PARTING OF WAYS

QUAIDE AZAM MOHAMMED ALI JINNAH AND THE CALCUTTA ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE

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The period 1924 - 1929 was a crucial one for the direction in which Indian politics particularly in relation to Hindu Muslim politics were to be determined in the two decades after 1930. The claim that the 1928 All parties Conference by rejecting Jinnah's amendments to the Nehru Report saw' a parting way' in Jinnah's own words, is not too exaggerated. Because a lthough between 1930 and 1947 many opportunities would occur for settlement and compromise and once again they would be wasted - never again would there be the euphoria and the trust and a willingness to give and take that was charateristic of the year from 1915 to 1924. From 1924 th 1930 attempts were still being made through in the end to be disappointed, by the more liberal and nationalist among the Muslims to reach an honourable settlement with the majority community. The leading nationalist leader who was active in this regard was Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

Jinnah had a remarkable career. He rose from obscurity to become one of the most prominent barristers of Bombay and subsequently a very successful politician. He had been associated with the great Congress leaders of the liberal and moderate tradition, Gokhale, Pheroze Shah Mehta and later Sapru-Essentially he was a man of moderation and compromise. Associated closely with non Muslim as well as Muslim politicians and having publicly declared that his ambition was to be a Muslim Gokhale, losre most of his life Jinnah firmly believed that the future of India was as one country and that it would be possible to work out a common destiny. These sentiments he was to express publicly and privately

repeatedly in the two decades up to 1930. The story of Twenties is therefore the story of the disenchantment of the Muslims, with the Hindu leadership and its promised, the disillusionment of the great Muslim leaders the men of emotion like Maulana Mohammed Ali, men who swore they would follow Gandhi anywhere but who by 1930 were sticking firmly to the minimum Muslim demands and showing their distrust of Hindu politics. At the same time the Twenties are also story of the shedding of illusions of men of reason such as Mohammed Ali Jinnah, men who had believed that educated leadership meant moderate leadership to guide and unify the people, to create trust and understanding between the communities. If India was a single country, a nation, then the, twenties were a tragedy brought about by an intolerant and short- sighted political leadership. In this category would be included not only Hindu communal leaders like Jayakar, Malaviya and Lajpat Rai, but also Congress stalwarts like Jawaharlal Nehru. Also Gandhi who miscunderstood or ignored the nature of Muslim fears and hopes and who could not understand that essential to the creation of the Indian nation was the reconciliation of differences between the communities, the creation of trust, and above all, generosity and large heartedness on part of the majority community. Mr. Jinnah was very fond of quoting the example of Zaghlul Pasha of Egypt who gave a 'blank cheque' to the minority community of Christians (Copts) in Egypt so that they could write into it any guarantees that they wanted and they should join the struggle for freedom on their own terms. Only generosity on that scale could have won unity for India along with freedom, and the Hindu leadership was not capable of doing.

In order to comprehend fully the events of the years 1927-1929, the years of the Simon Commission, the Nehru Report and the Fourteen Points, it is necessary to recapitulate the back' ground of the Muslim activity particularly with regard to the hopes and fears and the tactics of the Muslim leadership in the atmosphere of gradually approaching democracy.

Properly speaking Muslim political participation began with the famous deputation to the Viceroy Lord Minto in 1906, and the formation of the Muslim League Party soon afterwards.

The most obvious reason for the time and occasion was the Muslim reaction to the vehemence of the Hindu protest at the formation of the Muslim majority province of East Bengal and Assam. Moreover there was the apprehension that the new Liberal government in Britain would accede to the Congress demands for constitutional reforms. Muslim leaders wanted to ensure the position of their own community in the coming order and their demands included that in any expanded representation in the legislatures their community should vote for its own representatives in separate electorates and should have representation in excess of its proportion of the population or "weightage". The All India Muslim League was formed to urge these claims the most important of which were included in the Morley Minto Reforms. In addition to separate electorates Muslims were also given a vote in general constituencies wherever they fulfilled the voting requirements. These concessions brought forth strong protest from the Hindus. Separate electorates were regarded by progressive Congress leaders as tending to perpetuate difference between Hindus and Muslims. Muslim Congress leaders such as Jinnah also opposed separate electorates on these grounds.

