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Jinnah and the Pakistan Demand

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I. Enigma

IN an age sceptical of the historic role of great men there is universal agreement that Mahomed Ali Jinnah was central to the Muslim League's emergence after 1937 as the voice of a Muslim nation; to its articulation in March 1940 of the Pakistan demand for separate statehood for the Muslim majority provinces of north-western and eastern India; and to its achievement in August 1947 of the separate but truncated state of Pakistan by the Partition of India. Subcontinental judgements of Jinnah are bound to be *parti pris* and to exaggerate his individual importance. While Pakistanis generally see him as the Quaid-i-Azam, Great Leader, or father of their nation, Indians often regard him as the Lucifer who tempted his people into the unforgivable sin against their nationalist faith. Among distinguished foreign scholars, unbiassed by national commitment, his stature is similarly elevated. Sir Penderel Moon has written:

There is, I believe, no historical parallel for a single individual effecting such a political revolution; and his achievement is a striking refutation of the theory that in the making of history the individual is of little or no significance. It was Mr Jinnah who created Pakistan and undoubtedly made history.¹

Professor Lawrence Ziring believes that Jinnah's 'personality . . . made Pakistan possible' and that 'it would not have emerged without him'.² Sir Cyril Philips has argued that without Jinnah's leadership regionalism would probably have competed seriously with Muslim nationalism as the aim of the Muslim majority provinces.³ Professor Nicholas Mansergh looks to Jinnah for 'the classic exposition of the two-nation

I am indebted to my colleague, Dr Lance Brennan, for discussions and suggestions for sources on the subject of this article.

¹ Sir Penderel Moon, 'Mr Jinnah's Changing Attitude to the Idea of Pakistan', paper presented at Quaid-i-Azam Centenary Congress, Islamabad, 1976.

² L. Ziring, 'Jinnah: The Burden of Leadership', *ibid.*

³ C. H. Philips and M. D. Wainwright (eds), *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935–1947* (London, 1970), 29.

theory' in his March 1940 address prefiguring the Pakistan resolution and revises sharply upwards the determining influence of the concept upon the interplay of men and events that culminated in the Partition of India.⁴

Yet the relation of Jinnah to the rise of the League and its demand and movement for Pakistan is still obscure. Eminent contemporaries were puzzled by the sources of his apparent power. For example, as last Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten thought the idea of Pakistan 'sheer madness' and wrote of Jinnah in bewilderment: 'I regard Jinnah as a psychopathic case; in fact until I had met him I would not have thought it possible that a man with such a complete lack of administrative knowledge or sense of responsibility could achieve or hold down so powerful a position.'⁵ Mountbatten saw Jinnah as a leader whose 'megalomania' was so 'chronic' that he pursued his own power to the material detriment of his misguided followers.⁶ British statesmen and officials and Congress leaders alike attached immense significance to vanity and pride in Jinnah's quest for Pakistan and their views continue to influence the historiography of the Partition.⁷

In a perceptive analysis Professor Khalid Bin Sayeed seeks the key to the relationship between Jinnah's personality and the Pakistan movement in the 'congruence' between the ambition of Jinnah, a domineering man whom reverses in life had made desperate, and the needs and characteristics of his people, 'a community . . . looking for a great saviour . . . who was prepared to unite the community and bring earthly glory to Islam'.⁸ Nevertheless, for Sayeed 'it continues to be an enigma how these people followed a leader who was so austere and so remote from them'.⁹ The link, he speculates, was 'that this power-conscious

⁴ N. Mansergh, *The Prelude to Partition: Concepts and Aims in Ireland and India*, The 1976 Commonwealth Lecture (Cambridge, 1978), 26, 59.

⁵ Viceroy's Personal Report No. 3, 17 April 1947, N. Mansergh and P. Moon (eds), *The Transfer of Power (T.P.)*, X (1981), Doc. 165.

⁶ Mountbatten to Sir Stafford Cripps, 9 July 1947, CAB 127/139, Public Record Office (P.R.O.), London.

⁷ E.g. Clement Attlee's draft memoirs, ATLE 1/13, Churchill Coll., Cambridge; Mountbatten on Nehru and Patel in letter to Cripps, 9 July 1947, *loc. cit.*; Moon to J. McL. Short, 2 September 1946, CAB 127/150, P.R.O.; H. V. Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain—India—Pakistan* (London, 1969), 217–18; L. Collins and D. Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (London, 1975), 101; S. Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, I (London, 1975), 257; Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, IV (Delhi, 1972), 574.

⁸ K. B. Sayeed, 'The Personality of Jinnah and His Political Strategy', Philips and Wainwright, *Partition of India*, 276–93, esp. 282.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 293. Dr Ian Copland has recently observed that Jinnah 'remains an enigma' ('Islam and Political Mobilization in Kashmir, 1931–34', *Pacific Affairs*, 54.2 (1981), 228–59).

man promised to them the political power which the Qur'an had promised to them and which their forbears had wielded in India'.

Historians have also emphasized the enigmatic nature of Jinnah's 'promise'—the vagueness of the Pakistan demand and the variety of constitutional forms that Jinnah seemed willing to accept in satisfaction of it.¹⁰ Some have sought to resolve the paradox by construing the demand as a bargaining counter, whereby Jinnah sought to enhance the power of the League and himself within a united free India.¹¹ Others have argued that Jinnah was 'hoist with his own petard': he fell captive to his promise of separate statehood for six provinces and was left by the Partition with the truncated state that was alone consistent with the concept of a nation defined by the religious map of the subcontinent.¹²

The following analysis seeks to clarify the relation between Jinnah and the Pakistan movement during the decade preceding Partition, in terms of both his charisma and his constitutional strategy, but not, it should be stressed, in terms of party organization and political mobilization, on which much more work remains to be done.¹³

II. Sources of Charisma

Jinnah was born on Christmas day 1876 in a tenement house in Karachi. He was to be the eldest of seven children of a hide merchant, whose modest means confined the family's living space to two rooms but somehow sufficed to despatch Jinnah at the age of sixteen direct from the Sind Madrasa to Lincoln's Inn. The exemplary pupil qualified for the Bar precociously young, but during his short four-year absence his mother and child-wife died and his father suffered financial ruin. He chose to make his way at the Bombay Bar. After three briefless and penurious years his powers of application, analysis, and advocacy brought him rapid success and wealth, the springboard to his political career. By the age of forty he had been prominent in the Indian National Congress, toured Europe with Gokhale, represented the Muslims of Bombay in the Imperial Legislative Council, and acted as principal

¹⁰ E.g. Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement*, IV, 321ff.

¹¹ See Moon, 'Jinnah's Changing Attitude', for an analysis of such arguments.

¹² E.g. S. R. Mehrotra, 'The Congress and the Partition of India', Philips and Wainwright, *Partition of India*, 188–221, p. 216; A. Seal, 'Imperialism and Nationalism in India', J. A. Gallagher, G. Johnson and A. Seal (eds), *Locality, Province and Nation: Essays on Indian Politics, 1870–1940* (Cambridge, 1973), 1–27, p. 24.

¹³ For recent studies of mobilization, see Copland, 'Islam and Political Mobilization', esp. 228–31, 257–9.

negotiator of the Lucknow Pact for Congress–Muslim League unity. When Edwin Montagu visited India in 1917 he recorded meeting this ‘young, perfectly mannered, impressive-looking . . . very clever man’, who, ‘armed to the teeth with dialectics’ tied the Viceroy up in verbal knots.¹⁴

By the standards of his gilded youth the next twenty years of Jinnah’s life were leaden. Poised to scale political heights he fell and suffered disappointment. Gandhi’s Congress–Khilafat non-cooperation movement, which was inimical to his constitutionalist style, was partly responsible for his eclipse, but perhaps as important was the shift that the dyarchical provincial councils effected in Muslim politics. Given the realities of office and patronage the Punjab Unionist Party became the powerhouse of Muslim policy.¹⁵ Confronted with Congress initiatives to inherit the central government of India, the All-India Muslim Conference, led from the Punjab by Mian Fazl-i-Husain, espoused schemes for entrenching the Muslims in quasi-sovereign provinces, yielding to a federal centre only such powers as they chose and given effective safeguards for Muslim interests. Jinnah remained a leader of the League and a member of the Central legislature but the action had moved elsewhere. In 1928 he was worsted by the forces of Hindu orthodoxy when he sought accommodation with Congress on an all-parties constitutional scheme. At the Round Table Conference he was suspected by the dominant Muslim delegates as an unreliable conciliator, and he seemed to speak for no-one but himself. For three or four years he turned his back on India and tried to settle in London, living in Hampstead and practising at the Privy Council Bar. When he returned to India in 1936 to set up the League’s Parliamentary Board to contest the 1936 elections under the India Act of 1935’s provisions for provincial autonomy, he was shunned by the Punjab Unionists. He remained hopeful of achieving an all-India Hindu–Muslim settlement under a Congress–League *rapprochement* until, after its electoral triumph, Congress made it apparent that its terms were the League’s capitulation.¹⁶

Jinnah’s personality and experience disposed him to feel bitterly the Congress denial of the Muslims’ political identity. Lacking inherited

¹⁴ Cited in H. Bolitho, *Jinnah: Creator of Pakistan* (London, 1954), 70.

¹⁵ A. Jalal and A. Seal, ‘Alternative to Partition: Muslim Politics Between the Wars’, C. Baker, G. Johnson and A. Seal (eds), *Power, Profit and Politics: Essays in Imperialism, Nationalism and Change in Twentieth Century India* (Cambridge, 1981), 415–54; Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity, 1917–40* (Oxford, 1974).

