The First Phase of Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Leadership in the Muslim League:

A POLITICAL STUDY

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The Muslim League movement, started in 1906 for the safeguard of Muslim position in South Asia, entered a new and rather crucial stage in 1940 when Muslim League viewed division of the region as the best way to protect Muslim interests. Consequent to this thinking it passed and adopted in March a resolution, generally known as 'Pakistan Resolution' which declared that "no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it was designed on ... the principles, viz., that geographically contiguous units were demarcated into regions... that the areas in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority ... should be grouped to constitute "independent states" in which the constituent units should be autonomous and Sovereign."[1] By the middle of 1947 the Pakistan demand was almost assured and on 14 August it became a reality. No doubt this had been possible due to the hard and united work which Muslims had put in together as a nation. But no less significant was the contribution made by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876 – 1948), the leader of the Muslim League movement, in making the dream of Pakistan come true. The belief that Jinnah held a key position in respect of South Asia's future once the British decided to leave the region was entertained by many long before the Muslim League demand for Pakistan appeared a reality.

It was perhaps a coincidence in historical developments that

Chinese, who have the closest relationship today with Pakistan, were among the many foreigners to recognise the important position enjoyed by the leader of the Pakistan movement. It was apparently to set seal on this belief that in 1939 General Omar Pai Chung Hsi, China's number one Muslim General and Deputy Chief of Staff of the National Salvation Federation, representing all Chinese, sent a Muslim delegation to greet Jinnah. The leader of the Chinese delegation, Othman K. H. Woo, also brought with him gifts for Jinnah from General Omar.[2] By early 1947 when the Pakistan demand reached its heights most observers convincingly saw into Jinnah as an important leader holding the key to the solution of the future constitutional problems of South Asia, and that he had to be reckoned with if others that mattered in the region wished to see South Asia free from British control.

With a view to assert its position against the Muslim League, the Indian Congress — the other important political movement in South Asia — convened in March 1947, several months before India won her freedom, the Asian Relations Conference in Delhi which was attended by twenty-eight countries. Though Muslim League was invited it had refused to attend on the ground that it was a "thinly disguised attempt on the part of the Hindu Congress to boost itself politically as the prospective leader of Asiatic peoples."[3] But the absence of the Muslim League in the Asian Relations Conference was conspicuously felt by several delegates from abroad. However, J. A. McCullum, a member of the Australian Delegation in his quest to meet leaders of the Muslim League went even to the extent of finding them at a social gathering. He also managed to see Jinnah there. He saw "Mr. Jinnah", as he observed later, "only as a man in a crowd." But McCullum was sure "even if there had been no magic in the name one would have picked him (Jinnah) out as the most notable man in a distinguished gathering ... The Quaid-i-Azam had just had his first interview with the Viceroy (Mountbatten (1900–1981)). He was sitting with a small group somewhat apart from the main body of guests... I thought of Napoleon and suddenly saw a spare handsome man, old, tired, anxious, yet marvellously vital and intelligent. In a flash my opinion of Mohammad Ali Jinnah changed. Whatever this man was, he was not what so many diverse reports combined to represent him as an adventurer. I can give no final judgement", concluded McCullum, "but I think Jinnah is an original

force in politics."[4] The conclusion drawn by McCullum could have not been more precise. Jinnah proved himself a real force in politics by his successfully leading the movement for Pakistan.

But while the role Jinnah played in the Muslim League from the middle of 1930s to 1947 has come under extensive discussion and study, little attention is paid to examine and expose his connections with and contributions made for the success of the Muslim League movement in earlier years.

The study of the rise of Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah as a most dominant political personality and important leader of the Muslim League in twentieth century South Asia actually falls within three distinct periods. These are (1) between 1906 – 1919; [(2) from 1920 to 1930; and (3) 1934 to 1947. The first period should be regarded as the formative, yet important, phase of his political career; for it was during this time that Jinnah not only created a place for himself in the Muslim League but also attained the most prestigious position of President of its Executive. Earlier, during the same period, he presided over the Lucknow Session of the Muslim League in 1916. In the second phase of his leadership which begins from 1920 Jinnah headed the Muslim League for ten years; and with only a short break of three years, when he lived in England as a man frustrated with the machinations and unscrupulous methods followed by some politicians at home, Jinnah resumed the leadership of the Muslim League again in 1934 — whence started the third and last stage of his political life and leadership.

This paper mainly concentrates to study the first phase of Jinnah's political connections with and his contributions made to the Muslim League since it was essentially at this stage that he emerged as an important leader of the Muslim League.