The Muslim League case was that these demands sought to safeguard the interests of the Muslim minority in a system which would give power to the majority - a system which was conceived in a homogeneous "White" Protestant Christian community and which had no important minorities to consider. This was the system of democracy and representative government. Although in 1906 such a system was far from the mind of the British rulers in connection with India the logical Indian mind had seen the inevitable destination of the reforms of Ripon and of Morley Minto even before the Declaration of 1917 had made representative government the goal of Indian constitutional reform.

The demand for [separate electorates was incorporated into the Morley Minto Reforms and from this time on became the touchstone of Muslim "safeguards". Only briefly in the period 1927-1929 was there a conditional shift from this position when subject to the creation of a majority Muslim province in Sind and reforms for N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan, the nationalist and progressive group

of Muslims led by Mohammed Ali Jinnah accepted joint electorates in what were known as The Delhi Proposals. This renunciation of separate electorates was symbolic of the spirit of compromise and give and take the progressive nationalist Muslim wished to display. This agreement which was arrived at between Hindu and Muslim leaders was not given due recognition in subsequent formula particularly in the Nehru Report where though joint electorate were incorporated the creation of majority Muslim provinces was hedged in by conditions which were niggling in the extreme.

Muslims who had been going along with the Congress in the hope that a genuine settlement might achieved were taken a back by the recommendations of the Report. The decisive meetings were to be held in Calcutta in December 1928. The Muslim League session was scheduled for 26th December and the All Parties Conference for 22nd December. The League session was to meet and decide its policy towards the Nehru Report and the consequent negotiations with the All Parties Conference. The Muslim League session which met under the presidentship of the Maharaja of Mahmudabad appointed a number of delegates to represent the League and take part in the deliberation of the All Parties Convention. "These delegates will take into careful consideration and attach due weight to the views on the communal question expressed in the Subjects committee and the open session of the League, and will endeavour to bring about an adjustment of the various outstanding questions between Hindus and Muslmans arising out of the Nehru Report". Jinnah was to leade the delegates.

On the fourth day of the All Parties Conference the Muslim League delegation attended and a sub-committee of 35 members was nominated to meet the delegates of Muslim League and Khilafat Conference. The Committee met the same day and the next day, 28th December. Dr. Ansari was presiding and he asked Mr. Jinnah to place the resolutions and amendments on behalf of All India Muslim League. The amendents presented on behalf of the Muslim League, and the attitudes taken by the two Committees were as follows:-

1. That 1/3 of the elected representatives of both the Houses of the Central Legislature should be Musalmans- (The committee could not arrive at any agreement on this point).

2. That in the Punjab and Bengal in the event of adult suffrage not being established, there should be reservation of seats for Musalmans on population basis for ten years subject to reexamination after that period, but they should have no right to contest additional seats. (The committee did not contemplate any additional contingency).

3. That as the residuary powers should be left to the province and should not vest in the Central Legislature Clause 13- A embodied in the supplementary report should be deleted, that the division of subjects in schedule I & II be revised. (The committee was of opinion that the residuary power should rest with the Central legislature but the revision of 13-A and schedule I & II was not objected to):

4. That the constitution shall not be amended or altered unless the amendment or alteration is passed first by both Houses of Parliament separately by a majority of 4/5 ths of those present and then by both Houses sitting together by a majority of 4/5ths. (The committee approved of the suggestion unanimously).

5. It was moved that in Article IV about communal representation delete the words "simultaneously with the establishment of a Government under this constitution." (The Committee regretted that it could not accept it as this resolution records an agreement arrived at by parties who signed it at Lucknow).

6. Embody the pact regarding the communal pact in the Punjab arrived at Lucknow in the Nehru Report. (The committee had no objection if the Sikh members dissented).