¹⁶ Z. H. Zaidi, ‘Aspects of Muslim League Policy, 1937–47’, Philips and Wainwright, *Partition of India*, 245–75, esp. 250–7. See also J. A. Gallagher, ‘Congress in Decline: Bengal, 1930 to 1939’, *Locality, Province and Nation*, 269–325, esp. 307–12.

status, from an early age his place in the world had rested wholly upon his own efforts. By observing a regimen of discipline and self-denial he had earned a place of dignity in Indian politics. The single-minded pursuit of professional and political success left him little opportunity to cultivate a private life that might mitigate the sense of public rejection. The exaggerated refinement of the English dress and personal style that he adopted seem more like carapaces than indulgences. The political reverses of middle-age were unrelieved by any of the usual pleasures of personal or domestic life. His marriage at the age of forty-two to the eighteen year old daughter of a Parsi friend had, after several unhappy years, finally collapsed in 1928. Her death soon afterwards left him bereaved and with a sense of guilt. For the rest of his life his sole companion was his loyal sister Fatima, who, from living with it daily, came to share his acute sense of persecution.¹⁷

Like Jinnah's personal standing the status that the Muslims had achieved by 1937 had been hard won. Late-comers to western education, official employment and party politics, they had, as collaborators of the British Raj, advanced rapidly in the twentieth century. In the United Provinces they had consolidated their tenure of land and won weightage well beyond their numbers in councils and government service.¹⁸ Since the first elections to the Montford councils they had succeeded to decades of Congress ascendancy in Bengal and won office in Punjab. The All-India Muslim Conference had defended separate electorates in both majority provinces and applied a strategy of 'provincial balance' to secure the separation of Sind from Bombay and its elevation, together with that of the North-West Frontier Province, to full provincial status. In 1936, the last year of his life, Fazl-i-Husain could reflect that the Muslim position was now 'adequately safeguarded'.¹⁹ The sense of achieved security owed much to checks that the India Act of 1935 seemed to place on the power of the Congress, for in its contemplated all-India federation a third of the seats were reserved to the Muslims and a third to nominees of the Indian princes. The emergence of Congress dominance in 1937 changed all that.

In March 1937, when Nehru remarked that the Congress and the Raj

¹⁷ Lady Mountbatten wrote to her husband of Miss Jinnah in April 1947: 'Like Mr Jinnah, she has, of course, a persecution mania . . .' (*T.P. X*, 207). M. L. Chagla, a useful witness, believed that she 'injected an extra dose of venom' into Jinnah's diatribes against the Hindus (*Roses in December* (Bombay, 1973), 119). For recollections of Jinnah see also the works of Kanji Dwarkadas.

¹⁸ L. Brennan, 'The Socio-Economic Background to Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces, 1900-1940', unpublished seminar paper, Flinders University, 1982.

¹⁹ Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: a Political Biography* (Bombay, 1946), 265.

were the only two parties in India, Jinnah replied to the rebuff by claiming the Muslim League as a third, a rightful 'equal partner' of the Congress.²⁰ It was the Muslims of the Congress provinces who first apprehended the dangers of Hindu ascendancy under a Congress Raj and reacted with a sense of persecution.²¹ Muslim grandees in the United Provinces grew anxious when Congress denied them a share in government and threatened their culture, property and prospects of public employment.²² In Muslim minority provinces it seemed that under responsible government the Congress could withhold their participation in office permanently. In Muslim majority provinces Congress sought power through alignments with Muslim factions. Rajendra Prasad commented:

The attempt of our party in most [of these] provinces has constantly been to win over members of the government party and thus secure a majority for itself, so that it may form a ministry. In effect its action has been not so much to consider the criticised government measures on their merit and secure the adoption of its own programme by the government, but to try somehow or other to oust the party in power. The result . . . has been to create much bitterness against the Congress. . . .²³

At the all-India level the Congress High Command pursued its advantage by pressing the princes to fill their federal seats by election instead of nomination, which would open the prospect of sufficient Congress victories to destroy the statutory check upon its power.²⁴ Jinnah became convinced that parliamentary government would mean Congress 'totalitarianism' in India.²⁵ The only safeguard of equal rights to India's Muslims lay in their achievement of equality of power through their solidarity within the All-India Muslim League. Under his organization the League's membership grew from a few thousand to several hundred thousand in 1937-38.

Jinnah harped on the theme of equality. At the League's annual

²⁰ Cited in Bolitho, *Jinnah*, 113-14.

²¹ See D. Pandey, 'Congress-Muslim League Relations, 1937-39: "The Parting of the Ways"', *Modern Asian Studies*, 12 (1978), 629-54.

²² Brennan (*loc. cit.*) shows that in the U.P. 'for the first time since 1909 the Muslim élite seemed to have no leverage in the new institutions of government', 'many of the gains of the past thirty years seemed to be vanishing or at least under threat', and 'the foundations they had so carefully fought to build were shown to be straw'.

²³ Prasad to Patel, 11 October 1938, B. N. Pandey (ed.), *The Indian Nationalist Movement, 1885-1947: Select Documents* (London, 1979), 127-8.

²⁴ R. G. Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936-42* (London, 1943), 167-78.

²⁵ Jinnah's presidential address to Muslim League at Patna, 26 December 1938, Jamil-ud-din Ahmad (ed.), *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, 2 vols (Lahore, 1960 edn), I, 67-81.

session at Lucknow in October 1937 he insisted that 'an honourable settlement can only be achieved between equals'.²⁶ He demanded of Nehru that Congress must recognize the League 'on a footing of perfect equality'.²⁷ He internalized the Muslims' sense of 'suffering and sacrifice' from the 'fire of persecution'. He expressed himself with personal conviction: 'I have got as much right to share in the government of this country as any Hindu'; and 'I must have [an] equal real and effective share in the power'.²⁸ The appeal was underpinned by an assertion that Islamic society was based on the equality of man.²⁹

The essential link between Jinnah's leadership and the emergence of a Muslim national consciousness was that Jinnah personified the Muslims' sense of persecution by the Congress denial of their achieved status. The widespread assumption that vanity, pride, ambition and megalomania were the dominant facets of his personality has masked it. In a similar way, the extension of impressions of his personality to generalizations about his political style has exaggerated the intellectual distance between the leader and his followers, obscuring the doctrinal cut and thrust from which emerged the constitutional strategy that would afford a refuge from persecution.

III. From Karachi to Lahore

Almost all who observed Jinnah described him as reserved, remote, aloof and, above all, lonely. His remoteness in later life was caused partly by his chronic bronchial infection, which had probably appeared in 1936,³⁰ and from July 1943 partly by the precautionary measures of up to three official bodyguards who were assigned to him after he was attacked by an assassin. But clearly he did not enjoy physical contact and kept the world at a distance. The famous monocle and frequent changes of clothing seem, like his aversion to shaking hands and travelling by train unless in a first class coupé, expressions of immaculacy. When Sir Stafford Cripps visited him in December 1939 he noted: 'Altogether he gave me the impression of an intensely lonely man in perpetual conflict with himself and with no-one in whom he could confide or who could give him reliable advice, but he put his case with great ability and clarity.'³¹ In January 1942 Sir Reginald Coupland

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 30. ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 139. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 36, 139, 184. ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.

³⁰ The earliest X ray photograph in the Quaid-i-Azam archives at Islamabad (Q.A.P.) is dated Lahore, 26 October 1936.

³¹ Cripps-Geoffrey Wilson diary of visit to India, 15 December 1939 (in possession of Mr. Maurice Shock).

visited him at his new house on Malabar Hill and was struck by the 'great forensic ability . . . admirable lucidity . . . and clear conclusions' of this 'very able advocate'.³² His notes suggest Jinnah's clinical detachment and self-sufficiency, living and working in a mansion with 'beautiful rooms, lavishly furnished, and a most attractive curving marble terrace, with lawn beneath it sloping to a belt of trees with a gap in it through which the sea'. Jinnah plied him with League literature, 'largely reprints of his own speeches'. A few weeks later Coupland described Jinnah as 'virtually dictator' of the League,³³ a judgement that A. V. Alexander echoed at the time of the Cabinet Mission: 'Mr Jinnah, the so-called Man of Destiny of the Muslim League [is] a clever lawyer . . . and I should think in his own way pretty near to being a complete dictator'.³⁴ Mountbatten believed that 'the only adviser that Jinnah listens to is Jinnah'.³⁵

Yet in the crucial eighteen months preceding the proclamation of the Pakistan demand at Lahore Jinnah's role in the formation and expression of constitutional thought and strategy was certainly not that of an isolated, lonely and self-sufficient leader.

In October 1938 Jinnah returned to a king's welcome in the city of his birth, Karachi, for a conference of the Sind branch of the All-India Muslim League.³⁶ He rode from the railway station in an open limousine at the head of a procession three miles long. Some 20,000 delegates were assembled, among them the provincial premiers Sir Sikander Hayat Khan (Punjab) and Sir Fazlul Haq (Bengal), the U.P. leaders Liaquat Ali Khan (Secretary of the League), the Raja of Mahmudabad and Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman, the old Khilafat leader Shaukat Ali, and prominent Sindhis. The main object of the Sindhis in organizing the conference was to bring to bear upon the province's faction-ridden Muslim establishment the unifying influence of the national body. The benefits of the separation from Bombay of this majority province had been squandered by the recourse of its Muslim premiers to Hindus for their survival. In July 1937 M. H. Gazdar (a future mayor of Karachi) had written to Jinnah in disgust at the state of

³² Coupland's Indian diary, 1941-42 (C.D.), 17 January 1942, Rhodes House, Oxford.

³³ *Ibid.*, 8 April 1942.

³⁴ A. V. Alexander's diary, 4 April 1946, Churchill Coll., Cambridge.

³⁵ Cited in Hodson, *The Great Divide*, 217.

³⁶ The following account of the Karachi conference draws heavily on A. K. Jones, 'Mr. Jinnah's Leadership and the Evolution of the Pakistan Idea: The Case of the Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference, 1938', paper presented at Quaid-i-Azam Centenary Conference, Islamabad 1976.

