

CHOUHRY RAHMAT ALI AND PAKISTAN MOVEMENT

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Choudhry Rahmat Ali's name will be remembered by every Pakistani as a man, who for the first time thought of a separate homeland and gave it the name of Pakistan. But this man is not given recognition by the Government and people of Pakistan as a thinker, philosopher, originator of the name of Pakistan.

To study what contribution Rahmat Ali made in the creation of Pakistan and why he was not given proper recognition, we propose to study first his activities as a student in the Punjab and in Great Britain and then to explain how his plan on the whole was harmful for the Muslims.

Choudhry Rahmat Ali the founder President of Pakistan National Liberation Movement was born in the village Moher in District Hoshiarpur. He was a man of unusual religious fervour, who in other words may be termed as religious fanatic. He is the first Muslim to visualise the creation of an independent national homeland for the Muslims of South East Asia as early as 1915, a good quarter century before the Lahore Resolution of 1940. He must be credited for initiating the idea of Muslim separation and campaigning for its acceptance at the time when the Muslim leaders of the sub-continent were working for the Hindu Muslim unity which culminated in the signing of Lucknow Pact of 1916. He set about the job with a faith and dedication that was so rare in those days. While still a student at Islamic College, Lahore, he gave expression to his thought at the founding of Bazm-e-Shibli. In his inaugural address to the Bazm he

said, "North of India is Muslim and we will keep it Muslim. Not only that we will make it Muslim state, but this we can do only if and when we and our North cease to be Indian. For that is a pre-requisite to it. So the sooner we shed 'Indianism', the better for us all and for Islam".¹

This led to his parting of the ways with his co-workers at the College which is an evidence of his determined view. It is worth while to recall this incident in his own words, "Friends, if my views are unacceptable to you, we had better to part. In doing that let every one of us keep true to his pledge, to the ideas of revolution; let every one of us serve the cause of freedom according to his faith. You go to your own way and I will go my way, you work for your Indian revolution, but I will work for my Islamic revolution. At the end we shall see who creates revolution in India".²

Due to his extreme ideas he was asked to quit the membership of the Magazine "KASHMIR GAZETTE" by Munshi Mohammad Din.

We have it again on the authority of his friend and class-mate Reyaz A.Qureshi that, "While at the Law College Lahore in 1923, he engaged in ceaseless propagation of political ideas of Muslim separation among his College colleagues which brought a representation against him to the Principal Mr.Chatterji". For a short time he also worked as a lecturer at the Chief's College Lahore. He then proceeded to England in 1927 for further studies at the University of Dublin and Cambridge, obtaining M.A. and LL.B. with Hons."³

The years of his study in Cambridge coincided with holding of the three Round Table Conferences. The

celebrations in the conferences demonstrated the weakness of stands adopted by the Muslim Leaders. He strongly opposed the apologetic attitudes of the Muslim leaders whom he considered were suffering from defeatism and malady of minoritism.

These conferences galvanised Choudhry Sahib into intense political activity as he was conscious of the importance of the opportunity while the Muslim leaders at the Round Table Conferences were merely asking for safeguards based upon the resolution passed by the All India Muslim Conference at Delhi on 4th and 5th of April, 1931.⁴

Rahmat Ali came out with his political proposals in a declaration entitled "Now or Never" for a separate independent Federation of Pakistan distinct from the Federation of India, inspired by the sense of divine mission, received the situation most relevantly, I came to the conclusion that it was now or never that my further silence would be fatal. For that would mean our general acquiescence in policies of our delegation. "More that, it would mean our approval both of their resolution of our nationhood in our homeland and of their demand for and acceptance of Indian Federation. In that realization I decided to take immediate action to save our honour and existence and to ensure the ultimate security and destiny of our nation in Pakistan and our Millat in Dinnia and its defence" this be continued in pursuit of that decision, I first dedicated my life to the cause of the faith, the fraternity and the fatherland and then drafted the declaration "Now or Never" which embodied the first part of my Pak plan. In this declaration I condemn the acceptance by Muslim delegates of the Indian Federation and denounce the inclusion of our homeland in this

Federation. For that I demanded the recognition of our distinct nationhood in Pakistan and urged the creation of a Federation of Pakistan, separate from the Federation of India. Finally he stressed the unlimited possibilities of Islamic Renaissance and summoned Muslims to reject the Indian Federation to support the demand for the Pakistan Federation and to protect their heritage from further indianisation. 5

Choudhry Sahib attaches great importance to this declaration because it illustrated in his own words, "This declaration and this date will be memorable in history. For the declaration and symbolised the proclamation of our freedom from the British Bania domination, the release of our nation from the hands of minoritism and the resumption by our Millat of her march towards her goal, and the date marked the birthday of Pakistan; the death day of India and desolation day of British imperialism in India. Not only, that this declaration on that date started an ideological resolution in the life of one faith of mankind living in India, a revolution the repercussion of which will be felt throughout Asia and the world".6

What Choudhry Sahib had the foresight to realise at that time, could only dawn upon our leaders in 1939 after the tragic experience of the two years Congress ministries, in seven provinces. It is ironic that these same leaders while giving testimony before the joint select committee signed ignorance of Pak plan and consigned it to oblivion characterising it as "Chimerical and impracticable".7

Undiscouraged by this set-back Choudhry continued to elaborate his Pak plan which represents to any political scheme for the attainment of Pakistan only as

the first of a series of other steps.

