by the Bengal Pact of 1923 which was passed by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee under his inspiration. This Pact was intended to remove the fears of Muslims in Bengal of Hindu domination. It conceded the Muslim demand of representation in the legislative council on the population basis with separate electorates.

\textsuperscript{22} I.A.R., 1923, p.216.
The important clauses of the pact were:

1. Representation in the legislative council on the population basis with separate electorates.

2. Representation to local bodies to be in the proportion of 60 to 40 in every district—60 to the community which is in the majority and 40 to the minority.

3. Fifty-five per cent of the government posts should go to the Muslims.

4. No music should be allowed before the mosque.

5. There should be no interference with cow-killing for religious sacrifices, but the cow should be killed in such a manner as not to wound the religious feelings of the Hindus.

It provided that "every year, representative committees were to be formed in every sub-division, of which half the member should be Muslims and the other half Hindus; such committees choosing their president from among themselves, to have power to prevent or arbitrate upon any dispute between Hindus and Muslims in accordance with the provisions stated in the Pact."

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The Pact was conceived in the best spirits but it became the nucleus of political controversy. Communal sections among Hindus vilified Deshbandhu Das on the ground that he had surrendered the rights of the Hindu community. Even the moderate sections among Hindus held that Deshbandhu Das had gone too far in trying to win the confidence of Muslims. Even a section among Muslims raised the cry that the Pact was merely a camouflage and Deshbandhu Das was working to undermine the hold of Muslim leaders on their own community. The majority of Muslims according to his biographer, however, hailed this Pact as a "Charter of their rights and almost overnight Deshbandhu Das became their unchallenged leader." 25

But his Pact did not receive the approval of the All-India Congress at the Coconada session on the ground that it gave too much concessions to Muslims. 26 According to the Intelligence Report the rejection of the Pact "met with general approval from the Hindus throughout Bengal." 27 Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a great admirer of Das, supported latter's move over the communal question on the ground that "sufficiently speedy or sufficiently drastic step was needed" to prevent the widening of the breach between the two communities. 28

27. Home (Pol.) F.R. from Bengal, December 1923, No. 25.
The fate of this Pact reveals that there was a strong group of Hindus in the Congress who being alarmed by the political demands and aspirations of Muslims considered any move to conciliate Mohammedans by admitting some of their demands as an ominous trend in the national politics. Most of the leaders of this section also cast doubt on Gandhi's approach to the communal problem on the ground that it contained an element of surrender to Muslim pressure which they considered as inimical to national interest. Some of them had acquired an eminent position in the Congress as well as in the political life of the country because of their intellectual equipment, self-sacrifice and devotion to the country. Consequently, it was not easy for Gandhi or any other Congress leader to brush aside their views in framing a policy of the Congress with regard to communal question. This is evident from the role played by M.M. Malaviya, M.S. Aney, Lajpat Rai and M.R. Jayakar as champions of Hindu interest in the Congress from time to time.

Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946) according to Lala Lajpat Rai was the "second greatest in India." A graduate of Calcutta University, he kept the audience spellbound by his speech at Congress session of 1886.

With a few exceptions he regularly attended Congress sessions from 1886 to 1936. He was elected its president in 1909, 1918, 1932 and 1933 but owing to his arrest he could not preside over the session of 1932 and 1933 which had been banned. Though a strong supporter of the Congress, he founded Hindu Mahasabha in 1906 to consolidate the Hindu community and to protect its interests against the inroads made on it by other communities. He was also a journalist. He was the editor of Hindi Weekly, "The Hindustan" from July 1887 to the end of 1889 and of "Indian Union" from 1885 to 1890. He started a Hindi Weekly "Abhyudaya" in 1907 which was converted into a Daily in 1915. Two Monthly papers "Maryada" and "Kisann" and an English Daily "The Leader" were also the product of his enterprise. Both "Abhyudaya" and "Leader" rendered valuable service to the cause of national freedom for nearly half a century. He was elected to Imperial Legislative Council in 1909. But in view of the Non-co-operation movement in 1920, he did not seek election to the Indian Legislative Assembly in 1921. But he was a member of the Assembly from 1924 to April 1930. He was a delegate to the Round Table Conference in 1931. He had great interest in education and the Banaras Hindu University of which he remained vice-chancellor from 1919-1938, is the monument of his zeal for national education.
Like Gandhi, Malaviya was intensely religious and was deeply rooted in ancient Indian culture and traditions. He had become the idol of the orthodox sections amongst Hindus on account of his deep faith in Hindu ritualism and traditions. He was the life and soul of Sanatan Dharma Sabha. Hindu Sangathan movement owed much to him.