Sind politics and proposed the creation of an independent Muslim state comprising the four north-western provinces.³⁷ The initiator and reception committee chairman of the conference was Sir Abdoola Haroon, a self-made merchant and industrialist prince of Karachi, campaigner for the separation of Sind, member of the Central Legislature (1926–42), founder of the Sind United Party on the model of the Punjab Unionists, and member of the League's Working Committee.³⁸ In his opening address he focused attention upon the need for an all-India Hindu–Muslim settlement, failing which Muslims may need 'to seek their salvation in their own way in an independent federation of Muslim states', in the division of Hindu India and Muslim India 'under separate federations'.³⁹

Haroon was moving further and faster towards a separatist objective than Jinnah, who emphasized the primary need to consolidate Muslims to resist Congress oppression. Fourteen months later Jinnah was still professing to be as much an Indian nationalist as Nehru, and in January 1940 he could still write of India as the 'common motherland' of Muslims and Hindus.⁴⁰ He was disquieted when Haroon incorporated the goal of an independent Muslim state in a resolution:

The Sindh Provincial Muslim League Conference considers it absolutely essential in the interests of an abiding peace of the vast Indian continent and in the interests of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment and political self-determination of the two nations, known as Hindus and Muslims, that India may be divided into federations, namely, the federation of Muslim States and the federation of non-Muslim States. This conference therefore recommends to the All-India Muslim League to devise a scheme of constitution under which Muslim-majority-provinces Muslim Indian States and areas inhabited by a majority of Muslims may attain full independence in the form of a federation of their own. . . .⁴¹

Jinnah is reported to have entered a caveat: 'The Government is still in the hands of the British. Let us not forget it. You must see ahead and work for the ideal that you think will arise 25 years hence.'⁴² Next day, with his tacit consent, Haroon's draft was passed thus modified:

This conference considers it absolutely essential, in the interests of an abiding

³⁷ Gazdar to Jinnah, 10 July 1937, cited in Ziring, 'Jinnah'.

³⁸ Alhaj Mian Ahmad Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon: A Biography* (Karachi, n.d.).

³⁹ Address of 9 October 1938, cited in Jones, 'Mr. Jinnah's Leadership'.

⁴⁰ See Jinnah's Osmania University speech, 28 September 1939, Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, I, 87; Cripps–Wilson Diary, 15 December 1939; 'Two Nations in India', sent by Jinnah to *Time and Tide* on 19 January 1940 and published 9 March 1940.

⁴¹ *Statesman*, 11 October 1938, cited in Jones, 'Mr. Jinnah's Leadership'.

⁴² *Statesman*, 14 October 1938, cited in Mehrotra, 'The Congress and the Partition', 207.

peace of the vast Indian continent and in the interests of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment and political self-determination of the two nations, known as Hindus and Muslims, to recommend to the All-India Muslim League to review and revise the entire conception of what should be the suitable constitution for India which will secure honourable and legitimate status to them.⁴³

While the two nations theory now became the League's creed it was clearly not synonymous with separatism. Even the mover of Haroon's original resolution, Shaikh Abdul Majid, expected that the Hindu and Muslim federations would be linked by a common centre for foreign affairs, defence and the settlement of disputes.⁴⁴ Clearly, too, Jinnah was drawn this far by the initiative of the Sindhis and the need to accommodate policy to it in the interests of solidarity.

Jinnah was unwell during the following weeks and made no speeches until 26 December at the League's annual session at Patna, when he spoke impromptu. He then observed the awakening of a 'national consciousness among the Muslims' comparable to that of the Hindus, but warned that a 'national self and national individuality' had yet to be developed.⁴⁵ The session authorized him to explore suitable constitutional alternatives to the 1935 Act,⁴⁶ and the following March the Working Committee set up a committee to examine those that had already appeared and others that might emerge.⁴⁷ Jinnah was to head the committee and eight others, including Haroon, Liaquat, Sikander, Nazimuddin (Bengal), and Aurangzeb Khan (N.W.F.P.) were empanelled. Next month Jinnah intimated that several schemes were before the committee, including one for dividing the country into Hindu and Muslim India. In fact the committee never met and the initiative remained in Haroon's hands.

During the interim between the Karachi and Patna conferences Haroon took a number of steps to advance the general cause of a separate federation of Muslim provinces and states. His resolve was strengthened by Congress activities in the states towards the end of the year.⁴⁸ He failed in an attempt to enlist the support of the Aga Khan.⁴⁹

⁴³ *Pioneer*, 15 October 1938, cited in S. S. Pirzada (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents, 1906-47*, 2 vols (Karachi, 1970), II, xix.

⁴⁴ Zaidi, 'Aspects of Muslim League Policy', 261.

⁴⁵ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 306-24.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 321. ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, xx-xxi.

⁴⁸ Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon*, 139.

⁴⁹ Haroon's correspondence with Aga Khan in November-December 1938, in Shafi, *ibid.*, 137-42. For the Aga Khan's own notion of a 'United States of Southern Asia' see 'Scheme of His Highness Sir Aga Khan as modified by Sir Fazl-i-Husain, January 1936', *ibid.*, 118-21, and Jalal and Seal, 'Alternative to Partition', 445-9.

However, the Council of the League now established a Foreign and Inland Deputations subcommittee, and Haroon became its chairman. It was to send deputations abroad, to explain the views of Muslim India and counter Congress allegations that the Muslims were reactionary and unpatriotic, and from the Muslim majority to the minority provinces, to consolidate links between their organizations.⁵⁰ The committee performed some of the functions appropriate to offices for foreign affairs and propaganda. Haroon also involved it in planning when he asked Dr Syed Abdul Latif to meet it in Lahore in January 1939 to discuss his ideas for the recognition of the two nations by the redistribution of India into cultural zones.⁵¹ Though Latif's approach was to accommodate the two nations within a 'common motherland' under a single federal authority, rather than to pursue the separate federations that he himself favoured, Haroon advanced Rs 2000 for the publication and foreign distribution of Latif's scheme in expanded booklet form.⁵² The circulation of Latif's views in 1938–39, in pamphlets, the newspapers and the booklet, stimulated controversy over the constitutional future of Muslim India.

Much of the constitutional planning occurred in the Punjab, where there was already a significant legacy of separatist thought. As president of the League in 1930 the philosopher-poet of Lahore, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, had called for the amalgamation of the four north-western provinces, less some non-Muslim districts, into 'a Muslim India within India'.⁵³ As the religious units of India had never been inclined to sacrifice their individualities in a larger whole 'the unity of an Indian nation must be sought, not in negation, but in mutual harmony and co-operation'. The 'effective principle of co-operation' in India was the recognition of 'homelands' in which the Muslim might enjoy 'full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition'. In 1933 the Cambridge student Rahmat Ali, the Punjabi coiner of the name 'Pakistan', proposed the separation from India of a Muslim state embracing the four provinces and Kashmir, and soon afterwards launched the Pakistan National Movement.⁵⁴ During the year preceding his death in April 1938 Iqbal's opposition to a single Indian federation had hardened and he had urged Jinnah to demand one or

⁵⁰ Shafi, *Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon*, 150–1.

⁵¹ Haroon's introduction to Latif's *The Muslim Problem in India*, Bombay, July 1939, v–viii.

⁵² *Ibid.*; *The Cultural Future of India*, Bombay 1938; *A Federation of Cultural Zones for India*, Secunderabad, 20 December 1938; *Statesman*, 30 March 1939.

⁵³ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 153–71.

⁵⁴ Cited and discussed in Coupland, *Indian Politics*, 199–201.

more separate Muslim states, though he was silent as to their relations with the rest of India.⁵⁵

In March 1939 the fact that the League Working Committee had Latif's scheme before it provoked one who signed himself 'Ahmad Bashir', secretary of the Pakistan Majlis, Lahore, to petition Jinnah, Liaquat, Haroon, Fazlul Haq and Sikander.⁵⁶ Latif's scheme would prejudice the political and economic integrity of Pakistan by casting the eastern tracts of the Punjab and Kashmir into a Hindu-Sikh zone:

As the scheme is likely to influence the natural boundaries of Pakistan I feel the interest of Pakistan and the Movement started towards the creation of an independent state in the North-West of India comprising the whole of the Punjab, Kashmir, the North Western Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan would materially suffer if the Cultural Zones Scheme is extended towards the North West of India. . . . The Pakistan mind is slowly believing in its physical whole and any attempt to disintegrate this natural geographical identity will certainly be detrimental to the cause of Muslim India.⁵⁷

The references to the Pakistan Movement and the claim to the full four north-western provinces plus Kashmir suggest the influence of Rahmat Ali on the Pakistan Majlis of Lahore. However, the character that the Majlis subsequently manifested suggested the influence of Iqbal's ideas and there is good reason to believe that 'Ahmad Bashir' was the pen-name of Mian Bashir Ahmad, son of Justice Shah Din, a dear friend of Iqbal's and the subject of a eulogy by the poet when he died. The Majlis soon assumed the title 'Majlis-i-Kabir Pakistan, Lahore', suggestive of its reverence for the saintly poet who was also the prophet of Indian unity, and, in the spirit of Iqbal, argued: 'Nobody questions India's unity but how that unity can be achieved is a matter that deserves special attention of all the parties concerned. It is a matter . . . [that] must be given precedence to everything else.'⁵⁸ The recognition of 'separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous homogeneous states' was 'the one and the only way to India's Unity'. The identification of 'Ahmad Bashir' as Mian Bashir Ahmad rests partly on convincing holographic evidence but also on the knowledge that Mian Bashir Ahmad, barrister of Lahore, was also a journalist (editor of the Urdu *Humayun*) and a poet, who wrote admiringly of Iqbal's political

⁵⁵ Hafeez Malik (ed.), *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan* (New York, 1971), appx, 383-90.

⁵⁶ Ahmad Bashir to Jinnah etc., 22 March 1939, Q.A.P., file 96.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* See also Ahmad Bashir letter to a newspaper, 7 April 1939, *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Ahmad Bashir to Jinnah, 21 October 1939, Q.A.P., file 96.

ideas and poetry and of Jinnah in prose and verse.⁵⁹ He was to be a member of the reception committee for the League's historic Lahore session in 1940 and a member of the Working Committee from 1942. This follower of Iqbal was to supply Jinnah with ringing passages for his inspiring Lahore presidential address.

