

# Gandhiji on PARTITION

Selected and Compiled with an Introduction by

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MANI BHAVAN GANDHI SANGRAHALAYA MUMBAI

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## **Preface**

Gandhiji's life, ideas and work are of crucial importance to all those who want a better life for humankind. The political map of the world has changed dramatically since his time, the economic scenario has witnessed unleashing of some disturbing forces, and the social set-up has undergone a tremendous change. The importance of moral and ethical issues raised by him, however, remain central to the future of individuals and nations. Today we need him, more than before.

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya has been spreading information about Gandhiji's life and work. A series of booklets presenting Gandhiji's views on some important topics is planned to disseminate information as well as to stimulate questions among students, scholars, social activists and concerned citizens. We thank Government of India, Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Department of Culture, for their support.

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6<sup>th</sup> April 2002

# Introduction

## Bharati Mazmudar

When India achieved independence in the year 1947, people were happy but behind this happiness was a shadow of sorrow. India was partitioned and two nations came into existence — India and Pakistan.

Let us review the events that led to partition. The Muslim League was established in 1906. The main intention in founding the League was to keep the younger generation of Muslims away from the Indian National Congress. But during the Khilafat Movement a large number of them joined the Congress.

In course of time many communal and religious organizations came up. They demanded protection for the religious minorities. Thus, separate electorates for the Muslims (and later for other smaller groups) were introduced. Additional seats were given to them in excess of their population. But this was not a satisfactory solution.

After M.A. Jinnah took up the leadership of the League the situation changed. He came out with a new idea that India consists of two nations, Hindus and Muslims. From this the two-nation theory was developed. The Muslim League put forth a demand for a separate state in its Lahore Resolution of March 1940 (see Appendix A). Even though the resolution did not use the word Pakistan or make any reference to the two-nation theory, it did emphasize on the demarcation of territories and territorial readjustment on religious basis.

Gandhiji was very upset by the propaganda of the two- nation theory. He tried his level best to convince the League and particularly Jinnah. He met Jinnah on September 9, 1944 in a friendly atmosphere. The talks lasted for eighteen days but without result, inviting Gandhiji's remark, "It was a test of my patience. I am amazed at my patience, however it was a friendly talk."

Jinnah went on insisting that the League was the sole representative of the Muslims of India and the Congress should consider itself a purely Hindu

organization. He refused to discuss any other matter unless the Congress accepted his view. After the Second World War the British Government was in a hurry to hand over power to Indians. Gandhiji negotiated with each of the British representatives, some of whom were in favour of undivided India, but not all. The discussions at the Simla Conference of 1945 finally led to the partition of India. T.N. Kaul has rightly said, "It was not inevitable and would not have happened but for the British policy of divide and rule. It would also not have happened if the Congress had shown a little more consideration for the Muslim League, as Gandhiji wanted. He tried very hard to placate Jinnah by offering him the Prime Ministership or Presidency of an undivided India. But Jinnah's mind was made up. He did not trust Gandhiji much less Nehru, Azad and Patel and stuck to his guns. He wanted Pakistan at any cost."<sup>1</sup>

"Gandhiji would perhaps have agreed to postpone independence by a few years to save a united India, but both, the Congress and the Muslim League were keen to have independence and had therefore to pay the price of partition. Neither realized the holocaust that would follow."<sup>1</sup>

Indians then and now are wondering, why did Gandhiji allow partition? Why did he not go on fast unto death? He had said in 1940, "Vivisect me before you vivisect India". Then why was he a silent spectator to partition?

This little booklet is an effort to answer these questions. Let us see what he himself had to say about the whole process of partition; starting with the Lahore Resolution to the Act of Independence in 1947.

The matter has been collected from the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. (The volume and page numbers are given in brackets.)

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## REFERENCE

1. T. N. Kaul, *My Years through Raj to Swaraj*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1995, p. 65.

## Gandhiji on PARTITION

When the proposal for partition came up disturbing the political scene Gandhiji expressed his view on 29-4-1940 :

"The partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu- Muslim problems. There can be no compromise with it. At the same time I have said that if the eight crores of Muslims desire it no power on earth can prevent it notwithstanding opposition, violent or non-violent. It cannot come by honourable agreement."