In a situation of conflict with Mohammedans, a large number of Hindus trusted him more than any other. Congress leader of All-India stature. For that very reason he was distrusted by most of the Muslims. Gandhi held him in high esteem in spite of his differences with the latter. Keeping in view Malaviya's influence over a section of Hindus, the Mahatma did not hesitate to seek his co-operation in settling the communal dispute in certain areas especially in the Punjab. In a letter to G.D.Birla in August 1926 Gandhi expressed his hope that Malaviya alone could bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. In fact, Malaviya was not opposed to Hindu-Muslim unity as he fully knew that no political unity was possible in India until and unless all communities were determined to sink their communal differences. He played a leading role at several conferences held to arrive at the communal settlement. However, he was driven to the position of defending Hindu interest in

any parley with Muslims on account of his mental make-up and his conviction that each community must be strong enough to defend itself against the bad elements of the other.\textsuperscript{32} It was this logic that led him to support the Hindu Sangathan movement and to oppose any formula for settlement of the communal question which, according to him, was injurious to Hindu interest. It was because of his pressure that the Congress in 1931 could not evolve a definite policy with regard to the Communal Award. He left Congress in 1934.

The same was the case with M.S. Aney (1880-1968) who entered the national movement as the follower of Tilak and became the vice-president of latter's Home Rule League. He opposed Gandhi's programme of Non-cooperation tooth and nail till it was finally accepted at Nagpur in 1920. He suspended his practice for one year only, though he did not believe in the Triple Boycott of Gandhi. Later, he joined the Swaraj Party and organised its wing in the Perars. He was a member of Central Legislative Assembly from 1924-26. He held an eminent position in the Congress and was a member of its Working Committee in 1924-25. He was a member

\textsuperscript{32} I.A.R., 1923, \textellipsis, p. 943.
of the All-India Congress Committee throughout the stormy period of 1920-30. He was secretary of the Nehru Committee appointed by the All-Parties Conference in 1928 to press for India's demand for Dominion Status. He resigned from the Legislative Assembly in protest against Gandhi's arrest on 5 May 1930 and became a civil register in his province.

Though conscious of the importance of Hindu-Muslim unity in India's struggle for freedom, he lost faith in unity conferences because of their proved "worthlessness" in the thirties of the century. In a letter to Tej Bahadur Sapru dated 27 January 1930, when the latter sought his advice over the utility of a fresh unity conference, he replied that another conference "will be one more addition to the long list of the unsuccessful attempts hitherto made in that direction. There must be something tangible to gain to persuade anybody to surrender his precious privileges in favour of his neighbour ... A clear and unambiguous declaration on that point would have helped the two great communities to reconsider their claims and adjust their differences and arrive at an agreed formula. But in the absence of that the All-Parties Conference may serve to widen rather than bridge over the gulf."33

33. Letter from M.S.Aney to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru dated 27 January 1930, File No.3, M.S.Aney Papers, N.M.M.L.
Similarly in a letter to C.Vijayraghavchariar dated 5 July 1931, he laid emphasis on the spirit of accommodation or adjustment for arriving at an amicable settlement. He wrote, "First principles are certainly the best that one can think of but they are not for that reason, necessarily the most handy or serviceable at all times particularly when we have to make a supreme effort to ease a situation of great and almost unbearable tension. Our loyalty to First principles must admit of some modifications of the same to suit the exigencies of the time. No hope of progress on peaceful lines can be entertained if the combatants will be making a fetish of First principles .... I know it is impossible to overcome obstinacy. Even the Working Committee of the Congress has now recognised the hard fact."34

His differences with the Congress over the issue of its attitude towards Communal Award led him to quit the Congress in 1934 and he contested election to the Legislative Assembly against a Congress candidate in 1937.

