

SAFFRON REAWAKENING

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Jinnah wanted Muslims to Emigrate

The startling UP election results of 2017 would not have been, had Gandhiji lent his ear to the Muslim League. Its proposal for partition had included an exchange of population: most Muslims were to emigrate to Pakistan and all Hindus and Sikhs come away to Hindustan. In fact, the exchange was integral part of their demand. Partition was for Muslims to have their Dar-ul-Islam (land ruled by Islam) where they could live and flourish with the writ of the *Shariah* running throughout their land.

While addressing the Muslim League MLAs of Bihar, Sir Feroze Khan Noon, who later rose to be Prime Minister, had on 8 April 1946, threatened to reenact the murderous orgies of Genghis Khan and Halaqu Khan if non-Muslims took up an obstructive attitude against population exchange. Ismail Chundrigar, who also eventually rose to be Prime Minister of Pakistan, had said that the British had no right to hand over Muslims to a subject people over whom they had ruled for 500 years. Mohammad Ismail, a leader from Madras, had declared that the Muslims of India were in the midst of a jihad.

MA Jinnah, while addressing a press conference at Karachi on 25 November 1946, said that the authorities, both central and provincial, should immediately take up the question of exchange of population, as reported by *Dawn*, on 26 November, 1946. Shaukat Hayat Khan, son of the Prime Minister of Punjab Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, had threatened, while the British were still in India, of a rehearsal of what the Muslims would do to the Hindus eventually.

For the Muslim leaders, therefore, the idea of a population transfer was neither novel nor surprising. Even Prophet Muhammad had undertaken *hijrat* from Mecca to Medina while founding Islam. Not surprisingly, Khan Iftikhar Hussain of Mamdot had said that the exchange of population offered a very practical solution for the problem of the Muslims, reported by *Dawn* (3 December 1946). Pir Ilahi Bux, the Sindhi leader, had said that he welcomed an exchange of population for the safety of the minorities, as it would put an end to all communal disturbances as reported by *Dawn* (4 December 1946). So also felt Raja Ghazanfar Ali, who later became Pakistan's envoy to New Delhi. The *Dawn* of 19 December 1946 reported

his having asked for the alteration of the population map of India. His detailed plea is reproduced in a clipping given in this chapter.

What the politicians said was confirmed by Vice-Chancellor M Mujeeb, of Jamia Millia Islamia in his erudite work, *Indian Muslims*. He said that the League demanded the creation of a separate homeland. He further stated that in the 1946 elections held early that year, the League, whose dominant manifesto was the creation of Pakistan, secured 425 seats out of 492 reserved for Muslims. The League insisted that the right to a separate homeland should be conceded first. All other negotiations could be held thereafter.

These thoughts were no doubt unsavoury to the Hindus,

but the League leaders had a clear plan. Their demand for not only partition but also population transfer had been thought through along with the implications of creating Pakistan. If a division was to be made, it had to be thorough and comprehensive. The League demand for an exchange of population was loudly voiced and widely debated. Merely to get a flavour of the contemporary reports, one may read a few clippings from the 1946 issues of the *Dawn*. It was a daily then published from Delhi and now from Karachi. The newspaper had been founded by Jinnah.

Theologically, partition was consistent with Muslim separatism, or his inability to coexist with people of other faiths. In the words of MJ Akbar (in his book *The Shade of Swords*, Roli Books, New Delhi, 2002):

The community did not forget that Prophet Mohammad himself had warned that there should never be two religions in Arabia. In their 1,400-year history, Muslims have shown clear preference for being masters or rulers. When and wherever this has not been possible the inclination has been to migrate or undertake hijrat to another land which they could call Dar-ul-Islam or a society where the writ of the Sharia runs without any hindrance.

In the absence of a Dar-ul-Islam, the Muslim feels that he would be unable to blossom as a *momin* which means a faithful. In India, since the sun finally set on the Mughal empire in 1858, Muslims have been uncomfortable. Instead of being rulers, they became British subjects like the rest of Indians. When the British were preparing to give up their Indian empire 90 years later, Muslims feared that the Hindu majority would overwhelm them. The only alternative, therefore, was partition and for that one-third of the *ummah* who would remain on the Indian

side of the dividing border, hijrat was the way. To make space for the *Mohajirs*, the government of Pakistan cleared the western wing of their country of nearly all non-Muslims on the morrow of the vivisection.