II

Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah started his political life in 1906 as a member of the Indian Congress. By 1914 he was a prominent member of it. It is also evident from his position he held among the four members of the Congress delegation who went to London to meet the Secretary of State, in-charge of South Asian affairs, in connection with the reorganisation of the 'India Council'. Sir William Wedderburn

(1838 – 1918), twice President of the Congress — in 1889 and 1910 — while introducing members of the delegation declared to the Secretary of State that "Mr. Jinnah would be their spokesman."[5] By 1917 Jinnah also became a leading member of the Home Rule League founded by Mrs. Annie Besant (1847 – 1933); he became its President also after the founding – president was interned by the government on account of her extremism. But Jinnah broke away from both the Home Rule League and Congress in 1920.[6] Both had become slaves in the hands of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869 – 1948) who, Jinnah believed, was determined to use them particularly for the advancement of his peculiar political views.[7] Jinnah's suspicions of Gandhi were fully confirmed when the latter renamed Home Rule League as *Swarajya Sabha* declaring "I felt if I was accepted by the (Home Rule) League, as I was, I should be wrong in not identifying myself with the organisation that I could utilise for the advancement of causes which I had specialised."[8]

After Jinnah left the two organisations the Muslim League became the main platform from where he carried his political activities which eventually led him to emerge successfully as "the leader" with the title of *Quaid-i-Azam* conferred upon him by Muslims as a nation. But the transition of leadership from Congress and Home Rule League was neither sudden nor abrupt.

III

The formal membership of Jinnah in the Muslim League did not take place before October 1913. He was in England at this time, Maulana Mohammad Ali (1878–1931) and Wazir Hasan (1874–1947), respectively member Council and Secretary of the Muslim League, were on a visit to London in connection with the demolition of Kanpur Machhli Bazar Mosque by the Government. The two leaders also met Jinnah and obtained his signature on the application meant for Muslim League membership. But this was only the formal way of Jinnah's association with the Muslim League; informally his interest in exclusively Muslim affairs had started much earlier.

When Jinnah was attending the Congress sessions at Calcutta in 1906 a large number of Muslims were meeting around the same time at Dacca where by a unanimous opinion they decided to establish the

Muslim League with the following objectives: (a) To promote among the Musalmans...feeling of loyalty to the Government; (b) to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans...and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government; and (c) to prevent the rise, among the Musalmans ... of any feeling of hostility towards other communities...[9]

The birth of the Muslim League was in direct consequence to the Indian Congress which, since its foundation in 1885, had been unsuccessfully trying to win Muslim support for its movement. But the Muslim attitude towards the Congress, largely due to the efforts of Sayyed Ahmad Khan (1817–1898), *peer-i-azam*, "the grand patriarch", of Muslim politics in South Asia,[10] had been generally one of indifference. Due to Sayyed Ahmad's opposition only a few Muslims ever cared to join the Congress. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was one of those few who joined the Congress at the start of his political career.

The news of Muslim success at Dacca had a stunning effect in the Congress circles. But soon their concern turned into great satisfaction when a rival meeting was arranged at Calcutta under the presidentship of Maulvi Ghulam Ahmad Khan with the object "to consider what should be the attitude of the Mohammadan community towards the political and economic movements of the day." In sharp contrast to the aims and objects of the Muslim League the Musalman Association, as the Calcutta based Muslim meeting called itself, decided "to work with other communities in all political and economic matters because the interests of the Muslims were in no way different from those of other."[11] The formation of the Musalman Association was welcomed by the Congress–oriented press. The Calcutta based *Bengali* particularly hoped that it would soon "become a powerful factor in initiating progressive movements..."[12]

The Musalman Association appointed a Committee of 26 members to finalise its plan. Nawab Sayyed Mohammad was elected President and Jinnah one of the three Vice-Presidents.[13] Thus simultaneous to his membership of Congress, Jinnah associated himself with the movement organised by Calcutta Muslims. It must, however, be admitted the aims and objects of the latter were in sharp contrast with the Muslim League.

The Musalman Association was doomed to failure from the very beginning; it was not difficult to realise by a majority of Muslims that it was a brain child of the Congress since most of its members like Nawab Sayyed Mohammad, Jinnah and Abbas Tyabji belonged to no other organisation but the Calcutta Congress itself.

Jinnah seems to have realised the unworthiness of his decision to associate himself with the Musalman Association in opposition to the Muslim League. Jinnah must have also felt sorry for his remarks made by him in the Calcutta Congress earlier against separate Muslim representation and reservation of seats in the councils for them. He had said "there should be no reservation for any class or community" and that the principle on which the Indian Congress was based was that "we are all equal."[14] But no more would Jinnah raise his objections in opposition to this demand made to the Government by the Muslims. To make his loss good Jinnah, as early as February 1909, identified himself with the Muslim League policy on the question of reforms of the legislative councils in the country.