Like Malaviya and Aney, Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) too wielded great influence over Hindus in the Congress and outside especially in the Punjab and United Provinces. Born in a village in the Punjab on 28 January

34. Letter from M.S. Aney to C. Vijayaraghavchariar dated 5 July 1931, File no. 3, M.S. Aney Papers.
1865, he was brought up in an atmosphere generated by the confluence of three religions that were prevalent in the Punjab, i.e., Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. Through his father Lala Radha Krishan, who was a teacher of Persian and Urdu, the child Lajpat Rai came under the influence of Islam. His mother was a devout Hindu lady whose father and brothers were drawn towards Sikhism.

Lajpat Rai had his higher education at Lahore which was the hub of social and political activities of the province. There he joined Arya Samaj which marked a turning point in his life, for the Samaj generated in him pride for ancient Indian culture and Vedic religion. It also infused into him love of the motherland and the spirit of sacrifice. His association with the Samaj, which was a militant Hindu body, while raising his image among Hindus, prevented him from becoming the leader of all the communities in India especially in the Punjab where militant Hinduism as represented by Arya Samaj came into a clash with Islam. Lajpat Rai was also driven towards the Congress and he attended its first session in 1888 at Allahabad where he received some recognition as a result of his open letter to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. However, his real involvement in the activities of the Congress started in 1905, when he was sent to England along with Gokhale to represent the
Congress point of view before the British people and to persuade their leadership to refrain from going ahead with the proposal of the partition of Bengal. On his return, he was mostly a mediator between the Moderates and the Extremists though personally he was inclined towards the latter. He was deported to Mandley in 1907 because of his participation in the agitation in the Punjab against the Land Alienation and Colonization Bill. Though released shortly, this event raised his position in the country and he was even considered for the office of the presidentship of the Congress for its Surat session in 1907. But he withdrew his candidature to prevent division in the Congress. However, he played a key role of a peacemaker between the two warring groups at this session. He went to England in 1914 from where he went to the United States and was prevented from returning home because of the outbreak of first World War. Returning in 1920 he presided over the historic special session of the Congress in September 1920 where Gandhi's resolution on Non-co-operation was passed and shortly after this, he threw himself heart and soul into the Non-co-operation movement and was arrested in 1921. But after his release in 1922 he was disillusioned with Gandhi's lead and was drawn towards the programme of Swaraj Party. On being elected, he became its deputy leader in the Central Assembly but
later on resigned from it because of his differences with Motilal Nehru. He joined hands with Malaviya in giving shape to the Nationalist Party which had greater appeal for Hindus because of its assurance of the protection of Hindu interest in any communal settlement. He also gave full support to the Hindu Sangathan movement that carried him close to Hindu communalists. His death in 1928 following from serious injuries sustained by him during his demonstration against the Simon Commission at Lahore raised him to the position of a martyr.

Lajpat Rai was one of the foremost leaders of the Congress. But driven by his own experiences of the communal situation especially in the Punjab where the Hindus were in minority, and his mental make-up, he was quite often compelled to champion the exclusive interest of the Hindus. But he could never deny the importance of communal unity in India's fight for freedom. His stay abroad broadened his outlook. Consequently in 1919 he impressed upon his countrymen to take pride in the achievements of both Hindus and Muslims heroes and saints.\(^{35}\) Similarly a few months later he wrote, "With 70 million Muslims, India is the most important centre of Mohammedan sentiment with