In summer 1939 the alternatives open to the League were clarified by Sikander's formulation of a scheme for a loose all-India federation of zones including provinces and states,⁶⁰ and its rejection first by Bashir Ahmad⁶¹ and then by scholars at Aligarh. The latter favoured the division of British India into 'three wholly independent and sovereign states'.⁶² Two Aligarh authors, Professor Syed Zafarul Hasan and Dr M. A. H. Qadri, insisted that the Muslims of India, 'a nation by themselves', must not be 'enslaved into a single all-India federation with an overwhelming Hindu majority in the Centre'. The three sovereign states of British India would be North-West India or Pakistan, Bengal, and Hindustan. The principalities within these states or exclusively on the frontier of one of them would be attached automatically, while those adjoining more than one state might choose their attachment. But Hyderabad must recover Berar and the Karnatic and become a fourth sovereign state, 'the southern wing of Muslim India'. Pakistan would include the four north-western provinces, Kashmir and other adjacent states. Bengal would embrace the existing province less the districts of Howrah, Midnapur and Darjeeling, but plus the districts of Purnea (in Bihar) and Syhlet (in Assam). Both Pakistan and Bengal would be Muslim states. Hindustan would comprise the rest of India but within it two new autonomous provinces—Delhi and Malabar—should be formed, with strong Muslim minorities. The three states would have separate treaties of alliance with Britain and should join together in a

⁵⁹ Cf. the signatures on preceding letters and of '(Mian) Bashir Ahmad' on letter to Jinnah, 19 June 1946, Q.A.P., file 1092. For Bashir Ahmad, see Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 326, 462–3 (poems read at League's Lahore session, 22 March 1940, and Karachi session, 25 December 1943); Muhammad Daud Rahbar in Malik, *Iqbal*, p. 44. For his writings, see, e.g., *ibid.*, bibliography; 'Quaid-e-Azam: Some Glimpses of His Greatness', Jamil-ud-din Ahmad (ed.), *Quaid-e-Azam as Seen by His Contemporaries* (Lahore, 1966), 13–28.

⁶⁰ Sikander Hyat Khan, *Outlines of a Scheme of Indian Federation*, Lahore, 30 July 1939. See also Sikander's speech in *Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, 11 March 1941 (in V. P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, 1957, appx I, 451–67). For another Punjabi scheme published in Lahore in summer 1939, see 'A Punjabi' [? Miyan Kifayat Ali] *Confederacy of India*, pub. by Sir Muhammad Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot.

⁶¹ Ahmad Bashir, 'Sir Sikandar Hayat's Scheme' and 'Sir Sikandar's Federal Scheme', *Civil and Military Gazette*, 5 and 27 August 1939.

⁶² Syed Zafarul Hasan and Muhammad Afzal Husain Qadri, *The Problem of Indian Muslims and its Solution*, Aligarh Muslim University Press, 14 August 1939.

defensive and offensive alliance. The Hasan–Qadri scheme was commended warmly by eight Aligarh scholars who, at the same time, deplored Latif's proposals.⁶³ The scholars claimed to have discussed 'the Aligarh scheme' with its authors in principle and detail and were convinced that it went as far as possible to meet the just claims of the 'two nations'.

By September 1939, when Britain shelved the paper federation of the 1935 Act, Muslim constitutional thought was certainly turning against the federal principle, even as expressed in the zonal schemes of Latif and Sikander. A year after the adoption at Karachi of the two nations theory its practical application was a live issue. On 18 October, when Lord Linlithgow spoke of India's destiny in terms of unity,⁶⁴ Bashir Ahmad protested to Jinnah at his blunt rejection of 'the national demand of the Muslims regarding the recognition of their separate national status'.⁶⁵ Next month the Aligarh group was provoked when Gandhi attacked the theory of separate Muslim nationhood.⁶⁶ On 15 November Professor Hasan, together with Dr Zaki Uddin and Dr Burhan Ahmad (two of the eight who commended the Aligarh scheme), and Ubaid Ullah Durrani, petitioned Jinnah at length upon the matter. They concluded: 'Neither the fear of British bayonets nor the prospects of a bloody civil war can discourage [the Muslims] in their will to achieve free Muslim states in those parts of India where they are in majority.'⁶⁷ Soon afterwards the several Muslim authors of constitutional plans met for ten days 'to evolve a consolidated scheme', which they sent to Jinnah confidentially.⁶⁸ This 'fresh plan on the basis that Moslems are a separate Nation' so constituted Muslim zones in the north and the east as to include seventy-two per cent of the total Muslim population of India. A Delhi province was added to the northern zone and all of Assam to the eastern. A third of the land mass of India was claimed.

On 1 February 1940 Haroon presided at New Delhi over a joint

⁶³ Printed commendation by Amiruddin Kedwaii, Umar Uddin, Zafar Ahmad Siddiqi, Masud Makhdum, Dr. Zaki Uddin, Dr. Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, Jamil-ud-din Ahmad and Muddassir Ali Shamsee, n.d., but attached to similarly printed address by 'The Authors', d. September 1939, Q.A.P., file 96.

⁶⁴ Viceroy's statement, 18 October 1939, in M. Gwyer and A. Appadorai (eds), *Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution, 1921–47*, 1957, 490–3.

⁶⁵ Ahmad Bashir to Jinnah, 21 October 1939, *loc. cit.* See also extract from his letter to Nehru, 6 December 1939, in S. Gopal (ed.), *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, X (New Delhi, 1977), 420 n.

⁶⁶ Gandhi, 'Opinions Differ', *Harijan*, 11 November 1939, reported in *Statesman* (Delhi), 12 November 1939. Gandhi was replying to a private letter from 'M.A. of Aligarh' (see *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, LXX (1977), 332–4).

⁶⁷ Typescript document, 4pp., Q.A.P., file 96.

⁶⁸ 'Confidential Note for the President', n.d., *ibid.*

meeting of his Foreign Committee and the authors of schemes. It resolved to recommend that the Working Committee 'state its mind in unequivocal language with regard to the future of the Indian Moslem Nation'.⁶⁹ India's Muslims were a separate nation entitled to self-determination. In order to make that right effective 'the Moslems shall have separate National Home in the shape of an autonomous state'. The meeting's resolutions were sent to Liaquat (as League secretary) and to Jinnah on 2 February. Two days later the Working Committee adopted the nub of them⁷⁰ which was, of course, expressed in the Lahore resolution's call for independent Muslim states in the north-western and eastern zones of India.⁷¹

The Lahore expression of the two nations theory as a demand for separate Muslim statehood was thus the culmination of eighteen months of controversy. The variety of its analogues goes far to explain the vagueness of the resolution over the delineation of the contiguous Muslim regions of north-western and eastern India and the contemplated relations between them. The notoriously obscure provision for 'territorial readjustments' was clearly a hold-all for additions to, as well as reductions of, existing provinces.⁷² Doubts about the desirable relations between the regions are revealed by the authorization of the Working Committee to frame a scheme providing 'for the assumption finally, by the respective regions, of all powers' such as 'defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary'. Again, 'finally' suggests an antithesis to an interim period of co-ordination by a common authority, such, perhaps, as the resolution's seconder, Khaliqzaman, favoured.⁷³ However, it is clear that by its separatist emphasis the resolution marked the firm rejection of Sikander's view that Muslim India's national destiny might be achieved within an all-India federation. He indeed acknowledged that his own preferred resolution was lost.⁷⁴ One possibility left open was that of an

⁶⁹ Haroon to Hon. Sec. A.I.M.L., 2 February 1940, *ibid.*

⁷⁰ C. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), 223–4. Khaliqzaman grossly exaggerates his own role, though in March 1939 he had proposed to the Secretary of State a vague scheme for three or four separate federations of provinces and states under a small central co-ordinating body (*ibid.*, 205–7; Marquess of Zetland, 'Essayez', 1956, 248–9). See also below, p. 552.

⁷¹ A.I.M.L. session, 22–24 March 1940, Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 325–49.

⁷² At the time Liaquat Ali Khan rightly said that the term 'territorial readjustments' connoted a Muslim claim to Aligarh and Delhi, an interpretation questioned by Pirzada in the light of later events (*ibid.*, xx–xxi).

⁷³ See above, n. 70, and below, p. 552.

⁷⁴ See his speech of 11 March 1941 (see n. 60).

independent Bengal nation, the destiny most favoured by the resolution's proposer, Fazlul Haq.⁷⁵

No more than the resolution itself was Jinnah's Lahore address the achievement of the Quaid unaided. The most remembered passages in his speech were drawn essentially unchanged from the representations of Bashir Ahmad and the Aligarh group. After roundly condemning the 1935 Act as unsuitable to India he followed Hasan and Qadri in quoting for criticism a London *Times* leader of 1 April 1937 that had consigned the difference between Hindus and Muslims to the realm of transient 'superstition', no real impediment to the emergence of a single nation. He then took his refutation of British views from Bashir Ahmad's condemnation of Linlithgow's statement of 18 October 1939:

Mian Bashir Ahmad

His Excellency the Viceroy thinks that this unity can be achieved with the working of the constitution as envisaged in Government of India Act, 1935. He hopes that the passage of time will harmonise the inconsistent elements in India. May be he holds this view with sincerity, but it is in flagrant disregard to the past history of the sub-continent as well as to the Islamic conception of society. The nationalities which, notwithstanding thousand years of close contact, are as divergent as ever, can never be expected to transform into one nationality merely by being subject to the same constitution. What the *Unitary* Government in India has failed to bring about can not be achieved by the imposition of the *Federal* Government.