New instalments of political concessions, commonly known as Morley – Minto Reforms, were on the anvil. The Muslim League had been vigorously demanding the right of separate electorate for Muslims in South Asia; the Congress was opposed to this idea and demanded mixed electorate with no reservation for any community. Jinnah advocated in favour of separate electorate for the Muslims and though a member of the Congress he thanked as a "community" to the Secretary of State Lord Morley, and the Viceroy, Lord Minto "down to officers of different rank and Englishman generally for their anxiety and vigilant care to secure for the Mohamedans an adequate and substantial representation in the (Reform) scheme."[15] In contradiction of his Calcutta speech Jinnah now opposed Congress policy of demanding mixed electorate. He feared the system, if accepted and introduced, "will get Mohamedans who will probably be pledged to the Hindu views."[16] This was an argument no different from Sayyed Ahmad Khan's own, which the latter had expressed as early as 1883.[17] "All that the Muslims wanted" argued Jinnah "is a potential voice in the (electoral) College so as to return their real representatives."[18] He offered his own formula in this regard and said that "the figures of 1/4 or 25 out of 100 to be increased to 1/3

or 33 out of 100 or some such proportion" would be a fair share to satisfy Muslims. He believed this principle, when conceded, would "unite them (Hindus and Muslims) in every direction and will in course of time nationalise them."[19] Only a few years later Jinnah saw his scheme come true through the Muslim League – Congress pact signed at Lucknow in 1916.

A few months after making his scheme known Jinnah asserted again in favour of separate Muslim electorate. In a public meeting held in Bombay in the premises of the Anjuman-i-Islam High School "to give expression to the views of the community on the subject of Muslim representation on the Bombay Legislative Council"[20] Jinnah urged upon the Government "to form separate Muslim electorates in consultation with Muslim Leaders."[21]

By supporting Muslim League point of view Jinnah did not have to lose anything. On the contrary by doing so he ensured his chance for gaining a seat in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1910. Irrespective of his membership of the Congress at this time it is still doubted and is even inconceivable, if Jinnah would have won a seat on the Imperial Council under the mixed electorate system as advocated by him earlier.

However, after his election Jinnah's view on the subject of separate electorate underwent a change and he objected to the introduction of this method in the body – politic of South Asia. This simply incurred the displeasure of Muslim League leaders and Jinnah was publicly censured for the change in his views. Sayyed Nabiullah (d. 1925), President Nagpur Muslim League in 1910 criticised Jinnah for his vascillating attitude. Nabiullah further reminded Jinnah the fact that he owed his "position in the Imperial Legislative Council to the separate electorate."[22] Jinnah admitted the fact and regretted over his remarks which, he said, were his "personal" and "did not represent the opinion of the community"[23] on this matter.

Despite his membership of the Congress Jinnah had started taking keen interest in the business of the Muslim League. He proved of assistance to Muhammad Aziz Mirza (1865 – 1912), Secretary (1910 – 1912) Muslim League, when the latter visited Bombay to

organise and establish the Bombay Presidency Muslim League. In fact it was on this occasion and not in 1913, as is largely be ieved, that Jinnah was thoroughly introduced with the aims and objects of the Muslim League and brought round it. Giving details of his exploits Aziz Mirza observed "The Bombay people gave me a dinner last night when I had a good opportunity of expounding my views (with regard to Muslim League) to the local magnates. They have promised to attend the Nagpur session (scheduled for December 1910) n great force. I have succeeded in evoking Mr. Jinnah as a member of our League and he will be a real acquisition to our cause."[24]

A "real acquisition" indeed. For only a few months earlier he had declined to attend the Delhi Muslim League Session held in January 1910. It is, however, to be added to Jinnah's credit that despite his refusal to attend the sessions he wished them success.[25] But after meeting Aziz Mirza Jinnah helped him in his endeavour to organise Muslim League work in Bombay. Subsequently, he also cooperated with the Muslim League in securing official assistance in respect of a proper legislation for Muslims' *Waqf Alāl Aulad*, Trust and Endowments. Since he was in the Imperial Legislative Council and his reputation as a lawyer of great understanding had been established already, Jinnah was entrusted with the task of seeing through a proper legislation for the management of Muslim auqaf. Jinnah discussed the matter with several leading Muslim jurists and consulted several others of them who were also members of the Imperial Council,[26] and finally had a bill drafted with the help of Sayyed Ameer Ali (1849 – 1928).[27]

The bill was introduced by Jinnah in the Council in 1911. It received overwhelming support from the Muslims, with only Shias dissenting over some of its clauses.[28] The bill was titled as "Mussalmans Waqf Validation Bill." Aziz Mirza recording his appreciation for Jinnah observed that "At the suggestion of the League the Hon'ble Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah has undertaken to submit to the Council a bill on the subject of *Waqf Alal Aulad* ... he has been taking so much interest in the question that he had a draft bill carefully prepared in England..."[29] The bill met with no opposition in the Imperial Council and Aziz Mirza was "glad" to observe "The Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah met with no opposition from the Government..."[30]