In moving his amendment Mr. Jinnah made an extremely powerful and moving speech which used reason and a passionate appeal to the patriotism and nationalism of the delegates. This dramatic moment was undoubtedly the *cri de coeur* of the nationalist Muslims and its rejection by the blind arrogance of Hindu leadership

This moment was to form the tragic climax of the politics of rapprochement. For these reasons, although it is well known, Mr. Jinnah's speech deserves to be quoted in full.

"The Report of the Committee which you appointed has already been read out and placed before you. I am exceedingly sorry that the Report of the Committee is neither helpful nor fruitful in any way whatsoever. I am sure, gentlemen, that you all realise that the present moment is very critical and vital to the interest not only of the Mussalmans, but to the whole of India. I think it will be recognised that it is absolutely essential to progress that Hindu-Muslim Settlement should be reached, and that all communities should live in a friendly and harmonious spirit in this vast county of ours. No country has succeeded in either wresting a democratic constitution from a domination of another nation or establishing representative institutions from within without giving guarantees for the securities of the minorities wherever such a problem has arisen. Majorities are apt to be oppressive and tyrranical and minorities always dread and fear that their interests and rights, unless clearly and definitely safe-guarded by statutory provisions, would suffer and be prejudiced, but this apprehension is enhanced all the more when we are working and struggling for freedom ... record your vote in favour of the modifications proposed, which I have said before, are fair and reasonable and thus enable us to triumph in our cause.

"That first point that I want to place before you is a point with regard to our proposal that there should be no less than 1/3rd of the Muslim representation in the Central Legislature. We propose that 1/3rd of the elected members of the Central Legislature should be Mussalmans, and that the seats should be reserved for them to that extent in the joint electorate of the country. Now the Nehru Report has stated that according to the scheme which they have formulated, the Mussalmans are likely to get 1/3rd in the Central Legislature and more. It is argued there that the Punjab and Bengal will get many more seats over and above their proportion and the other minorities provinces in India will get the representation of the Mussalmans according to their population under the scheme propounded by the Nehru Report. What we feel is this. If it is conceded that Mussalmans should be enabled to secure one-third of the represen-

tation in the Central Legislature, the method which is adopted is neither quite fair to the provinces where the Mussalmans are in a minority nor does it guarantee that we shall obtain 1/3rd representation in the Central Legislature. Therefore, the two Mussalman majority provinces-Punjab and Bengal-will get more to the rich who will under normal conditions, get the largest number of Muslim representation and you are depriving the Muslim minority Provinces of great importance, and restricting them to get no more than their population, whereas we wish to restrict the Punjab and Bengal according to their population and desire that the excess should be distributed amongst the minority Muslim Provinces. In other words, we propose that let us carve out of this 1/3rd as the Mussalmans wish. Take the case of Madras and Bombay- it is not always the only criterion viz. counting of heads, but the importance of those two provinces. Take the case of the United Provinces again, it is the centre of Mussalman culture and heart and it will be unfair that they should be restricted according to the population. I am sure indeed that besides counting out heads, there are other weighty and important considerations, which must not be lost sight of. It is not only a question of getting votes in the Legislature, but it is also essential that various parts of the Provinces which are themselves vast, should be represented, so that any question affecting the people or their grievances may be ventilated properly and thoroughly on the floor of the Legislature. Very often when proper facts and arguments are placed by one single representative which when they are convincing, carry the entire legislature. It really comes to this that the Nehru Report makes a gift of the extra seats over and above the population basis to Punjab and Bengal, whereas, we propose that this extra 7 or 8 seats should be distributed amongst the minority Muslim provinces.