It is, however, satisfying to note that His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State along with the House of Lords are fully alive to the fundamental differences between the peoples of the Indian continent. Yet unfortunately, they are unwilling to recognise their separate national status. It is more than truism to say

Jinnah

So according to the London Times the only difficulties are superstitions. These fundamental and deep-rooted differences, spiritual, economic, cultural, social and political have been euphemised as mere 'superstitions'. But surely, it is a flagrant disregard of the past history of the subcontinent of India as well as the fundamental Islamic conception of society *vis-à-vis* that of Hinduism to characterise them as mere 'superstitions'. Notwithstanding thousand years of close contact, nationalities which are as divergent today as ever, cannot at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation merely by means of subjecting them to a democratic constitution and holding them forcibly together by unnatural and artificial methods of British Parliamentary Statutes. What the unitary government of India for 150 years had failed to achieve, cannot be realised by the imposition of a central federal government. It is inconceivable that the fiat or the writ of a government so constituted can ever command a willing and loyal obedience throughout the subcontinent by various nationalities

⁷⁵ See Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, xxii–xxiii; Philips, *Partition of India*, 29.

that the Hindus and Muslims represent two distinct nationalities. Therefore, any attempt to dissolve their present differences which disregards this vital fact is doomed to precipitate. Hindu-Muslim problem is not an intercommunal issue and will never be solved on intercommunal lines. It is manifestly an international problem and therefore it must be treated as such. It will submit itself to a permanent solution on that basis alone. Any constitution be it in the form of Dominion Status or even 'Complete Independence', which disregards this basic truth, while destructive for the Muslims cannot but be harmful to the British and Hindus.

If the British Government is really serious and sincere in bringing about peace in the sub-continent, it should not only appreciate the difference but also allow the two nationalities separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous homogeneous states. These states shall not be antagonistic to each other, they on the other hand, will be friendly and sympathetic to one another; and by an international pact of mutual goodwill and assistance they can be just as united and harmonious as today are France and Great Britain. This is the one and the only way to India's Unity.

We are confident that it shall ensure eternal harmony, calm and friendliness between the Hindus and Muslims and materially accelerate the progress of the sub-continent.

If this method for the salvation of India's problems is not adopted the fate of the Muslims as a nation is sealed in India and no revolution of stars and no rotation of the earth would resuscitate them.

except by means of armed force behind it.

The problem in India is not of an intercommunal but manifestly of an international character and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realised, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove destructive and harmful not only to the Mussalmans, but also to the British and Hindus. If the British Government are really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this subcontinent, the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into 'autonomous national states'. There is no reason why these States should be antagonistic to each other. On the other hand the rivalry and the natural desire and efforts on the part of the one to dominate the social order and establish political supremacy over the other in the government of the country, will disappear. It will lead more towards natural good-will by international pacts between them, and they can live in complete harmony with their neighbours. This will lead further to a friendly settlement all the more easily with regard to minorities by reciprocal arrangements and adjustments between the Muslim India and the Hindu India, which will far more adequately and effectively safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims and various other minorities.

The Bashir Ahmad text was thus the source of Jinnah's 'quiet assertion' of the international status of the Indian problem that Mansergh has held

to be 'the essence of his case'.⁷⁶ Jinnah notably dropped the emphasis (following Iqbal) upon present division as 'the only way to India's Unity' in future.⁷⁷ He continued by drawing upon the Aligarh petition of 15 November 1939 to fill out the rhetoric of his 'classic exposition of the two-nation theory'. Again, where the scholars' target was specifically Gandhi, Jinnah's is more generally the Hindus:

Aligarh scholars

It is extremely difficult to explain Mr. Gandhi failing to appreciate and understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. Islam as well as Hinduism are not only religions in stricter sense of the word, but are in reality different and distinct social orders governing practically every individual and social aspect of their adherents. It should be clear beyond doubt that Hindus and Muslims cannot evolve a common nationality. A few following arguments must convince Mr. Gandhi on this issue.

1. That the Hindus and Muslims belong to two different cultures. They have totally different religious philosophies, social customs, laws and literature. They neither inter-marry nor inter-dine together and, indeed, belong to two different civilizations which are in many aspects based on conflicting ideas and conceptions. . . .
2. That the Hindus and Muslims drive [*sic*] their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes and different episodes. Very often a hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. . . .

The above facts must convince

Jinnah

It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither inter-marry, nor inter-dine together and indeed they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans drive [*sic*] their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such

⁷⁶ Mansergh, *Prelude to Partition*, 27.

⁷⁷ Still, the Associated Press of India reported that as Jinnah spoke 'there were many in that huge gathering of over 100,000 people who remembered the late Mohammed Iqbal, the poet of Islam, the animator of the idea of Pakistan' (Pirzada, II, 327). Jinnah later wrote of Iqbal: 'His views were substantially in consonance with my own and had led me to the same conclusions as a result of careful examination and study of the constitutional problems facing India and found expression in due course in . . . the Lahore resolution . . .' (Malik, *Iqbal*, 384-5).

every body that all those ties which hold people together as one social unit (Nation) are entirely wanting in the case of Hindus and Muslims of India. Nor there is any possibility of their ever being created here.

Mr. Gandhi and other Congress leaders stress the significance of a common country and cite the examples of Egypt, Turkey and Persia. They only state a half truth in this argument. Egypt, Turkey and Persia are wholly Muslim countries and the Muslims there are naturally free to determine their own future.

A discontent is bound to occur wherever two different people are yoked under a single state one as minority and the other as majority. A number of instances like those of Great Britain and Ireland, Czechoslovakia and Poland can exemplify the above. Further it is also too well known that many Geographical tracts which otherwise should have been called as one country, much smaller than the Indian sub-continent have been divided into as many states as are the nations inhabiting them. The Balkan Peninsula comprises of as many as eight sovereign states. The Iberian Peninsula is also likewise divided between the Portuguese and the Spaniards.

Mr. Gandhi stresses the historical unity of India even during the days of Muslim kings. We cannot accept his contention. No student of history can deny the fact that all along the last 12 hundred years India has always been divided into a Hindu India and a Muslim India. The extent of one or the other might have been varying from time to time, but the fact remains untarnished that Hindu and Muslim Indias have always been co-existing. The present unity of India dates back only to the British conquest. . . .

nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.

History has presented to us many examples such as the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, of Czechoslovakia and Poland. History has also shown to us many geographical tracts, much smaller than the subcontinent of India, which otherwise might have been called one country but which have been divided into as many states as there are nations inhabiting them. Balkan Peninsula comprises as many as 7 or 8 sovereign states. Likewise, the Portuguese and the Spanish stand divided in the Iberian Peninsula. Whereas under the plea of unity of India and one nation, which does not exist, it is sought to pursue here the line of one Central Government when, we know that the history of the last 12 hundred years, has failed to achieve unity and has witnessed during the ages, India always divided into Hindu India and Muslim India. The present artificial unity of India dates back only to the British conquest and is maintained by the British bayonet, but the termination of the British regime, which is implicit in the recent declaration of His Majesty's Government, will be the herald of the entire break-up with worse disaster than has ever taken place during the last one thousand years under the Muslims.

We want to assure Mr. Gandhi that the ideal of having free sovereign Muslim states in India which now inspires a very large number of Muslims is not actuated by a spirit of hatred or revenge. It is initiated by an earnest desire of solving Hindu Muslim problem on an equitable basis and epitomises the natural desire of Muslims of India to determine their future independently in the light of their own cultures and history.

Jinnah was carried to Karachi on the shoulders of his fellow Sindhis and soared to Lahore on the wings of poet- and philosopher-politicians of Lahore and scholars of Aligarh. The Great Leader who personified Muslim apprehensions synthesized plans to assuage them in acceptable formulations of Muslim nationalism (the two nations theory) and separatism (the Pakistan demand).

IV. The Meaning of 'Two Nations'

In October 1939, when Lord Linlithgow called Jinnah into discussions with the Congress leaders about participation in government during the war, he was certainly recognizing him as the Muslim leader *par excellence*.⁷⁸ But in large measure Jinnah had earned the status by the solidarity that the League had then achieved. In May 1939 Sikander, the senior Muslim premier, had observed publicly that Jinnah had answered for Muslims the question: 'Are we content to lose our identity and to be relegated to the position of political pariahs?'⁷⁹ Jinnah's mobilization of the League in reaction to Congress 'totalitarianism' under the 1935 Act had made it the voice of the putative nation. In December 1939 Liaquat estimated that it had over three million two anna members. In the early wartime negotiations Jinnah could, pursuant to the two nations theory, make acceptance of the League's status as sole Muslim spokesman the precondition of co-operation with government or Congress, thereby outflanking dissidents (be they even

⁷⁸ For the discussions, see Gowher Rizvi, *Linlithgow in India: A Study of British Policy and the Political Impasse in India, 1936-43*, 1978, 129ff.; K. Veerathappa, 'Britain and the Indian Problem (September 1939-May 1940)', *International Studies*, VII (1966), 537-67; Moore, 'British Policy and the Indian Problem, 1936-40', Philips and Wainwright, *Partition of India*, 79-94.

⁷⁹ Cited in D. Pandey, 'Congress-Muslim League Relations', 647.

premiers) by appeals to the national will. It was another corollary of his theory that as one of the two nations Muslim India must be treated as the co-equal of Hindu or Congress India. In consequence, the League called for the right to consultation prior to any British statement about India's constitutional future and to veto any scheme. By November, Rajendra Prasad (now Congress president) shrewdly perceived that Jinnah's insistence upon the League's equality with Congress would mean not only 'equality in the matter of negotiations' but also 'division of power in equal shares between the Congress and the League or between Hindus and Muslims, irrespective of population or any other consideration'.⁸⁰

The meaning of the two nations theory and its implications for Jinnah's leadership became manifest in League Working Committee resolutions in June 1940. In any wartime reconstruction of the central or provincial governments the League must receive half of the seats (more if the Congress was non-co-operating), Jinnah alone might negotiate with Viceroy or Congress, and without his consent no League member might serve on war committees.⁸¹ The resolutions were a rebuff for Sikander, who, appalled at the grave implications for India of the allies' defeats in Europe, was negotiating with Congress leaders for a constitutional settlement.⁸² In August a British statement, effectively according the Muslims a veto on any constitutional scheme, seemed to remove the danger of a Hindu raj.⁸³ Here was a major victory for the two nations theory. Another was soon to follow.