Aziz Mirza died in February 1912 and was succeeded by Wazir Hasan (1874–1947), Joint Secretary of the Muslim League. Wazir Hasan was representative of the young elements among the Muslims. As Secretary of the Muslim League (1912–1918) he realised that there was "ample room for reform and improvement"[31] in the Constitution of the organisation. He issued a letter to leading Muslims, irrespective of their membership of the Muslim League, to ascertain their views on this subject. Jinnah also received a communication. In the light of comments received Wazir Hasan prepared a draft of the Constitution for approval by the Council of the Muslim League. The Council met "in the spacious hall of the Qaiser Bagh Baradari at Lucknow on 31 December 1912."[32] Among those present "conspicuous" was "the Hon'ble Mohammad Ali Jinnah"[33] who had come to attend all the way from Bombay. The presence of Jinnah on this occasion proved most useful; for the Muslim League had the benefit of his legal acumen which surely must have proved of great help during the course of discussion which led to insertion of a fourth section in clause 2 of the Muslim League Constitution. The new section stood for "a system of self – Government"[34] considered suitable for South Asia. Thus within a period of less than six years of its existence the objective of the Muslim League was brought close to the Congress and Jinnah had his share in bringing about this change.

The Council meeting held was a substitute to the Annual session postponed on an urgent appeal made by Sayyed Ameer Ali. The latter was elected to preside the session and unlike the past occasions when his preoccupation did not allow him to leave London Ameer Ali appeared determined to come and lead his nation in its political deliberations. The Muslim League had made arrangements for his passage to and from London. To the funds raised by the Muslim League for this purpose Jinnah also committed to contribute a sum of £ 50.[35] Despite, however, all the facilities offered to him and besides his own keenness in the matter, Ameer Ali expressed inability at the last moment, when all arrangements for the session had been complete, and requested for the postponement. This was not for personal reasons however. It was due to the outbreak of hostilities against Turks followed by their indiscriminate massacre in the Balkan region. Ameer Ali viewed the matter as one of national calamity. Being in sympathy with the Turks and their cause he thought it un-

wise to hold a political gathering in South Asia because by diverting attention on matters exclusive to the problems of South Asian Muslims would mean overshadowing the crisis faced by Turkey. Therefore he requested Wazir Hasan to postpone the session as a mark of protest over the attitude of the European powers involved in the conflict with Turkey.[36] Since all arrangements were ready Wazir Hasan thought it advisable to convert the sessional proceedings into the one that of a special meeting. He utilised the occasion for introducing changes in the aims and objects of the Muslim League.

With the change introduced in its aims and objects the Muslim League and Congress now had common ideal before them. Jinnah had long felt the "unity" of the "two great communities", Muslims and Hindus, was a pre-requisite "for the realisation of our goal."[37] He worked to achieve this essential purpose; but was still of the view that "education was a great solvent in this matter."[38] Accordingly, he suggested Wazir Hasan "If possible attempts should be made in bringing boys from these communities, instead of having two separate schools for Hindu and Muhammedan boys there should be two separate branches of one school; one branch or wing of Muhammedan boys be a portion and other of the Hindu boys, they should be brought into a free contact as often as possible (sic)."[39] All these developments preceded in Jinnah's political life before he formally enrolled himself a member of the Muslim League. But when enrolled in London he returned from there just to be in time to preside over a public meeting organised by Bombay Muslims in honour of the two returning members of the Muslim League who had gone to England to represent the Muslim case regarding the demolition of the Mosque in Kanpur.

IV

The mosque in Kanpur had been demolished by the authorities in complete disregard of Muslim religious feelings. When Muslims demonstrated against the official attitude they were met by the bullets. Scores of them died on the spot and several hundred received wounds of all kinds and nature. But government remained adamant in refusing to listen to the Muslim complaint in regard to official decision to demolish the Mosque which indeed they carried with impunity. That the local authorities had committed blunder after blunder in

the matter was admitted even by the Viceroy himself in a private letter to Valentine Chirol (1852 – 1929), a noted British scholar and correspondent to the *Times* of London. Hardinge thus explained to him that "so many blunders have been committed at Cawnpor by the Local authorities that the Mahomedans positively declined to accept any compromise whatever from the local Government."[40]

But if the local government had failed to see the Muslim point of view Hardinge's own administration had not proved understanding any the better in this respect. The Viceroy was much annoyed with Muslims for they had refused to listen him for a compromise. His ire of them seems to have grown more because of the intense criticism launched on the matter by "that pestilent fellow Mohammad Ali of the *Comrade*."[41] Mohammad Ali was so outspoken in his criticism of Hardinge and his administration that the latter felt much upset by it. On account of this Hardinge's only wish then became "to give rope enough"[42] to Mohammad Ali.