"Our next proposal is that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established, Punjab and Bengal also should have seats reserved on population basis for the Mussalmans. But they should not have the right to contest for more. Of course, subject to re-examination of the question at the end of ten years. I am not sure that establishment of adult suffrage is within the range of practical politics in the near future. Your remember, originally the

proposal emanated from certain Muslim Leaders in March 1927 known as the Delhi Muslim Proposals. That was dealt with by the All India Congress Committee in Bombay and in the open session of the Madras Congress and endorsed by them. The Muslim League in its Calcutta Session in December, 1927 also confirmed the proposals. I am not going to enter into the pros and cons but it is an admitted fact that although the Mussalmans in Punjab and Bengal are numerically in the majority, their voting strenght is far below in proportion to their population and they, therefore, would not secure sufficient representation and it is feared that under those circumstances their representation will be far below their population. It is now devised to meet this undoubted fact by the Nehru proposals and the Report proposes the substitution of adult franchise and from those premises it is agued that there is no need for reservation in the Punjab and Bengal, but we wish to provide for the contingency which is most patent and probable that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established, there should be reservation for Mussalmans in the Punjab and Bengal according to their population, but they should not be entitled to additional seats. And we therefore, attach very great importance to this modification.

"Our next proposal is that the form of the constitution should be federal with residuary power vesting in the Provinces and Clause 13A in the Supplementary Nehru Report is most pernicious and should be deleted and the whole constitution should be revised on the basis of Provincial governments having the residuary power vested in them, and subject to that there should be revision of the schedules laying down Central and Provincial subjects as embodied in the Nehru Report. This question is by far the most important from the constitutional point of view and the future development of India and has very little to do with communal aspect. If this question is examined carefully, it has much less of communal bearing and for greater of general interest of India and the future constitutional progress of the people of India.

"This is hardly a place or an occasion when you would expect me to enter into a debate which might be held qetween two jurists. We have carefully considered the matter and we have come to the conclusion that a system which will give residuary power to the Provinces is the most suited for the Federation of India.

"With regard to the question of the separation of Sind and the N. W. F. Province, we cannot agree that they should wait until the Nehru Constitution is established with adult suffrage. Do you expect the Mussalmans to oppose reform being introduced in the N. W. F. Province until the Nehru Constitution is an accomplished fact? Do you expect the Mussalmans to refuse to accept the separation of Sind until the Nehru Constitution is established? I am somewhat amazed that the Committee appointed by the Convention has rejected these proposals on the ground that a resolution was passed at Lucknow which recorded an agreement arrived at by certain individuals who were parties to that agreement and signed it and therefore they cannot reopen the question. The All-India Muslim League was not a party to any such resolution and was not represented at that meeting. I say with the utmost deference to the Members of the Committee that this is not a valid ground or answer. There are many organisations present here in the Convention today, none of them is bound by any such agreements arrived at between individuals or groups. I venture to say that this Convention is not bound and it is wholly untenable to advance any such reason before this Convention. This Convention is entitled to make any change, or alteration or modification in the proposals now before it and I ask the Convention whether the separation of Sind and the introduction of reforms in the N. W. F. Province are only to be accepted when the Nehru Constitution with adult suffrage is brought into full effect and operation in this country. The Mussalmans feel that it is shelving the issue and postponing their insistent demand till doomsday and cannot agree to it. I, therefore, appeal to the Convention to take all these matters into their carefull consideration and meet us."

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru the Liberal leader, who had been very closely associated with Nehru Report rose to express his views on Jinnah's speech. "We were actuated by one main desire, namely to bring about the maximum amount of unity. Many parties which belong to different schools of thought which have worked during the last eight or ten years on different platforms, were prepared to cooperate with one another in evolving a constitution not merely for our day but for posterity .... The report was written in a

spirit of Indian nationalism to remove disunity which is disfiguring our public life and to restore harmony in certain matters, so that we may work shoulder to shoulder in regard to these matters. It was only after the most careful and fullest discussion that we settled on the ideal or objective of Dominion status...