Leading Muslim politicians, including the premiers, were now prepared to join war committees on a basis short of parity. By so doing they would, in effect, be compromising the cause of Muslim equality embodied in the two nations theory. In summer 1941 Jinnah brought the theory to bear in order to force their resignations from the Viceroy's Defence Council. That this was no mere exercise of personal power but rather the execution of essential League policy is revealed by Liaquat's advice to Jinnah a month before the Working Committee met to consider the matter. Liaquat advised that Jinnah's condemnation of the collaborators had 'given expression to the feelings of a vast majority of Musalmans on the subject'.⁸⁴ The question now was 'whether the

⁸⁰ Prasad to Nehru, 12 November 1939, B. N. Pandey, *Documents*, 137-8.

⁸¹ Resolutions of A.I.M.L. Working Committee, 15-17 June 1940, Q.A.P., file 95. See also Coupland, *Indian Politics*, 243.

⁸² Sikander to Jinnah, 31 May 1940, Q.A.P., file 21; Coupland, *Indian Politics*, 241.

⁸³ Viceroy's statement of 8 August 1940, Gwyer and Appadorai, *Speeches and Documents*, 504-5.

⁸⁴ Liaquat to Jinnah, 28 July 1941, Q.A.P., file 1092.

disciplinary action . . . should be taken by you or by the Working Committee and the Council' (an elected body of 465 members). Liaquat strongly advised the latter course:

Let us put up an imposing show and I think the people will appreciate [it] if the Council is given an opportunity of expressing its views on the conduct of those who have let down the League. . . . Let it not be said that the decision is of only one individual or a few persons. Let the whole Council which is the most representative body of the League give its verdict and I have no doubt as to what the verdict will be. . . .

On 24 August the Working Committee demanded the collaborators' resignations from the Defence Council and expelled from the League those who resisted the verdict. The Council did not meet to ratify the action for two months but its attitude was not in doubt. Jinnah was, of course, aware of allegations that he was a dictator.⁸⁵ The two nations theory enabled him plausibly to brand as 'traitors' Muslims who collaborated with the Raj on a basis short of parity. As national leader he saw it as his duty to identify their 'mistakes', leaving the Working Committee and the Council to determine their punishment.⁸⁶

By applying the theory vigorously Jinnah engineered the nationalization of Muslim politics throughout the war. The theory's meaning was revealed most dramatically at Simla in June 1945, when Jinnah demanded not only Hindu-Muslim parity in the Viceroy's executive but also that all the Muslim members must be League nominees. The demand destroyed Lord Wavell's attempt to reconstruct his government on the basis of party representation.

V. Defining 'Pakistan'

In February 1941 Jinnah explained the meaning of 'Pakistan', for the term had not been used at Lahore:

Some confusion prevails in the minds of some individuals in regard to the use of the word 'Pakistan'. This word has become synonymous with the Lahore resolution owing to the fact that it is a convenient and compendious method of describing [it]. . . . For this reason the British and Indian newspapers generally have adopted the word 'Pakistan' to describe the Moslem demand as embodied in the Lahore resolution. I really see no objection to it. . . .⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Allegations of dictatorship remain prominent in Partition historiography (e.g. Collins and Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight*, 103; Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement*, IV, *passim*). Hodson wrote that Jinnah 'displayed his authority . . . imperiously' in August 1941 (*The Great Divide*, 89).

⁸⁶ E.g., May 1944 speech, Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, II, 47-50.

⁸⁷ Press statement, *Statesman*, 19 February 1941.

But the resolution was obscure on the demarcation of the Pakistan regions, their relation to each other, and any interim constitutional rearrangement prior to their 'finally' assuming such powers as defence, foreign affairs, communications and customs. While Jinnah demanded parity as the basis of participation in government, the vagueness of 'Pakistan' was such as to make impracticable its acceptance by the Raj a precondition of co-operation. He did, however, insist that no constitutional scheme that was inconsistent with its eventual achievement must be imposed. The 'Pakistan' demand meant that Muslim India's right to national self-determination must not be transgressed, not that separate statehood must be embodied in a constitutional settlement. Jinnah drew the distinction explicitly in his speeches.⁸⁸ The diversity of the schemes embodying 'Pakistan' that were extant in March 1940 helps to explain the obscurity of the Lahore resolution. Any precise scheme must surely divide the League. However, the resolution did provide for the Working Committee to prepare a particular scheme. Haroon's Foreign Committee seems to have continued to discharge the primary planning function.

In February 1941 a scheme recommended by the Haroon committee was leaked to the press.⁸⁹ Consistently with the direction pursued by the Aligarh scholars and the assemblage of authors during winter 1939-40, it delineated sovereign Muslim states: the four north-western provinces plus a Delhi province; and Bengal (save Bankura and Midnapur districts) plus Assam. The principalities adjoining them might federate with them, and Hyderabad would become a separate sovereign state. For a transitional period the four powers listed at Lahore for assumption finally by the regions would be exercised by a co-ordinating central agency. Jinnah denied that the Working Committee had adopted the scheme and on 22 February it merely reaffirmed the Lahore resolution. The main effect of the leakage was to draw from Sikander a long, reasoned denunciation of 'Pakistan', if it meant separatism.⁹⁰

In his presidential address to the League's session at Madras in April 1941 Jinnah emphasized the goal of 'completely Independent States in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, with full control of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Communications, Customs, Currency, Exchange etc.'⁹¹ The League would 'never agree' to an all-India constitution 'with one Government at the Centre'. As if to suggest that

⁸⁸ E.g., November 1940 and April 1941 speeches, Ahmad, *op. cit.*, I, 184-5, 259.

⁸⁹ *Statesman* (Delhi), 18 February 1941.

⁹⁰ Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, 451-67.

⁹¹ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 359-71.

the two nations theory did not restrict future development to the emergence of only two states he explained that in Hindu India there was a Dravidian nation, Dravidistan, to which the Muslims would stretch their 'hands of friendship'. In amplification of this trend in his thinking he told the Governor of Madras that he envisaged four regions—Dravidistan, Hindustan, Bengalistan, and the north-west Muslim provinces.⁹² They would be separate self-governing dominions, each with its own governor-general controlling its foreign affairs and defence and responsible to the British parliament through the secretary of state. Here was a scheme for subordinate dominions, with the princely states joining them and remaining apart under a Crown Representative. It bore some resemblance to Haroon's leaked scheme.

In February 1942 Khaliquzzaman explained a similar proposal to Coupland:

The Moslem demand is that Britain, after the war, should by Act of Parliament, establish the zonal system, before considering further Swaraj. British control would be still required at the Centre—apparently for an indefinite period—since Defence and Foreign Policy (which is practically all the Centre would deal with) should still be in British hands. The zones would have fiscal autonomy. If they couldn't agree on tariff policy, the British at the Centre would settle it. Pakistan, moreover, would require British aid and capital for its development before it would be able to stand alone.⁹³

Khaliquzzaman seemed to be saying that in the event of a complete British withdrawal the Muslims would accept nothing short of sovereign Pakistan; but that they would welcome a protracted British presence—in effect, Indian unity under the Crown, with the sub-national zones standing as recognition of Muslim nationhood. Unlike Jinnah he was opposed to the cession of the non-Muslim districts of Punjab (Ambala division) and Bengal (Burdwan division).⁹⁴

On the eve of Cripps's arrival in India Coupland analysed Jinnah's position on the Pakistan demand:

- (i) While claiming Dominion status for Pakistan, Jinnah has more than once intimated that it need not be full Dominion status and that he would like Foreign Affairs and Defence to remain, at least for the time being, in British hands; and
- (ii) he has never asked that H.M.G. should accept Pakistan, but only that it should not be ruled out of discussion nor the chances of its adoption prejudiced

⁹² Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, 105.

⁹³ C.D., 2 February 1942.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17 January and 2 February 1942. Coupland assumed these cessions in his own "Agency Centre" scheme (*The Future of India*, 1943, 82).

by the form of an interim constitutional system. Nevertheless, *Pakistanism might triumph as a counsel of despair*.⁹⁵

The Cripps declaration proposed Dominion status for a Union of India, but though it did not accept Pakistan it did accord provinces the right to secede from the Union and become separate dominions.⁹⁶ Jinnah and the League saw it as recognizing the principle of Pakistan.⁹⁷ From the notes of Coupland, Cripps and the Intelligence Department there can be no doubt that Jinnah and the League were disposed to accept the offer.⁹⁸

On 28 March 1942 Jinnah 'stated [to Cripps] the League's acceptance of the Declaration'. On 7 April he intimated that 'he must hold back the League's acceptance till after the Congress has accepted'.⁹⁹ Coupland foresaw that if Congress rejected the offer the League would follow suit, 'so wording their rejection as to obtain some British and world support without losing face as Indian patriots'. On 9 April, when Congress seemed poised to accept, Jinnah was reported as saying 'that Pakistan could be shelved', given a satisfactory position in the Viceroy's executive and a suitable procedure for the secession of provinces.¹⁰⁰ When Congress rejected the declaration the League did likewise, deprecating H.M.G.'s objective of Union, the provision for a single constituent assembly in the first instance, and the eligibility of non-Muslims to participate in the Muslim provinces' decisions on secession.¹⁰¹

In February 1944 Jinnah stated that Britain 'should now frame a new constitution dividing India into two sovereign nations', Pakistan and Hindustan, with 'a transitional period for settlement and adjustment' during which British authority over defence and foreign affairs would remain.¹⁰² The length of the period would depend upon the speed with which the two peoples and Britain adjusted to the new constitution. Though the statement clearly contemplated continued subordination to Britain it is too vague to be read as a shift from the notion of zonal dominions.¹⁰³ In September 1944 the Gandhi-Jinnah talks concen-

⁹⁵ Memo. on Pakistan, 21 March 1942, C.D., 269-70.