Failing in their efforts to secure justice from the government at home Maulana Mohammad Ali and Wazir Hasan had decided to go to England to represent Kanpur Mosque case before the government in London. But that then was going too far and was too much for Hardinge. Indeed their decision appeared to him a bitter pill to swallow when he learnt of the "arch agitator (Mohammad Ali)" ... suddenly leaving Bombay for London ... evidently with the intention to trying to work up public opinion in England, against my government in connection with Mahomedan affairs in this country."[43] Now, here was the chance for Hardinge "to rope" the arch agitator. The result was that the Secretary of State, Lord Crewe, took a hard line and refused to see the two-member Muslim League delegation. The two men were not allowed even an audience with the Secretary of State. But still greater satisfaction was expressed by James Meston (1865 – 1943), Lieutenant–Governor of the United Provinces where the incident of the mosque had taken place. Meston thought the "rebuff of Mohammad Ali and Wazir Hasan at home had an excellent effect" in the country and he thanked the Viceroy "for warning Lord Crewe against them.[44] Seen in this background the welcome reception by Bombay Muslims to the two returning Muslim League leaders was

to be an extremely important event. And of no less significance was the election of Jinnah either as he was to give expression of his thoughts in a background of recent happenings.

The election of Jinnah on this occasion should also be seen in the light of his past association and services rendered to the Muslim League. It is also to be realised that by now he had come to be regarded by many members of the Muslim League, particularly its Secretary — Wazir Hasan — as most important leader in the country. But for this conviction Wazir Hasan would not have worked hand in hand with Jinnah for holding the Muslim League sessions at Bombay in 1915 when many other leading members of the Muslim League had wished that no sessions should be held on account of the European war (1914 – 1918) in which England was also involved against Germany. It should also be admitted that Jinnah too had realised the significance and important position of the Muslim League movement in the country. Thus in 1914 when he spoke for the Congress in London he unreservedly spoke also of the Muslim League as "most representative and the greatest organisation of public opinion"[45] in South Asia. His election by the Bombay Muslims for presiding over their public meeting therefore cannot be interpreted but a recognition of mutual trust and respect which both sides had developed for each other and had been showing it over the past several years.

In the Kanpur Mosque dispute the government had particularly charged young Muslims belonging to Aligarh Muslim College of Sayyed Ahmad Khan for creating trouble in the country — incidentally both Mohammad Ali and Wazir Hasan had been students of the Aligarh Muslim College. The government even accused Muslims of spreading sedition. It was also declared by the government that it would hold responsible leaders of the movement for all that had been done in the name of Kanpur Mosque. Many among Muslims were frightened by the official threats. The Aga Khan (1877 – 1957), the most prominent among them, deliberately kept himself away from the Kanpur Mosque affairs lest he should fall out of the official sympathy which he had been enjoying for years and expected to gain more. For some time past he had been pleading the government for the

grant of some "status" to him which he did not enjoy before. He was particularly keen in securing a few guns salute for himself as was granted by the government to so many or most of the native rulers in accordance to their status and position they held in the region. He was very emotional on the issue and had told Hardinge that the inability of his government in the matter of determining his desired status had "rendered my life in India well nigh intolerable for me." While pleading his case he reminded the Viceroy also that how, in deference of official wishes "I carefully abstained" from the Kanpur Mosque dispute despite the "strong and constant pressure ... put on me ... to assist ... or at least ... make a representation to the Government."[46] Eventually Aga Khan got what he had longed for. But unlike Aga Khan and many others Jinnah was not a status seeker. This particularly rendered his position very strong as a leader of the Muslims. As such he could take risk of being bold nough and speak-out freely in contradiction of official accusations advanced against Muslims in general and their institution in particular.

Thus keeping recent events in mind, and not forgetting the official attitude, Jinnah defended Muslims' actions in defence of Kanpur Mosque. He also approved the activities of leaders belonging to Aligarh Muslim College. He described official accusations "a base villification"[47] in his first public speech from the Muslim League platform.

As for the official charges against Aligrah Muslim College Jinnah dismissed them as a "slander upon the fair name of Aligarh."[48] He admired the role of the young men of Aligrah and approved their activities. To him their involvement in political affairs of the region was a sound proof of the growing political consciousness among Muslims and for all this he felt happy. Jinnah thought, and this also appeared his conviction, that Muslims "have passed the stage of political infancy and have grown in the manhood and therefore can no longer be controlled by the dictatorial policy from without or within."[49] These were probably references made obliquely against official attitude and Aga Khan's policies in respect of Muslim aspirations. The defence of Aligarh Muslim College, its boys and leaders all seem to have assumed prime importance for Jinnah in his approach

to Muslim politics. It was Aligarh Muslim College, since 1920 Muslim University, which had played key role in founding the Muslim League; and now it was again going to be the place from where Jinnah and Muslim League could and would in future depend to draw most of their support to strengthen and intensify the leadership and the struggle for an independent sovereign Muslim state in South Asia.