Christians as their present ruler the Hindus and Mohammedans of India are coming to realise that their best interests require a closing up of their ranks." But after the withdrawal of the Non-co-operation movement and the outbreak of communal riots in the Punjab, Lajpat Rai became sceptical about the success of Gandhi's programme of Hindu-Muslim unity. This feeling found expression in his Presidential Address at the Punjab Provincial Conference at Jaranwala. He criticised the principle associated with Gandhi's approach of voluntary surrender of rights and claims by Hindus in the interest of communal harmony. He started feeling that Gandhi's approach to Hindu-Muslim unity was not unbiased as he was under the influence of some Muslim friends who claimed to be his followers. He, therefore, wrote a series of articles with a view to making an independent assessment of the communal problem at a time when Gandhi was planning to visit the Punjab. But towards the close of his life he started appreciating Gandhi's approach.

Because of his position in the Congress as well as in the country, Lajpat Rai's views could not be taken very lightly by any leader of the Congress including

37. The Tribune, 9 December 1923.
Gandhi. Consequently there could not be any communal settlement without taking into account his stand. He rather acted as a spokesman of the Hindus in the Congress and his influence was, therefore, characterized as Hindu Mahasabha pressure by the Muslim leadership. One reason for this impression could be that at times Lajpat Rai's stand and policies could not be easily distinguished from those of Hindu Mahasabha and sometimes he rolled between Congress and Hindu Mahasabha. But the other reason which appears more important was the failure of Muslim leadership both inside the Congress and outside to appreciate Hindu fears about Muslim demands, postures and aspirations. This is evident from the position quite often taken by the Hindu Mahasabha leader, M.R. Jayakar who played some role in shaping the Hindu mind, both in the Congress and outside about the communal problem.

M.R. Jayakar (1873-1950) was a graduate of St. Xavier's College, Bombay. He obtained L.L.B. in 1902. In his early political career, he was drawn towards Mrs. Annie Besant's Home Rule League. He was not much impressed by Gandhi in his first meeting, as the latter appeared to him only as a "great ascetic." But Jayakar opposed Gandhi's entry into the Home Rule League. But

later on Gandhi's growing popularity made Jayakar anxious to know the mystery of his personality. He found this opportunity in December 1919 when he met Gandhi in Lahore as a member of the Congress Enquiry Committee for the Punjab disturbances of 1919. Later he worked as a leader of Swaraj Party in the Bombay Legislative Council. He was elected to the Central Legislature in 1924 where he worked as a deputy leader of the Nationalist Party (1926-30). He also participated in the All-Parties Conference held under the presidentship of Gandhi where he protested the increased claims of the Muslims and supported the appointment of a committee but warned the Conference against approaching the view of proportionate benefits for each community. He was in favour of a compromise on the basis of joint electorates and population basis throughout.

In response to Gandhi's request made to him sometime in March 1923, to write for Young India on the points on which the Swarajists were in agreement over the Hindu-Muslim question, he wrote:

1. The population basis is accepted throughout the country as the only basis of representation of the Muslims in the provincial and central legislature, and provided,

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2. The joint electorates are agreed, with special reserved seats for the Muslims in such legislatures. If, however, a bicameral system of legislatures in the province is ultimately agreed on, we are of opinion that all arrangements arrived at in this behalf should be reconsidered in the light of such a system of legislature. We are entirely opposed to the further continuance of special electorates for any community or in any capacity.

"As regards the extension of communal representation to the local bodies, we are of opinion that this question should be considered and decided by the new Provincial legislatures which will be set up under the scheme of Swarajya at present under preparation. We are entirely opposed to the extension of the communal principle to the Public Services in the country, though we are in favour of the view that; in strict conformity with the requirements of efficiency and other qualifications, any manifest disproportion between the several communities in the Public Services of the country should be gradually adjusted so as to give to all communities, subject to the above consideration, an equal chance of serving in Public Services of the country. All conclusions on this point are to be regarded as a part of the scheme of Swarajya and are tentative in their character."  