We did not disguise from ourselves the position that there can be no greater self deception on the part of any one, be he a Congress man, Liberal, Independance man, Hindu Sabhaite or Muslim Leaguer, that it is impossible for India to achieve Dominion Status, not to speak of independence, if there is not complete harmony on broad principles between one community and another community. Therefore the essence of the whole problem was the communal question, and, when we approached it, we had in mind the Delhi Proposals and others made in other quarters. We tried to explore as many avenues as possible and came to the conclusion that the only possible way of solving it in India was by taking courage in both hands and going headlong towards what I consider to be the most democratic state, namely to adopt adult franchise, so that each community may stand on a perfect equality with the other." That being the position it followed that the Mohammadan community should get representation to its numerical strength in the whole of India. If you examine the figures you will find that including the nominated members, Muslim representation in the Central Legislature is 27% and Mr. Jinnah wants 33%. By making the observations that follow I am not in the least degree disloyal to the Chairman nor am I departing from the Nehru Report. At the same time it seems to me that you are faced with an occasion when the first and last question should be to bring about unity. Even at the sacrifice of the reputation for being logical. I would rather lose my reputation than imperil this Conference. Gentlemen remember not only our own countrymen but the whole world is watching you. If you leave this *Pandal* with failure you will have done a great damage to the country from which it may not recover for a quarter of a century. The simple position is that for the sake of settlement you are invited by Mr. Jinnah, however illogical and unreasonable, to agree to this proposition which I consider is not inconsistent with the Nehru Report ... speaking for myself I could like you to picture Mr. Jinnah

whom I have known intimately for 15 years as if he is a spoilt child, a naughty child, give him what he wants and be finished with it. I am going to ask him to be reasonable but we must, as practical statesmen try to solve the problem and not be misled by arithmetical figures".

Touching the question of reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal as an alternative, Sapru said he would not put forward an alternative but if a better alternative could be suggested he was open to adopt it. He hoped that Mr. Jinnah would reconsider his position on the point.

As regards the residuary powers many eminent Muslims had suggested that those should be left with the provinces. Dr. Sapru argued against being misled by the examples of other countries, for in the case of USA the President, and in the case of Switzerland an unremovable Executive, were the chief centres of gravity, while Australian statesmen already thought their forefathers had made a mistake in giving the residuary powers to the provinces. "Having regard to the peculiar position of India it would be unwise to vest these powers in the provinces. The constitution we have desired is neither federal nor unitary. It is both. As a constitutional lawyer I feel that even if Hindus are prepared to agree I should warn them on this point. Do not allow your mind to be misguided by the fact that in certain provinces you will have a Hindu majority and in others a Muslim majority. Personally I feel that in spite of many suspicions you may have, you will have to pool together your energies. If you have the spirit of distrust and of suspicion let me tell you it is no use evolving your constitution. You have got to take certain risks and these must be taken in a spirit of abundant faith and hopefulness. Sir Tej Bahadur agreed that clause 13-A regarding the suspension of a provincial constitution was susceptible of improvement and the two schedules regarding the Provincial and Central subjects could also be modified. As regards the convention it had of course full authority to upset any arrangement arrived at Lucknow, if it so wished.

"I beg of you to remember the supreme nature of this occasion. For the nation.s sake do not allow your mind to be

affected by narrow considerations of the expediency of the hour or by bitter memories of recent conflicts, but approach it from the point of view of the future, of posterity. If you do so whatever may be your political differences in the matter of the programme, you will tell the world that so far as the constitution of India is concerned the political parties stand shoulder to shoulder with each other.

Jayakar the Mahasabha leader, who was presiding, made a bitter and inflexible speech which proved the turning point of the Conference. His point was particularly with regard to the reservation of seats for Muslims in the Central legislature. Jayakar started by saying that the was sure that in venturing to speak on this subject he would add to his evil reputation as a communalist. The word "communalist" had acquired an extraordinary meaning these days. "If I venture to speak of the rights of the Hindus I am a communalist, but if a Mussalman with nationalist tendencies fights for the rights of Muslims he still remains a nationalist". Mr. Jayakar congratulated Mr. Jinnah on the 'lucidity and grit' with which he had put Muslim demands. Then perhaps deliberately misunderstanding Sir Tej Bahadur's remarks, he said that he believed Sir Tej Bahadur was not serious when he described Jinnah as "a spoilt child." He had known Jinnah for over 15 years as a colleague and his mentality was not such that if demands of that 'naughty boy' were not acceded to he would break away or run away from them. The question they had to consider, went on Mr. Jayakar, was how far legitimate interests of the Muslims were to be safeguarded, how far had they been safeguarded in the Nehru Constitution and how much more they required to be safeguarded. Mr. Jayakar claimed that he was not there as a representative of the Hindu Mahasabha but as one of the signatories of the Nehru Report. When he had been invited by Pandit Motilal to join the Committee he had "humbly pointed out to him that the time was not ripe for any attempt at constitution mongering, because the right mentality in which the Hindus and Muslims could sit together had not yet come." Mr. Jayakar said that the Conference had rushed into a communal settlement at Lucknow. The Muslim League "somewhow or the other, for some reason or other, kept out it. "There was a lot in the Nehru Report with which he and many of his friends did not agree but