V

By his taking sides from the early years with matters exclusive to Muslims and showing keen interest in the policies of the Muslim League long before he joined the organisation in formal way Jinnah indeed turned a new leaf of his political career towards the end of 1913 when he got the singular opportunity to lead Bombay Muslims in their political deliberations which centred round exclusively to Muslim problems in South Asia. Jinnah's involvement in the matter eventually helped him and the Muslim League in strengthening their respective hold over each other in the coming years.

The first sign of it appeared in 1915 shortly before the Bombay Muslim League sessions. Due to the outbreak of war in Europe Muslim opinion had divided in respect of continuing their political activities. But Jinnah alongwith Wazir Hasan and a few others, who supported them, persisted in urging to hold Muslim League meetings in Bombay. Jinnah and Wazir Hasan in particular made every endeavour to hold the sessions and were actually successful. Since it was Jinnah's plan that Muslim League must meet in session the success was also his. Jinnah particularly emerged as a dominant figure among Muslim leaders. He had proved both assertive and persuasive, rare qualities to have been combined in a man, in the face of stiff opposition to his plans. For his efforts he was amply rewarded in 1916 when he was elected President to the Lucknow Muslim League with an overwhelming votes in his favour.[50] The fact is that none among Muslim leaders preferred to offer his name against Jinnah on this occasion. Between 1916 and 1919 he stepped up further on the leader. First he was elected a Vice-President in 1918 and in the following year, in 1919, the President of the Muslim League Executive. It will not be far too wrong to summarize for this spectacular rise of Jinnah

that his own contributions besides circumstances which favoured him helped him to achieve this position. The time certainly appeared most opportune for the singular position offered to him in 1919.

VI

Between 1913 and 1919 Muslim affairs in general and their leadership in particular had been almost in disarray. The Kanpur Mosque incident had left deep scar on Muslims and Muslim League movement. Despite the loss of Muslim life and property nothing substantial had been gained from the government in the dispute. On the other hand several leaders got a bad reputation for their mishandling of the affair. Mazhar-ul-Haque (1866–1929) in particular stood in great disrepute. He was charged of misappropriation of huge funds collected in the name of 'save the Kanpur Mosque' and for the defence of Muslims arrested on charge of rioting and demonstrating against the government in this connection.[51]

The outbreak of War in Europe divided Muslims further. The Muslim League movement suffered immensely on this account so much so that Punjab leaders almost broke away from the Muslim League, and it lay dormant in several other provinces. The end of the War did not prove a blessing either. Due to the Turkish involvement in the War, in which Turkey emerged as a vanquished power, the Khilafat Movement (1919 – 1924) was organised in support of Turkey and the Caliph. This caused diversion of Muslim attention from home to an outside affair; for Turkey and its Caliph were held in highest regard particularly by Muslims in South Asia. It was then quite natural for Muslim leadership to go along with the Muslim public opinion. Most of them were swept away by the Khilafat movement. Only men like Jinnah and Syed Zahur Ahmad, the able and vigilant Muslim League Secretary (1918 – 1926) believed into the inefficacy of the Movement. Thus keeping their religious sentiments under proper bounds they stuck with the Muslim League and helped protect it from being completely submerged by the Khilafat Movement which had suddenly taken the region into its grip in 1919.

Besides the confusion that prevailed among Muslims due to the Kanpur Mosque affairs, European War and the Khilafat Movement

there definitely appeared also a crisis of leadership among them which indicated serious dearth of capable leaders at the time when Jinnah was asked to lead the Muslim League.

Some of the prominent Muslim League leaders like Nawabs Mohsin-ul-Mulk (1837 – 1907) and Salimullah of Dacca (1884 – 1915) were dead. So also Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk (1847 – 1917), who had once been in the vanguard and also acted as Muslim League Secretary.

Aga Khan left Muslim League in 1913 for purely personal considerations. Moulana Mohammad Ali, who could have provided strong leadership to the Muslim League was far too much devoted to the Turkish cause. It was Mohammad Ali who had been the brain behind the Khilafat movement organisation. Indeed he was a brilliant and most able political leader. But Muslim League did not have the opportunity to benefit from him properly; for most of the time between 1914 and 1919 he remained removed from the South Asian political scene. Most of the years he spent in prison because his strong views on the Turkish affairs were looked upon with horror by the officials. He was in real sense a nightmare to many of them. Therefore, the government considered it necessary, in her own interest, to keep him in confinement for as long as she could.

Among the names of other possible men who, instead of Jinnah, could be considered for or were likely to provide leadership to the Muslim League in 1919 are the names of Ali Imam (1866 – 1932), Hakim Ajmal Khan (1863 – 1927), Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (1880 - 1936), Muhammad Shafi (1869 – 1932) and Fazli Husain (1877 – 1936).