⁹⁶ Declaration as published, 30 March 1942, *T.P.* I, 456.

⁹⁷ Resolution of League Working Committee, 11 April 1942, *ibid.*, 606.

⁹⁸ See Moore, *Churchill, Cripps and India, 1939-45* (Oxford, 1979), 88 and n. 4; *T.P.* I, 380, 392, 393. The Cripps Mission file (802) in the Q.A.P. is 'embargoed'.

⁹⁹ C.D., 185, 214.

¹⁰⁰ C.D., 221-2.

¹⁰¹ Working Committee resolution, 11 April 1942, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰² Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, I, 582-6.

¹⁰³ For further expressions of the idea, see *ibid.*, I, 383, 409, 477, 567-8.

trated attention on the precise meaning of the Pakistan demand. The Bengal Provincial League now wanted 'a sovereign state in N.-E. India that will be independent of the rest of India', though it was divided over the cession of the Burdwan districts, with some members arguing that their retention would win Hindu approval.¹⁰⁴ The talks themselves did little to clarify Jinnah's conception of Pakistan but he reiterated that for the regions in which the Muslims predominated it was they alone who must determine their future. Jinnah also spoke now of Pakistan as a single state.¹⁰⁵

Throughout the war Jinnah contemplated the post-war emergence of one or two Pakistan 'dominions', co-existing with one or two Hindustan 'dominions' and the princely states, and with Britain retaining power over defence and foreign affairs. The separateness and equality of the Pakistan and Hindustan 'dominions' would be a recognition of the validity of the two nations theory and of their right to eventual sovereign independence. The conception resembled that which some British Conservatives formed at the time of the Cripps mission and espoused until the eve of the transfer of power.¹⁰⁶

VI. Definition by Circumstance

With Labour's assumption of office in July 1945 it was soon apparent that there was not to be a gradual demission of power by stages but an early and complete withdrawal.¹⁰⁷ Jinnah now became adamant that there must be a single state of Pakistan and the League fought the elections of 1945-46 on that platform.¹⁰⁸ The announcement in February 1946 of the imminent despatch of a Cabinet Mission to settle the basis for independence and Jinnah's first meeting with the Mission on 4 April confirmed that Labour was in a hurry. Fortified by the League's electoral triumph, on 7 April Jinnah led a convention of 470 League members of the central and provincial legislatures to an unequivocal resolution in favour of 'a sovereign independent state

¹⁰⁴ See Richard Casey to Wavell, 11 September 1944, *T.P.* V, 13, 79; East Pakistan Renaissance Society, *Eastern Pakistan: Its Population, Delimitation and Economics*, Calcutta, September 1944. As early as 11 June 1940 Prof. A. Sadeque, Professor of Economics and Politics at Islamia College, Calcutta, sent to Jinnah a proposal for dividing India into Pakistan, Hindustan and 'Greater Bengal' (Q.A.P., file 106).

¹⁰⁵ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, xxx.

¹⁰⁶ Moore, *Churchill, Cripps and India*, 132-5. See below.

¹⁰⁷ Moore, *Escape from Empire: The Attlee Government and the Indian Problem*, 1983, 18-31.

¹⁰⁸ E.g., interview of 8 November 1945, Ahmad, II, 230-3.

comprising Bengal and Assam in the North-East zone and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the North-West zone'.¹⁰⁹ Acceptance of this precise demand for Pakistan and its implementation without delay, by the creation of a Pakistan Constituent Assembly, was made the *sine qua non* for the League's participation in an Interim Government. The opening of the imperial endgame had precipitated an immediate and full-blooded definition of the Pakistan demand.

By 10 April Cripps had prepared a draft proposal for discussion with the Indian leaders and a few days later the Mission confronted Jinnah with two alternative approaches that it advocated: either a truncated Pakistan, independent and fully sovereign but limited to the Muslim majority areas, and thus short of far more of the territories of Punjab, Bengal and Assam than the League had contemplated; or the grouping together of the whole of the six claimed provinces, beside a Hindustan group, within a Union exercising power over defence, foreign affairs and communications.¹¹⁰ When Jinnah refused to choose either alternative Cripps prepared a draft that rejected a fully independent Pakistan. But it proposed a powerful subnational Pakistan, with its own flag, forces to maintain internal order, and enjoying parity with Hindustan in an all-India government. The League would draft its constitution and join with Congress on the basis of parity to draft the Union constitution.¹¹¹ The Mission was willing to concede its right to secede from the Union after fifteen years.¹¹² This remarkable scheme was the furthest that H.M.G. ever went towards accepting the full Pakistan demand.

It is scarcely surprising that Jinnah and the League were drawn into negotiations on the basis of this scheme, though some Leaguers speculated that Jinnah's departure from the Legislators' full-blooded resolution evidenced vacillation among 'weak-kneed' members of the Working Committee.¹¹³ During the subsequent month of negotiations the Mission reduced the concessions to the demand in order to woo Congress, so that when its scheme was published on 16 May it was far less attractive to the League.¹¹⁴ It split the six 'Pakistan' provinces into two groups, the formation of which was to depend upon the voluntary accession of each province to its assigned group. It abandoned parity in the making of the Union constitution, enlarged the Union's power to include finance, and failed to provide for the secession of groups or

¹⁰⁹ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, II, 512-13.

¹¹⁰ *T.P.* VII, 71, 82. ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 126. ¹¹² *Ibid.*, 82.

¹¹³ See Ahmad to Jinnah, 29 May 1946, Q.A.P., file 1092.

¹¹⁴ *T.P.*, VII, 303.

provinces from the Union. Though some Leaguers feared that the Union's powers would enable Congress to abort the emergence of Pakistan,¹¹⁵ the counsels that prevailed were that the Cabinet Mission's scheme met 'the substance of the demand for Pakistan'.¹¹⁶ First, it provided that the provinces must enter constitution-making 'sections' that were co-terminous with the groups. Secondly, the section constitution-making procedure was to precede Union constitution-making. Thirdly, the Working Committee assumed, on the basis of discussions that Jinnah had had with the Viceroy, that the League would enjoy parity with Congress in an Interim Government, which seemed a tacit admission of Pakistan's right to separate nationhood.

Jinnah received written letters of advice from Aurangzeb Khan and Jamil-ud-din Ahmad that emphasized the advantages of accepting the Mission's scheme.¹¹⁷ Ahmad, then Convenor of the League's Committee of Writers, expressed the 'prudent' strategy vigorously. The League should

work the Plan up to the Group stage and then create a situation to force the hands of the Hindus and the British to concede Pakistan of our conception. . . . [We should] make known in most emphatic terms our objections to the Plan specially with regard to the Centre and declare that we will . . . not be bound to submit to a Union Centre which does not accord us a position of equality. We [should] give a chance to the Hindu majority to accommodate us at the Centre. . . . After we have made the constitutions of Groups B and C according to our wishes our position will be stronger than what it is now if we use our opportunities properly. We will have some foothold. When we reassemble in the Union Constituent Assembly we can create deadlocks on really important issues. . . . If the worst comes to the worst and the Hindu majority shows no willingness to compromise we can withdraw from the Assembly in a body, and refuse to honour its decisions. Ours will be a solid bloc as there won't be more than two or three non-League Muslims in the Assembly. . . . We will be on strong ground morally and politically because firstly we will have previously declared that we can never acquiesce in any Centre which reduces us to a subordinate position and secondly we will be in power in the Groups, and will be better able to resist the imposition of an unwanted Centre.

In the spirit of this advice the league resolved that:

. . . inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the

¹¹⁵ E.g., M. L. Qureshi (joint secretary of the League's Planning Committee) to Jinnah, 31 May 1946, Q.A.P., file 1092.

¹¹⁶ M. A. H. Ispahani, 'Factors Leading to the Partition of British India', Philips and Wainwright, *Partition of India*, 330–59, pp. 348–50.

¹¹⁷ Aurangzeb Khan to Jinnah, 19 May 1946, Q.A.P., file 12; Ahmad to Jinnah, 29 May 1946, *loc. cit.* See also typed lists of 'Advantages' and 'Disadvantages', n.d.; Liaquat to Jinnah, 21 May 1946; Prof. A. B. A. Haleem (Aligarh) to Jinnah, 23 May 1946; all in Q.A.P., file 12.

Mission's plan by virtue of the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim Provinces in Sections B and C, [it] is willing to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the scheme outlined by the Mission, in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan. . . .¹¹⁸

Jinnah was authorized to negotiate for the entry of the League to the Interim Government. He wrote to Wavell to emphasize that his assurance of parity therein had been 'the turning point' in the League Council's acceptance.¹¹⁹

The League's strategy was destroyed by the Congress's refusal to contemplate parity in the Interim Government or the compulsory grouping of provinces for constitution-making, together with H.M.G.'s conviction that Congress goodwill was vital for a peaceful transfer of power.¹²⁰ In August 1946 Jinnah was driven to a course of 'direct action' by his mistrust of the Congress and H.M.G.'s infirmity.¹²¹ Certainly, by December, when he and Nehru were called to London in a desperate attempt to secure agreement on sectional procedure, Jinnah had abandoned his mid-year hopes of realizing Pakistan through the Mission's scheme. He now reverted to the notion of a Pakistan dominion and rehearsed it not only with Attlee and the Cabinet Mission ministers¹²² but also with British Opposition leaders.¹²³ Churchill, for whom a secret telegraphic address was established, assured him that the Pakistan areas could not be turned out of the Commonwealth as part of an Indian republic.¹²⁴ Indeed, in parliamentary debate Churchill affirmed that Muslim India and the princes should be accorded Commonwealth membership.¹²⁵ That winter Jinnah sought assurances that other Conservatives would support Pakistan's dominionhood. His inquiries converged with intrigues for separate princely dominions, to which he gave his blessing.¹²⁶

Jinnah welcomed the prospects of a transfer of power on a provincial

¹¹⁸ *T.P.* VII, 469.