they had decided to stand by it because as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said, behind it lay the greatest common measure of agreement in the country. The four main principles on which the communal compromise was based were first, that no other community except Muslims were going to have reservation of seats, second that this representation was on the basis of adult suffrage and third that no majorities were to have reservation of seats and fourth that minorities were to be recognised only in the provinces of N. W. F. P. and Sind.

When it was remembered that everywhere else minorities were to have no reservation of seats at all, it was not a question of logicality but they must recognize that these were the four pillars on which the evidence of the Report stood. If they took away one brick the whole structure would collapse. Then again the parties to the communal pact had accepted it as a whole and if any alteration were made they were liable to back out of it. Jayakar said that he did not object to the Muslims getting a few more seats, but he warned the audience that already it was with difficulty that he was keeping back the disturbers in his camp who might break away if any violent departure from the Pact was attempted.

Having uttered his threat, in an ironical spirit, Jayakar added that he knew Jinnah was a patriotic man and he had no doubt that even if the demands of his community were not accepted he would not break away from them but bring the Muslim League with him. At this Jinnah intervened and said "But will the League come with me?" Jayakar with supreme indifference replied— "You will do your best for it" and ended by an unjust and utterly undeserved charge that all amendments put forward by Jinnah had their origin a communal spirit. They were based on the suspicion with which the whole atmosphere was surcharged. Having said so much, he ended with a pious hope which had a touch of cynicism if not of hypocrisy. If, he said, they wanted to go about their task they must do so in an atmosphere of mutual trust and must be prepared to take certain amount of risks.

It was clear from Jayakar's speech that no concession could be expected from that quarter and the effect of the speech on the

Conference was also clear. But Jinnah was willing to make one more effort lest it be said he had not tried.

"The reason why no other delegate from the Muslim League was going to take part in the debate is that we have come to the Convention, which is composed of something like 1,200 delegates not with a purpose of raising controversies which would lead to bad feelings. We have already placed our proposals before the Convention and our grounds for supporting them and on the hypothesis which must be admitted on all hands that communalism exists in this country. We have not come here to apportion blame for it. The offensive remarks or insinuations served no good purpose and I will not follow the style or the manner of the speech delivered by my friend, Mr. Jayakar. Nor will I on this occasion permit myself to deal with specious arguments and pleadings which he has advanced. In short, his position is an ultimatum and with that ultimatim, we were made aware from the very start on behalf of the Hindu Mahasaba. If a single word with regard to the communal settlement is changed in the Report they will withdraw their support to it. With regard to the remarks of my friend, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, I am afraid some of the speakers have misunderstood them He called me 'a spoilt child'. I know the spirit in which he meant it and others have put a childish interpretation upon it. But I think it cannot be denied and I hope that Mr Jayakar and others will agree with me that every country struggling for freedom and desirous of establishing a democratic system of Government has had to face the problem of minorities wherever they existed and no constitution, however idealistic it may be, and however perfect from the theoretical point of view it may seem, will ever receive the support of the minorities unless they can feel that they, as an entity, are secured under the proposed constitution and government, and whether a constitution will succeed or not must necessarily depend as a matter of acid test whether the minorities are in fact secure Otherwise no proper constitution will last but result in a revolution and civil war. I must here point out that it is not correct to say that the Muslim League did not take part at all in the All-Parties Conference. The Council of the League had appointed a Committee in February 1928 and it attended the All-Parties Conference till the 11th March and