Ali Imam had been a prominent Muslim League leader. He had also presided the Amritsar Muslim League in 1908. But after his appointment to the Viceroy's council in 1910 he had gone over to the side of the government. If any thing was left out of it then he was a pro-Congress man in later years of his life. Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari, most respected and prominent, had no doubt their sympathies with the Muslim League. But both of them kept close with the Congress as well. It is true Jinnah too was a member of the Congress at this time. But while Jinnah had tried to clearly

distinguish between Congress and Muslim League and had clearly appeared, over the years, as one who would not be ready to compromise with Congress where Muslim interests were concerned the first two mentioned followed a policy designed to keep both parties happy. In doing so they satisfied none in real sense. Morover the two were not public leaders in true sense. Their professional interest and occupation did not allow them to be a full-time politician.

The other two leaders, Muhammad Shafi and Fazli Hussain, could have equally provided strong leadership to the Muslim League. But both had disqualified themselves by their own actions. In the first place the two became rival to each other in their desire to acquire leadership of Muslim Punjab. Their rivalry was deep and existed on the eve of the birth of the Muslim League. The gulf of differences continued to grow even afterward with only occasional compromises reached with the intervention of other Muslim League leaders. Their conflict, which was over provincial leadership, did not enable either of them to emerge as a leader of national stature. Their policies also led them away from the Muslim League. Fazli Hussain, failing to get an upper hand over his rival, started flirting first with the Congress and eventually laid the foundation of his own political party, the Unionist, which was purely regional in character. Eventually the Unionist Party proved a strong rival to the Muslim League in the Punjab so much so that it controlled and dominated the Punjab Muslim politics at the expense of Muslim League movement close to 1947. Muhammad Shafi, who once had the privilege of presiding over the Lucknow Muslim League Session in March 1913, had been close to the officials; a relationship which was now not appreciated by many among the Muslims after what the government policy had been in past few years in respect of them. Shafi made him further unpopular by keeping quiet or siding with the government on matters like the Kanpur Mosque incident and the European War. He became a leading opponent to the idea of holding Muslim League meetings in 1915 and he had been no less conspicuous the previous year in opposing to hold the Rawalpindi Muslim League Session which was an affair settled, as usual, several months in advance. All this went against Shafi and resulted in his exclusion from the Muslim League for many years. He was not even extended invitation to the 1916 Lucknow Muslim League Session and thereafter.

The Muslim affairs in South Asia shortly before the outbreak of European war were seen by official circles as one of confusion. The description given was that "they are quarrelling more than before amongst themselves; that Mohammad Ali and Zaffar Ali (1873 – 1956) are losing influence ... Mohammad Shafi has tumbled down completely on the Government side of the fence and is anxious to break away (which he actually did) from the Muslim League."[52] The prospects and position of Muslim affairs in 1919 had not brightened any the better. In conditions when they were divided and their leaders almost lost the presence of Jinnah, who stood slightly a wayside bewildered and amazed over the situation, seemed reassuring. His election in 1919 as leader of the Muslim League indicated that there indeed could have been no better choice, and in fact there was none better available, than Jinnah. It was a recognition of his abilities and services rendered to Muslims in the past. "Leaders" it is observed by a leaderwriter, "cannot be created by the official Honours List or even by the leaderwriters in newspaper offices. Leadership comes and can come only through service."[53] This is what exactly Jinnah had been doing to the nation almost from the early years of his political career. After his election he alongwith Zahur Ahmad worked still harder to serve and refloat the Muslim League which lay inactive for some time.

Jinnah had accepted the "great honour with hesitation." He was apparently of the view he would "not be able to do justice to the great post."[54] But the promises of help made to him by Zahur Ahmad proved very convincing. He felt greatly encouraged and hoped that "I shall have the same encouragement given to me by the public."[55] After securing all that was necessary to assure Jinnah accepted the presidentship. He believed that together they "might do some useful work for our community and cause."[56] Undoubtedly he served in a far greater and effective manner. But this is to be remembered that with 1919 Jinnah completed one phase of his political career and leadership and beginning with 1920 he was going to start the next and second phase.

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2. John Kim, "Chinese Muslims view Pakistan" in *Asia and the Americans*, XLIII: 3 (March 1943), pp. 155 – 57.

3. Liaquat Ali Khan's statement issued on 19 March, 1947. Uncatalogued papers in *Archives of Freedom Movement* (AFM), Karachi University Library (KUL). See also *Morning News* (Calcutta), 20 March, 1947, and Arif Husain, *Pakistan: Its Ideology and Foreign Policy* (London, 1966), p. 56.

4. J. A. McCullum, "Personalities at the Asian Relations Conference" in *The Australian Quarterly*, XIX: 3 (September 1947), pp. 39–44.