¹¹⁹ Jinnah to Wavell, 8 June 1946, *ibid.*, 473.

¹²⁰ For elaboration see Moore, *Escape from Empire*, 124-44.

¹²¹ See, e.g., Jinnah's bitter complaint to Attlee and Churchill, 6 July 1946, *T.P.* VIII, 68.

¹²² See, e.g., *T.P.* IX, 153.

¹²³ E.g., Churchill to Jinnah and Lord Simon to Jinnah, both 11 December 1946, Q.A.P., file 21.

¹²⁴ *T.P.* X, 229.

¹²⁵ *Commons Debates*, 12 December 1946, cols. 1362-70; 20 December 1946, cols. 2341-52. See also K. Dwarkadas, *Ten Years to Freedom* (Bombay 1968), 195-6.

¹²⁶ See Sir W. Monckton to Lord Templewood, 15 January 1947 and reply, 16 January 1947, Templewood Coll., India Office Library, London.

basis that Attlee's time-limit statement of 20 February 1947 foreshadowed.¹²⁷ In his first discussions with Mountbatten he sought a Pakistan dominion comprising the full six provinces,¹²⁸ but he did not oppose the option of separate sovereign provinces that the 'Dickie-bird' or Ismay plan ('Plan Balkan') offered. His objection to Plan Balkan was that it envisaged the severance from Punjab and Bengal of their non-Muslim areas. When he first saw the Plan he argued 'that power should be transferred to Provinces as they exist today. They can then group together or remain separate as they wish.'¹²⁹ When Mountbatten asked his views on H. S. Suhrawardy's proposal for 'keeping Bengal united at the price of its remaining outside Pakistan' he replied: 'I should be delighted. What is the use of Bengal without Calcutta; they had much better remain united and independent; I am sure that they would be on friendly terms with us.'¹³⁰

Whereas in 1946 Jinnah had been prepared to find the Pakistan demand realized, at least temporarily, by the grouping of the six provinces within the Union of India, in 1947 he was willing to see it satisfied by the separate dominionhood of provinces. Now again he was frustrated by Congress, which was no less opposed to the instant loss to India of non-Muslim areas of provinces than it had been to their distant loss by secession from the Union. The outcome of negotiations in 1947, a dual transfer of power to a single truncated Pakistan dominion and a single Indian dominion (to one of which the states were obliged to accede), flowed from Congress policy and H.M.G.'s acquiescence in it.¹³¹ Given the reversals that he suffered in the three-sided discussions from April 1946 to May 1947 it is scarcely surprising that Jinnah eschewed the prolongation of triangularity implied in proposals for Mountbatten to become governor-general of both dominions and the retention of a Joint Defence Council.¹³² However, at the end of the Raj

¹²⁷ *T.P.* IX, 440; X, 105, 165. ¹²⁸ *Ibid.* ¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 256. See also 276, Annex. 1.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 229. See also 227–8, 264. Cf. the common Pakistani belief that Jinnah saw Suhrawardy's scheme as a heresy (e.g. M. A. H. Ispahani, *Quaid-e-Azam as I Knew Him* (Karachi, 1967 edn), 257–8). For relations between Jinnah and Suhrawardy over the scheme from February 1947, see Ziring, 'Jinnah'. A draft scheme for a 'Free State of Bengal', d. 4 June 1947, appears in Q.A.P., file 142.

¹³¹ Moore, 'Mountbatten, India and the Commonwealth', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, XXIX.1 (1981), 5–43.

¹³² See also A. K. Brohi, 'Reflections on the Quaid-i-Azam's Self-Selection as the First Governor-General of Pakistan', and S. M. Burke, 'Quaid-i-Azam's Decision to become Pakistan's First Governor-General', papers presented at Quaid-i-Azam Centenary Conference, Islamabad 1976. Cf. Mountbatten's simple explanation in terms of Jinnah's vanity and megalomania, and Congress suspicions of Jinnah's fascist intentions (above, nn. 6–7).

he still acknowledged Pakistan's need for British agency. The retention by Pakistan of British governors, chiefs of staff and civil and military officers was consistent with his expectation that the transfer of power would be a phased process.¹³³

VII. Man and Movement

At the age of sixty Jinnah made the cause of Muslim India his life. An extraordinary match of man and movement followed. Ambition, pride and vanity were less important to it than his refined sense of Muslim injury under Congress rule and his capacity to express the hurt and specify the cure. Like Gandhi he evoked national consciousness in opposition to felt wrongs.¹³⁴ While Gandhi had experienced India's emasculation by British imperialism Jinnah felt the impotence of Muslim India under Congress totalitarianism. Jinnah articulated not the Koran's promise of political power nor memories of the Mughals but the Muslim's sense of persecution at the sudden threat to all that he had achieved in the twentieth century. When the Congress governments resigned in November 1939 he rallied Muslims to celebrate their 'deliverance from tyranny, oppression and injustice'.¹³⁵ Jinnah's constitutional remedies were not of his own making. The Pakistan demand was no pet scheme of which he dreamed alone but an ideal to which he was converted by others, colleagues of long-standing like Haroon, thinkers in the line of Iqbal, scholars of the Aligarh school. His very formulation of the two nations theory drew upon their thoughts and words. His amplification of the theory into a demand for parity was a brilliant tactical manoeuvre, but its effectiveness rested on the willing support of the League, most notably when Linlithgow set up his Defence Council and Wavell attempted to reconstruct his executive. The tactic consolidated the League as the microcosm of the Muslim nation and Jinnah as its leader.

It is a paradox that the demand for separate Muslim statehood based on the existing Muslim provinces with territorial adjustments should finally have found recognition in a Pakistan truncated to a degree never envisaged by Jinnah and the League. It is inconceivable that they did

¹³³ In May 1949 three of Pakistan's governors, the three chiefs of staff, and 470 military officers, were still British.

¹³⁴ For Gandhi see his *Autobiography: the Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Ahmedabad, 1927), and S. H. and L. Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition* (Chicago, 1967), Pt. II ('The Traditional Roots of Charisma: Gandhi').

¹³⁵ Appeal for 'Day of Deliverance', 2 December 1939, Ahmad, I, 98-100.

not realize that the truncation was a logical corollary of the distribution of the peoples of the two nations. The arguments that they adduced to resist it could scarcely be accepted with justice by a departing Raj, whether they emphasized the need for hostages, or for matching minority populations for exchange in case of need, or for non-Muslim territories to make Pakistan viable economically. The incorporation of the full six provinces in Muslim zones could only have been secured by a British award, and it seems most likely that Jinnah envisaged such an award as a line of advance consistent with Britain's continuing presence in her own interests. In other words, he probably assumed a British withdrawal by stages, at the first of which the Pakistan zones would receive subordinate dominionhood, secured like the princely states by H.M.G.'s continuing control over defence and foreign affairs (as the 1935 Act had stipulated). His reference in October 1938 to a further twenty-five years of imperial rule, the Lahore resolution's emphasis upon all powers 'finally' passing to independent states, his wartime comments, his play for Pakistan dominionhood from December 1946, his reliance on British agency after August 1947, all support such a thesis. His acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's scheme might be seen similarly as evidence of a readiness to postpone full sovereign statehood, provided that the conditions of its eventual emergence were safeguarded, that is Muslim zones and parity in government. He was willing to associate the Muslim nation with central government on the basis of parity but he doubted that such a government could endure. He told Coupland as much:

Assume a 50:50 basis . . . The central questions are just those on which Moslems and Hindus must disagree: e.g. (a) Defence: Hindu Ministers will at once want to Indianize in communal proportions. . . . (b) Tariff: Hindu Ministers will want high protection for industries, which are mainly in Hindu hands, to the detriment of the Moslems who are more confined to poor agriculturalists than the Hindus.¹³⁶

Such caveats were urged upon Jinnah in May 1946, when he judged the disadvantages of a temporary union to be worth the prize of a safe passage through grouping to an eventual six-province fully sovereign Pakistan.¹³⁷

Jinnah's planning was undermined by the Labour Government's beliefs that Britain's post-war interests would be best served by immediate withdrawal, and that an orderly retreat and sound post-imperial relations with the sub-continent would alike be best achieved

¹³⁶ C.D., 17 January 1942.

¹³⁷ See, e.g., M. L. Qureshi to Jinnah, 31 May 1946, *loc. cit.*

by enlisting Congress co-operation. His hopes of obtaining more than a truncated Pakistan depended upon an extended imperial presence of some sort. That they were no mere illusions is revealed by the sympathies of some leading British Conservatives and Liberals. As late as May 1947 Mountbatten's staff and the India Committee of Attlee's Cabinet espoused a scheme that permitted an independent India of many nations while the Chiefs of Staff advised that if Congress rejected Dominion status then Commonwealth membership might be accorded severally to West Pakistan, united Bengal, and even to a maritime state such as Travancore.¹³⁸

Jinnah's readiness to accept, from time to time, quite different constitutional forms as consistent with the Pakistan demand flowed in part from the necessities of a dynamic situation, but in part, too, from the advice proffered by colleagues. In April 1946 470 Muslim legislators voted for a single sovereign Pakistan of six full provinces; a few weeks later the Working Committee and the Council accepted a scheme for a Union of India; in April 1947 Jinnah endorsed Suhrawardy's plan for a 'Free State of Bengal'; two months later he accepted 'moth-eaten' Pakistan. Yet the essence of the Pakistan demand—the right to a territorial asylum, to the self-determination of the Muslim nation in the north-western and eastern regions of India—was never compromised. Certainly, Jinnah planned that the regions should include virtually the whole of six provinces, whereas in the circumstances of 1947 he was left with a Pakistan defined by religious distribution district by district. Yet that outcome lends no support to speculation that the Pakistan demand was Jinnah's bargaining counter for power in a united India, or that the Partition hoisted him with his own petard.

¹³⁸ See my 'Mountbatten, India and the Commonwealth', 28–34; *T.P.* X, 387, 416.