To show how this inspiration to separatism is embedded in the theology of Islam, it is useful to quote a contract that was signed between Caliph Umar II and the Jews and Christians of Arabia sometime between 717 and 720 AD. They affirmed:

- We shall not build in our cities or in their vicinity any new monasteries, churches, hermitages or monks' cells. We shall not restore by night or by day any of these that have fallen into ruin or which are located in the Muslims' quarters.
- We shall keep our gates wide open for the passersby and travellers. We shall provide three days' food and lodging to any Muslim who passes our way.
- We shall not shelter any spy in our churches or in our homes nor shall we hide him from the Muslims.
- We shall not teach our children the Qur'an.
- We shall not hold public religious ceremonies. We shall not seek to proselytise anyone. We shall not prevent any of our kin from embracing Islam if they so desire.
- We shall show deference to the Muslims and shall rise from our seats when they wish to sit down.
- We shall not attempt to resemble the Muslims in any way. We shall not ride on saddle.
- We shall not wear swords or bear weapons of any kind, or even carry them with us.
- We shall not sell wines.
- We shall clip the forelocks of our head.
- We shall not display our books anywhere in the Muslim thoroughfares or in their marketplaces. We shall only beat our clappers in our churches very quietly. We shall not raise our voices when reciting the service in our churches, nor when in the presence of Muslims. Neither shall we raise our voices in our funeral processions.
- We shall not build our homes higher than theirs.

Instead of insisting that the kafirs or infidels subject themselves to conversion and become Muslim, or face the blade of the sword, this was a concession made to the Jews and the Christians because they were also *Ahl-e-Kitab* or the 'People of the Book' who shared common prophets. Incidentally, this privilege of not being

forced to convert was only provided to those who accepted the status of a *dhimmi* or a protected citizen and paid *jaziya* or the poll tax. The facility was also extended to Hindus. This contract of Umar II was in tune with the Quran and the *Sunna*, or the practice of the Prophet.

To realists, it is a mystery as to why the Muslims of undivided India insisted on partition. The areas that went into Pakistan were already Muslim majority. The community there was having its way as the premiers were Muslim, be it Baluchistan, Bengal, NWFP, Punjab or Sind. All the other provinces had Hindu majorities and therefore the Muslims there could possibly ask for safeguards. After partition, *prima facie* they could be in a weaker situation. With the *ashras* (elite) migrating, the *ajlas* (non-elite) lost many of their patrons. This was known and was obvious to most people at the time. Yet the Muslims of UP, and to an extent those of Bihar and the Bombay Presidency, were at the forefront of the agitation for Pakistan.

A particularly noteworthy book in this context, published recently is *Creating a New Medina* by Venkat Dhulipala (Cambridge University Press), which offers a clue to this paradox. Muslims, inspired by ideologues at the Aligarh Muslim University, were anxious to create a replacement for the fallen headquarters of Islam at Istanbul. The Caliphate was based there until Kemal Mustafa abolished the institution and exiled the Caliph-cum-Sultan. Aligarh's students felt Pakistan would be the ideological centre of global Islam. Even if the Muslims remaining in India happened to suffer, the sacrifice would be well worthwhile for the cause of Islam.

Author Dhulipala has quoted at considerable length what Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani of Bijnore (UP) had advocated. He glorified Pakistan as the first Islamic state in history that would attempt to reconstruct the Islamic utopia created by the Prophet in Medina. He constantly used Pakistan and Medina interchangeably to solidify their identification in the public mind.

Little wonder that Justice MC Chagla (*Roses in December*), Rafiq Zakaria (*The Man who Divided India*) and the Aga Khan (autobiography) have all blamed Aligarh University for being the ideological cradle of Pakistan. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah called it the 'arsenal of Pakistan!' Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the first prophet of partition when in a speech at Lucknow in 1887 and again at Meerut in 1888 he declared that Hindus and Muslims were separate nations.