5. Enclosure with Secretary of State's letter to Hardinge, 14 May, 1914, *Hardinge Papers*, Cambridge University Library (CUL). Hardinge was British Viceroy in South Asia from 1910 – 1916.

6. See M. H. Saiyid, *Mohammad Ali Jinnah: A Political Study*, Lahore 1945, Karachi 1962, pp. 132 – 33; Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah: Creator of Pakistan*, London 1954, pp. 84 – 5; S. K. Majumdar, *Jinnah and Gandhi: Their role in India's Quest for Freedom*, Calcutta, 1966, p. XI.

7. For Gandhi's rise in South Asian politics see Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915 – 1922*, Cambridge, 1972.

8. S. K. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

9. All India Muslim League, *Rules and Regulations of the All India Muslim League*, Aligarh 1909, p. 5.

10. Undoubtedly Sayyed Ahmad Khan is recognised by his admirers and critics both as the fountain – head and the grand old man of Muslim political views in the nineteenth century South Asia and had unrestricted influence over Muslim political thoughts in the modern century as well. The specific term referred to here was used by Aftab Ahmad Khan (1867 – 1930), a former student of Sayyed Ahmad's college but now a prominent political

leader, in his presidential Address before the *Soshal palitikal arganizashun* of Muslims held at Aligarh in July 1903. See his speech in *AFM*, KUL, Vol. I.

11. Quoted in Rafiq Zakaria, *Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics*, Bombay 1971, p. 110.

12. *The Bengalee*, Calcutta, 9 January 1909.

13. Kazi Kabir-ud-din and Abbas Tyabjee were the other two Vice – Presidents.

14. Quoted in Rafiq Zakaria, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

15. *Times of India* (Weekly) (Bombay), 20 February, 1909.

16. Ibid.

17. For full details of his views on the subject see Sayyed Ahmad Khan's speech in *Legislative Council of India* (Abstract and Proceedings), Vol. 22, 1883, pp. 16 – 19.

18. *Times of India* (Weekly) (Bombay), 20 February, 1909.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 14 August 1909.

21. Ibid.

22. Aziz Mirza, comp., *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the All India Muslim League Nagpur 1910*, Allahabad 1911, pp. 106 – 7.

23. Ibid., p. 106.

24. Aziz Mirza to Yusuf Khan, 14 August 1910, *AFM*, KUL, Vol. 72.

25. Jinnah to Musa Khan, 27 January 1910, *AFM*, KUL, Vol. 44.

26. See Fakhruddin to Aziz Mirza, 24 March, 1910, in *Ibid.*

27. Ameer Ali to Aziz Mirza, London, 14 November, 1911, *Ibid.*, Vol. 28.

28. Wazir Hasan to Jinnah, 26 February, 1913, *Ibid.*, Vol. 33.

29. Aziz Mirza, comp., *Report of the All India Muslim League for 1911*, Lucknow, 1910, pp. 9 – 10.

30. Aziz Mirza, comp., *Report of the All India Muslim League for 1911*, Lucknow, 1912, p. 17.

31. Circular letter issued by Wazir Hasan on 3 April, 1912, *AFM*. KUL, Vol. 102.

32. Syed Wazir Hasan, comp., *Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the All India Muslim League March 1913*. Lucknow. 1913, p. 71.

33. Ibid.

34. See section 2 of the *Constitution of the All India Muslim League*, Lucknow, 1913, p. 1.

35. For details and names of the contributors see *AFM*. KUL, Vol. 66.

36. A number of communications, telegraphic and otherwise, which were exchanged between Ameer Ali and Wazir Hasan on this issue exist in *AFM*, KUL, Vols. 66 and 91.

37. Jinnah to Wazir Hasan, 21 May, 1913. *AFM*. KUL, Vol. 115.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

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43. Ibid., 10 September, 1913.

44. Meston to Hardinge, 6 January, 1914. *Hardinge Papers*, CUL.

45. Jinnah's statement in *The Times* (London), 3 June, 1914.

46. Aga Khan to Hardinge, 15 January, 1916, *Hardinge Papers*, CUL.

47. Jinnah's Presidential Address before the meeting of the Bombay Muslims held on 20 December, 1913, *AFM*. KUL, Vol. 119.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid

50. For details of the opinions and votes favouring Jinnah on this occasion see *AFM*, KUL. Vols. 70 - 71. 78, 99 and 100.

51. For details of the Kanpur mosque case and misappropriation of funds, a charge which continued to be made against Mazharul Haque till 1926, see *AFM*, KUL. Vol. 119.

52. Harcourt Butler to DuBouley, 16 June. 1914. *Hardinge Papers*, CUL.

53. *Mussalman* (Weekly), Calcutta, 21 August, 1936.

54. Jinnah to Zahur Ahmad, 22 February, 1920. *AFM*, KUL. Vol. 96.

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