His other steps for the establishment of different Muslim States in South India except for Bangistan were impracticable rather this made the Hindus and other nationalities in South India to reject the Pakistan Scheme and demanded majority rule in the sub-continent i.e. the rule of the Hindus.

It is interesting to note his other steps. The main points of his political philosophy are summed up in: (i) Transformation of each Pakistani into a true Muslim, (ii) Rationally be envisaged the full integration of various groups in Pakistan under Islamic laws, political institutions and Islamic Culture, (iii) Thirdly, he visualised the creation of other sovereign Muslim States in South Asia, such as Bangistan (Bengal and Assam) Usmanistan (Hyderabad Deccan) and Moplastan in the South West and other states wherever possible and the living together of these sovereign nations with the Pak National into Pak Millat and consolidation of them all in the Pak common wealth of nations, (iv) Fourthly, he put forward the plan of freedom and unity of all Muslim countries and the creation of Pan Islamic World Organization on the line of United Nations Organization (U.N.O.) to bring together all Muslim nations on one simple platform, (v) Fifthly, the stirring for the sovereignty of all culturally and socially distinct group of India such as the Dravidians, Achuts, Sikhs, Budhist, the Christians, Parsis and cast Hindus and the creation of the country of India into the continent of Dinia, which means the land of different faiths and fraternities which will transform South India into Pak Asia.⁸

He visualized that in future all these various

religious states will co-operate and co-exist on the basis of Sovereign equality and friendship for peace, progress and prosperity of mankind.

The objectives of the Pakistan Liberation Movement may rightly be regarded as the just of his political thought which he summed up more appropriately in his own forceful and stirring diction. In his words, "such in brief are the basic aims of the Pakistan National Movement".

From all these facts, it is clear that the movement is the bearer of a message of honour and independence of integration and equality to our people in Pakistan, as to all other "people in their homeland of Millatism to our brethern in the other lands of Pak Asia of fraternalism to the Muslim world, and of friendship and good will to the whole of mankind".⁹

In consciousness of its responsibility to history, it is preparing the Paks to translate this message into reality.

In other words "It is an inspiration for them to rise again in Pakistan and reintegrate their country within its ancient frontiers to resume their divine mission in Dinia to change forever the 3 to 4th century-old course of the history of the Divine Pak Asia and to reoccupy their place in the conduct of world affairs. For this is demanded by the supreme interests not only of the Pak-nation in Pakistan, of the Pak Millat in Pak Asia, and of the fraternity in the world, but also of the rest of mankind which they are all pledged to serve through the teaching of Islam.

The philosophy of Choudhry Rahmat Ali, apart from Pakistan as a state including four provinces and

Jammu Kashmir State was harmful for the Muslim minorities in Hindu Majority Provinces and so we find that no Muslim spoke about Pakistan. Even in 1940, when Lahore Resolution was passed, Pakistan was never mentioned. This resolution was called "Lahore Resolution" and not "Pakistan Resolution". Congress press such as Daily 'Search Light' of Patna published a cartoon of Mr. Jinnah on 25th March 1940 putting on his head a turban and Huqa in his mouth and calling him "Sultan of Pakistan".¹⁰ This was satire which no Muslim leader took seriously. Ambedkar wrote a book "Pakistan or the Partition of India" where-in he pleaded that Muslim majority areas must be separated from the rest of India otherwise it would prove as cancer. Rajinder Parsad the former President of India wrote a book "India Divided" where he strongly opposed the creation of Pakistan. Thus, the Hindus called the Lahore Resolution as the "Pakistan Resolution" and Mr. Jinnah found a name for the country which was still to be born. Pakistan was born on 14th August, 1947.

Choudhry Rahmat Ali came to Pakistan in 1947 but was not given any importance due to his fanatical and extreme ideas which was not only a hurdle for the creation of Muslim States, but for Muslim minority in India.

Thus he went back to England quite disappointed and wrote a book "Betrayal of the Millat".

He died on 3rd February 1951 and was buried at Newmarket Road Cemetery Cambridge, England. Recently Choudhry Rahmat Ali's idea of Muslim common wealth came true when the Muslims of the world founded Islamic Conference with the membership of 42 nations which held its meeting and discussed about their

betterment.

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