Partition, however, was not entirely ideology-inspired. For example, the Shias, whose spiritual and temporal head was the Caliph, were not integrally a part of the ummah. Whoever became a Shia was and is the follower of Hazrat Ali and his son Husain, who was cheated out of the Caliphate he was promised by Muaviah and his son Yazid, the fifth and sixth Caliphs. Following the butchery of Husain and his male relatives at Karbala in 680 AD, schism set in between Sunnis and Shias. The latter believe in their Imams while the former looked up to the Caliphs. Jinnah was a Shia and yet his unquestioned leadership led to partition; he is rightly called the founder of Pakistan (who had supported neither the Khilafat movement nor the establishment of Aligarh University).

The Muslims of the Bombay Presidency enthusiastically supported Jinnah and his movement. Of them, the Khojas and Bohras are Shia while the Memons are Sunni. They were the leading financiers of the Muslims League. For example, the Habib family (Khoja) had all its business and assets in Bombay. Yet they wholeheartedly backed the partition. His grain business partner Ratilal Gandhi, who was also for several years the president of Bombay Pradesh Congress, asked him the reason for this. The Habibs' answer was simple. In Pakistan, the Khojas would have to compete with the Punjabi farmer. While in India, they were up against the Parsi industrialists, the Baniyas, the Marwaris, the Chettiers et al. Jinnah also had his own vested interest as told to my grandfather Dharamdas Vora whose close friend was Ahmed Ali, the Qaid's younger brother. According to Ahmed, his elder brother had to be number one wherever he be. If he could not be the *badshah* of the whole of India, he would rather be the sultan of a part of it. He had to have his place in the hall of fame.

Coming back to population transfer, the idea goes back to Spain of 1609 AD when Moriscos, the Moors or Muslims of Spanish origin were expelled because they refused to reconvert to Christianity. They were resettled in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Next, some four lakh Protestants were asked by King Louis XIV to leave France; they resettled in England, Prussia, Holland and America. These precedents of population transfer are based on a book by Stephen P Ladas called *The Exchange of Minorities* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1932). It may have given ideas to Jinnah as well as Ambedkar to develop their views on the exchange.

In the 20th century, the Treaty at Neuilly was signed in France soon after the end of World War I. Among its several terms Bulgaria and Greece exchanged their ethnic minorities living in each others' territory. In 1923, Lord Curzon, on behalf of the League of Nations (like the UNO but of post-World War I) supervised the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne between Greece and Turkey. It provided for the

free and spontaneous emigration of Greek Muslims and Turkish Christians to the two respective countries. The properties of the emigrants were appraised and disposed of. The exchange would not prejudice the rights of property and monetary assets of the exchanged people. They were to be free to take away or arrange for the transport of their movable property. They could also leave behind property, in which case the local authorities were to draw up an inventory and valuation of such property. Immovable and movable property of the exchanged populations was to be sold off by the Mixed (or joint) Commission.

The convention of 30 January 1923, regarding the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations, was a part of the peace settlement with Turkey. It was proposed that the exchange should be carried out within three months. Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, expressed his preference for *a compulsory exchange*, as only in this way could the expected results be obtained. The sums due to the exchanged population of each country on account of the property liquidated by the Mixed Commission was to constitute a government debt from the country where the liquidation took place, to the government of the country to which the proprietors emigrated. The exchanged populations were entitled, in principle, to receive in their new country property of a value equal to and of the same nature as that which they had left behind. Provisions were made for settlement of accounts between the two governments as a result of the liquidation (Article 14 of the Treaty).

The Muslim League resolved to demand partition on 23 March 1940. BR Ambedkar soon set about thinking through the ramifications of creating partition. The author of this book has not come across anyone who thought as sincerely about the security of Hindus as Ambedkar did. What he wrote gives an insight into what Ambedkar thought of partition six or seven years before it took place. He proved remarkably prescient. Had we listened to him, we would not have suffered the communal tension and the virtual repeat of a hundred years ago.