He participated in All-Parties Conference of 1928 where he mostly represented the Hindu point of view. He took keen interest in the deliberations of Allahabad Unity Conference in 1932 as he was keen to settle Hindu-Muslim differences. It was on his persuasion that a conference of Muslims was held on 15 October 1932 in Lucknow. He wanted Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of fair and equitable arrangement. His direction to a comrade participating in the Lucknow Unity Conference gives a peep into the working of his mind as to how a settlement should be brought about without impairing either the interest of Hindus or of the nation. His views can be summed as follows:

1. "Joint electorates:- Oppose tooth and nail the proposal of retaining separate electorates. But if the failure of the Conference will be brought about by violent wrangles of this question, that is to say, if the chances of securing a large measure of self-government will be jeopardised on this account, we would give way.

2. Appointments:- We attach no importance.

3. Seats in Central Legislature:- We see no harm in giving one-third provided there is full provincial autonomy.

42. Letter from Jayakar to Natrajan, dated 10 October 1932, File No. 355, Serial No. 3, Correspondence Hindu-Muslim Negotiations, 1932, Jayakar Papers, N.A.I.
4. Residuary Powers:— Strongly advocate retention in Central Government. On this point we should like to be unyielding till the very last moment. You will see after a study of the constitutions and the history of their developments of the various self-governing dominions that there are risks to be safeguarded against in cases both where the residuary powers are in the Central Government and in the provinces. This is only a question of absolute, sheer, political science, which tells you that neither is an evil. It all depends on how either system is worked. Both can collapse and both can succeed, you will realise this later on."

It looks that some Hindu leaders too, had become conscious of the immediate need of the communal unity and were ready to concede some of the important demands of the Mohammedans even at the risk of annoying other Hindu leaders. But they were more cautious than many Congress leaders, for, in their opinion, there was no guarantee that after having got everything they wanted, the Muslim leaders would stand by the nationalists in their struggle for independence. Moreover, as a matter of tactics, Jayakar advised some Hindu leaders to pose a die-hard attitude in order to make Muslim members of the Conference moderate their demands to win Hindu support.

43. File No.356, Serial No.12, Hindu-Muslim Question, Jayakar Papers, N.A.I.
He appreciated some of the demands of Muslims which ostensibly appeared unjust on the ground that "there is nothing in a minority community unenlightened as well, asking for things which the others enjoy as an accident...."  

To him the communal problem had grown out of the peculiar situation and unlike Gandhi he was not ready to admit that it was completely the result of the mischief of the third party i.e. the British, implying that it will vanish with the non-existence of the foreign government.

Besides making efforts at settlement through Unity Conferences, he suggested measures for promoting communal harmony by laying emphasis on the cultural affinities between the two communities. He laid stress on this point, though he was conscious that "political journals in Bombay and outside have not appreciated this idea, which is of course," according to him, "due to their ignorance of how potent cultural affinities can be...." He admired all those Muslim leaders who felt the necessity of easing this tension. For instance he praised Akbar Hydari, Finance and Railway member of Nijam's Government for emphasising the unity of both the communities in his presidential address at Poona.

44. File No. 356, Serial No. 12, Hindu-Muslim Question, Jayakar Papers, N.A.I.
45. (i) Letter from Atulananda Chakravarti to Jayakar dated 11 September 1934, File No. 356, S.No. 34, Ibid.
   (ii) Letter from M.R. Jayakar to Atulananda Chakravarti dated 21 September 1934, Ibid.
46. Letter from S. Singh to Atulananda Chakravarti dated 13 October 1934, File No. 356, S.No. 37, Ibid.
47. M.R. Jayakar to Akbar Hydari dated 6 Nov., 1934, File No. 356.
Undoubtedly Gandhi was in a happier position in carrying the Hindu leadership with him over Hindu-Muslim question as he had the support of some topmost Congress leaders for his programme. But he could not completely ignore the pressure of all those Hindu leaders who, being alarmed by the aspirations and postures of Muslim leadership, wanted protection of Hindu interest at least in the Hindu minority areas. This circumscribed his ability to find a solution of the problem.