the Committee had express instructions not to proceed with the framing of any constitution until the Hindu Muslim differences were adjusted and agreed upon. It is true that no settlement was reached and as the Committee felt that it was not possible to arrive at any agreement they ceased to take further part in the All-Parties Conference which is responsible for producing the Nehru Report. I am not here today to express my opinion as to whether a constitution ought to be framed or not but I would ask Mr. Jayakar to consider whether he wants what he calls the greatest common measure of agreement to be still greater or not. We are engaged today in a very serious and solmen transaction. It is not merely for the various organisations to come here and say, we agree to it, and retire. We are here, as I understand, for the purpose of entering into solemn contract and all parties who enter into it will have to work for it and fight for it together. What we want is that Hindus and Mussalmans should march together until our object is obtained. Therefore, it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but the Mussalmans of India and here I am not speaking as a Mussalman but as an Indian. And it is my desire to see that we get seven crores of Mussalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom. Would you be content with a few? Would you be content if I were to say, I am with you? Do you want or do you not want Muslim India to go along with you? You must remember the two major communities in India. I say this without the slightest disrespect to other communities like Sikhs, Christians and Parsis are the Hindus and Mussalmans and naturally therefore, these two communities have got to be reconciled and united and made to feel that their interests are common and they are marching together for a common goal. I want you, therefore, to rise to that statesmanship which Sir Taj Bahadur Sapru describes. Minorities cannot give anything to the majority. It is therefore, no use asking me not to press for what you call these small points. I am not asking for these modifications because I am a naughty child. If they are small points why not concede? It is upto the majority and majority alone can give. I am asking you for this adjustment because I think it is the best and fair to the Mussalmans. Look at the constitutional history of Canada and Egypt. The minorities are always afraid of majorities. The majorities are apt to be tyrannical

and oppressive and particularly religious majorities and the minorities, therefore they have a right to be absolutely secured. Was the adjustment between French Canadians and British arrived at on population basis or on the ground of pure equity? Was the adjustment between the Copts, Christians and Mussalmans in Egypt regulated by such considerations? We are dealing with politics. We are not in a Court of Law and therefore, it is no use resorting to hair-splitting and petty squabbles. These are big questions and they can be settled only by the exercise of the highest order of statesmanship and political wisdom. I, therefore, ask you once more to consider this question most carefully before you decide. Please don't think that in anything that I have said I am threatening any party and I hope I shall not be misunderstood. If you do not settle this question today, we shall have to settle it tomorrow, but in the meantime our national interests are bound to suffer. We are all sons of this land. We have to live together. We have to work together and whatever our differences may be, et us at any rate not create more bad blood. If we cannot agree, let us at any rate agree to differ but let us part as friends. I once more repeat. Believe me, there is no progress for India until the Musselmans and Hindus are united and let no logic, philosophy or squabble stand in the way of our coming to a compromise and nothing will make me more happy than to see the Hindu-Muslim union".

The Muslim League amendments were rejected by the All Parties Conference and for Jinnah it was the shattering of the illusion of Indian unity and nationalism which for such a long time he had held so dear and for which he had fought so hard. To achieve this unity he had risked a split in Muslim ranks, risked his own popularity and the position of leadership that he had achieved. But he was realistic enough to see that Muslims of India must now look to themselves and not to the Congress or other parties. Some very sincere Muslim leaders like Azad and Kitchlew would still hang on for the sake of their ideals and would fail to realize that they could not expect generosity or wisdom from the Congress leadership. But Jinnah was above all a practical politician and when he knew that nothing could be expected of the Hindus he had the courage to turn around and extend his hand to his co-religionists who had not believed

in Congress promises. To Jinnah December 1928 in Calcutta was a definite 'parting of says'. From now he would be the implacable and uncompromising champion of the Muslim cause who would be negotiate but not concede an inch unless he was absolutely certain of the bona fides of the other side.

Note of Sources.

The sources used for this article are mainly: The Indian Annual Register, 1928, and Times of India, for the relevant dates.