By 1941, Ambedkar's detailed work entitled *Pakistan or the Partition of India* was in the market. Much later in 1990, the book was reprinted as part of Ambedkar's complete works by the government of Maharashtra. It formed Volume 8 of the comprehensive publication. The chapters in this book largely consist of extracts from that book. Ambedkar was one of the few people who recommended partition for the sake of Hindu safety and India's military security. Apart from the inevitable vivisection of territory, he strongly advocated an exchange of population. The Muslims on the Indian side were to emigrate to Pakistan and non-Muslims from Pakistani territory were to come away to this side of the border. Ambedkar did not

consider the transfer unduly difficult and quoted the precedents of Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

How would the creation of Pakistan affect the defence of Hindustan? This question was posed by Babasaheb from the viewpoints of frontiers, of resources, of the armed forces, of communal peace, of redrawing of boundaries.

It is a feature which, if widely known, will set many people thinking furiously. It is sure to raise questions that may prove insoluble and may easily block the path of India's political progress. Yet another particular feature of the Indian army of the 1930s was the much-overlooked question of communal composition. One Mr Chaudhari, a military expert quoted by Ambedkar, has highlighted this aspect. The following table shows the proportion of soldiers serving in the Indian infantry, according to the area and the community from which they were drawn in the 1930s:

Two glaring facts stand out from this survey. The first is that the Indian army is predominantly Muslim in its composition. The other is that Musalmans who predominate are from the Punjab and the NWFP. Such a composition means that the Musalmans have been made the principal defenders of India from foreign invasion. And they are conscious of this proud position which has been assigned to them by the British. One often hears them say that they are the gate-keepers of India. The Hindus must consider the problem of the defence of India in this light. How far can the Hindus depend upon these gatekeepers to hold

| Area and Communities in 1930 | %age |
|--|--------------|
| I. The NWFP, Punjab and Kashmir | 58.5 |
| Sikhs | 13.58 |
| Punjabi | 22.6 |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | 6.55 |
| Musalmans | |
| Pathans | |
| (Muslims—Ed.) | |
| II. Nepal, Kumaon, Garhwal | 22.00 |
| Gurkhas | 16.4 |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | |
| III. Upper India | 11.0 |

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| UP Rajputs | 2.55 |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | Nil |
| Hindustani | Nil |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | |
| Musalman | |
| Brahmins | |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | |
| IV. South India | 5.5 |
| Mahrattas | 5.33 |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | Nil |
| Madrasi | Nil |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | |
| Musalman | |
| Tamils | |
| (Hindus—Ed.) | |

means that the Musalmans have been made the principal defenders of India from foreign invasion. And they are conscious of this proud position which has been assigned to them by the British. One often hears them say that they are the gatekeepers of India. The Hindus must consider the problem of the defence of India in this light. How far can the Hindus depend upon these gatekeepers to hold the gate and protect the liberty and freedom of India? The behaviour of the Indian soldier under British control is artificial. His behaviour when he is under Indian control would be his natural behaviour. British control does not allow much play to the natural instincts and sympathies of men. That is why the men in the army behave so well.

The realist must take note of the fact that Musalmans look upon Hindus as kafirs, who deserve to be exterminated rather than protected. The realist must take note of the fact that while Musalmans accept the European as his superior, he looks upon the Hindu as his inferior. It is doubtful how far a regiment of Musalmans will accept the authority of Hindu officers if it be placed under them. The realist must take note that of all the Musalmans, the ones from the North-West are the most disaffected in their relations with Hindus. The realist must take note that the Punjabi Musalman is fully susceptible to the propaganda in favour of pan-Islamism.

The views held by the Mohammedans (certainly the most aggressive and truculent of the peoples of India) are alone sufficient to prevent the establishment of an independent Indian Government. Were the Afghan to descend from the north upon an autonomous India, the Mohammedans, instead of uniting with the Sikhs and the Hindus to repel him, would be drawn by all the ties of kinship and religion to join his flag.

Hindus have a difficult choice to make: to have a safe army or a safe border? Is it in their interest to insist that Muslim India should remain part of India so that they may have a safe border, or is it in their interest to welcome its separation from India so that they may have a safe army? Which is then better for the Hindus? Should the Musalmans be without and against or should they be within and against? If the question is asked of any prudent man, there will be only one answer, namely, that if the Musalmans are to be against the Hindus, it is better that they should be without and against, rather than within and against. Indeed, it is a consummation devoutly to be wished that the Muslims should be without. That is the only way of getting rid of the Muslim preponderance in the Indian army.

How can it be brought about? Here again, there is only one way to bring it about and that is to support the scheme for creating Pakistan. Once Pakistan is created, Hindustan, having ample resources of men and money, can have an army which it can call its own and there will be nobody to dictate as to how it should be used and against whom it should be used. The defence of Hindustan, far from being weakened by the creation of Pakistan, would be infinitely improved.

The Pakistan area, which is the main recruiting ground of the present Indian army, contributes very little to the central exchequer as will be seen from the following figures:

The Pakistan provinces, it will be seen, contribute very little. The main contribution comes from the provinces of Hindustan. In fact, it is the money contributed by the provinces of Hindustan which enables the Government of India to carry out its activities in Pakistan provinces. The latter are a drain on the former. Not only do they contribute very little to the central government, instead

they receive a great deal from the centre. The revenue of the central government amounts to Rs 121 crore, of this about Rs 52 crore are spent annually on the army. In what area is this amount spent? Who pays the bulk of this amount of Rs 52 crore, which is spent on the Muslim army drawn from the Pakistan area? It is contributed by Hindu provinces and is spent on an army which consists mainly of non-Hindus! How many Hindus are aware of this tragedy? How many know at whose cost this tragedy is being enacted? Today the Hindus are not responsible because they cannot prevent it. The question is whether they will allow this tragedy to continue. If they mean to stop it, the surest way of putting an end to it is to allow a Pakistan to come into being. To oppose it is to buy a sure weapon for their own destruction.

Only if such a population transfer had been agreed upon by Indian leaders, Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru particularly, India would not still be suffering communal tensions. It is relevant here to quote what Syama Prasad Mookerjee had to tell Parliament on 15 November 1952. Wave after wave of refugees were coming in from East Pakistan and the

| Contribution to the Rs Central Exchequer² | |
|---|-------------------|
| Punjab | 11,801,385 |
| North-West Frontier | 928,294 |
| Sind | 58,646,915 |
| Baluchistan | Nil |
| Total | 71,376,594 |

**As against this, the Rs
provinces of
Hindustan contribute
as follows:**

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Madras | 95,326,745 |
| Bombay | 225,344,247 |
| Bengal | 120,000,000 |
| UP | 40,553,000 |
| Bihar | 15,437,742 |
| CP&Berar | 3,142,682 |
| Assam | 18,755,967 |
| Orissa | 567,346 |
| Total | 519,127,729 |

is being enacted? Today the Hindus are not responsible because they cannot prevent it. The question is whether they will allow this tragedy to continue. If they mean to stop it, the surest way of putting an end to it is to allow a Pakistan to come into being. To oppose it is to buy a sure weapon for their own destruction.

Only if such a population transfer had been agreed upon by Indian leaders, Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru particularly, India would not still be suffering communal tensions. It is relevant here to quote what Syama Prasad Mookerjee had to tell Parliament on 15 November 1952. Wave after wave of refugees were coming in from East Pakistan and the government in Delhi was doing little about them. Mookerjee recalled how, accompanied by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, he went to see Gandhi a few weeks before his death. He had this to say:

We were discussing this question. He came out with fire in his eyes. He (Gandhi) said: 'We did not agree to the partition of India for this terrible rehabilitation causing misery to millions of people: it was on a certain fundamental basis: the minorities must be protected; they must live in their own homeland: no question of their being turned out as beggars.' What was his remedy? He said: 'Let India play her part; you protect the minorities: let not one man be turned out from here; then turn towards Pakistan and say we have fulfilled our part, but you have

not; it becomes a world problem; it becomes a moral problem.’ The words which he uttered are still ringing in my ears. He said: ‘If Pakistan fails to do so, if there is no other remedy you must take charge of East Bengal; let government take charge and protect the people.’ He added: ‘I cannot join the war, I do not believe in it; but I will bless you that you have the moral courage for it. [I] will remember that. I am not advocating war: but if there is no other means of protecting the minorities of East Pakistan except to take charge of that territory, Government of India will someday have to consider it. I am not using [the] word lightly; I am not saying that immediately war should be declared. It would not be necessary also. There was no war in Hyderabad. They are not ready for war. Goondaism does not wish to face war. They want to gain something without sacrifice.’ Only if the Prime Minister says Government will act firmly and adopts a policy not of weakness and appeasement you will see what happens. He is proud of appeasement. I am amazed at it. He may say, I cannot find a solution: I can sympathise with that. But he glorifies appeasement and goes on appeasing; at whose cost? If he does it at his cost...

In 1946, Rajendra Prasad, President of India for the first two terms, happened to comment on the Pakistan demand of the Muslim League. His book was called *India Divided*, to which he subsequently added an *Addendum*. Therein he quotes an interview of Jinnah by Donald Edwards of the BCC and simultaneously comments. A relevant portion is reproduced below:

A question has been engaging public attention ever since the two-nation theory was propounded. All Muslims being one nation by reason of their religion alone, irrespective of any other considerations like the territory they inhabit, the language they speak etc., the question naturally arises what would be the position and status of the Muslims who will be left in Hindustan, which according to the League proposal will be a Hindu state. Jinnah, on being asked what he proposed for those areas where the Muslims are in a minority replied in the course of the interview referred to above:

‘Those areas, like Madras for instance, will have a Hindu government and the Muslim minority there will have three courses open to them: they may accept

citizenship of the state in which they are; they can remain there as foreigners; or they can come to Pakistan. I will welcome them. There is plenty of room. But it is for them to decide.'

Jinnah accepts the position that the Muslims who are citizens of India today will, after Partition, cease to be citizens of Hindustan and therefore they will have three alternatives to choose from. Let us examine these three alternatives.

The first alternative is that they may accept citizenship in the state in which they are. It may be pointed out that citizenship can be acquired by a foreigner in a state only under rules made for that purpose by the state concerned. It is open to any state which is independent to regulate and control its own population and to lay down restrictions on foreigners acquiring citizenship and even to prohibit it altogether. The history of the British Dominions like South Africa, Canada and Australia, which are all members of the British Commonwealth and Empire, to which India also belongs, and which owe allegiance to the same King-emperor to whom Indians are in law required to owe allegiance, shows how they have successfully and effectively prevented Indians from acquiring the rights of citizenship. The United States of America also regulates immigration and does not permit any and every foreigner to acquire the right of citizenship simply because the foreigner wishes to have that right. So, if Hindustan is to be really a free and sovereign state, it will have the same right to regulate its citizenship and to lay down rules for and even to prohibit acquisition of the rights of citizenship by foreigners. It will not lie with the Muslims left in Hindustan to become its citizens unless Hindustan permits it. Jinnah, of course, assumes that Hindus must not be allowed to put difficulties in their way.

The second alternative is that they can remain there as foreigners. Here again he makes the same assumption. Hindustan, like any other independent state, will not be bound to allow foreigners to remain on its territory, particularly when they happen to be in such large numbers as the Muslims will be. It is also worth remembering that an independent state may regulate and even prohibit the acquisition of property, particularly immovable property, by foreigners within its territory.

The third alternative is that the Musalmans who will be left in Hindustan can go to Pakistan. This, of course, is legally possible. Every foreigner is entitled to leave the foreign state and to go to his own state. In *wanted* short, Rajendra Prasad's view was that because the partition was on the basis of a single criterion, namely, Islam, the Muslims who wish to stay back in Hindustan could do so as aliens by obtaining visas, not as citizens. Or else, they must undertake hijrat (migration) to the Dar-ul-Islam, namely Pakistan or the New Medina.

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