"At the bottom of the cry for partition is the belief that Islam is an exclusive brotherhood and anti-Hindu. Whether it is against other religions is not stated. The newspaper cuttings in which partition is preached describe Hindus practically untouchables. To live under Hindu rule is a sin. Even joint Hindu- Muslim rule is not to be thought of.

"Time was when Hindus thought that the Muslims were the natural enemies of Hindus. But as is the case with Hinduism, ultimately it comes to terms with the enemy and makes friends with him."(72:27)

\* \* \*

He wrote in *Harijan* dated 4-5-1940 :

"Religion binds man to God and man to man. Does Islam bind Muslims only to Muslims and antagonize the Hindus? Was the message of the Prophet peace only for and between Muslims and war against Hindus or non-Muslims? Are eight crores of Muslims to be fed with this which I can only describe as poison?

"Those who are instilling this poison into the Muslim mind are rendering greatest disservice to Islam. . .

"I have lived with and among Muslims not for one day but closely and almost uninterruptedly for twenty years. Not one Muslim taught me that Islam is an anti-Hindu religion." (72:27)

\* \* \*

When there was a demand for a Constituent Assembly, Gandhiji warned saying in *Harijan* 18-5-1940 :

"The demand for a Constituent Assembly presumes that the determination of the groups and individuals will coincide. Should it happen otherwise and partition become the fashion, either we shall have partition or partitions rather than foreign rule, or we shall continue to wrangle among ourselves and submit to foreign rule or else have a proper civil war. . .

"I am an optimist. I have every hope that when we come to grips Hindus, Muslims and all others will throw in their weight in favour of India which all will claim as their own." (72:66)

\* \* \*

When the A.I.C.C. met in Bombay in the year 1940 Gandhiji took the opportunity to express his views on partition on 16-9- 1940.

"It is worse than anarchy to partition a poor country like India whose every corner is populated by Hindus and Muslims living side by side. It is like cutting up a living body into pieces. No one will be able to tolerate this plain murder. I do not say this as a Hindu. I say this as a representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsees and all. I would say to my Muslim brethren, 'Cut me to pieces first and then divide India.' You are trying to do something, which was not attempted even during the Muslim rule of 200 years. We shall not allow you to do it." (73:25)

\* \* \*

Mr. Jinnah talked about the two-nation theory. Gandhiji expressing his view on 12-4-1942 said:

"If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with the Hindus and others, no power on earth can

compel them to think otherwise. If they want partition of India on that basis, they must have partition unless the Hindus want to fight against division. So far as I can see preparation for such a fight is going on now on behalf of both parties. . . The only true and just way is the way of unity and non-violence of regarding one another not as a member of holistic cultures but as sons of the same great motherland."

(The *Bombay Chronicle* 25-4-1942; 76:24)

"Pakistan according to him (Jinnah) 'in a nutshell' is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be wholly treated as an independent and sovereign state. This sovereign state can conceivably go to war against the one of which it was, but yesterday, a part. He says, "Pakistan is an article of faith with Muslim India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal.

"If Pakistan as defined above is an article of faith with him, indivisible India is equally an article of faith with me. Hence, there is a stalemate." (76:315)

In his speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting of 8-8-1942 he dealt with the problem of communal harmony and the idea of Pakistan. He said:

"Thousands of Mussalmans have told me that if the Hindu- Muslim question was to be solved satisfactorily it must be done in my lifetime. I should feel flattered at this, but how can I agree to a proposal, which does not appeal to my reason? Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new thing. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans have sought after it. I consciously strove for its achievement from my boyhood. . . Even at that tender age I believed that the Hindus in India, if they wished to live in peace and amity with other communities, should assiduously cultivate the virtue of (good) neighbourhood." (76:385)

Remembering the Khilafat movement where members of each community respected one another's religious feelings and considered it to be a great privilege, he asked all Mussalmans including Quid-e-Azam Jinnah 'to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse.'

"Quid-e-Azam Jinnah was at one time a Congressman. If today the Congress has incurred his wrath, it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his heart. May God bless him with long life.

"The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity. Are you followers of that Islam or any other?

To Quid-e-Azam I would say whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such coercion. . . God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of an untruth." (76:386-387)

"There is neither fair play nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear."

Rajaji said, "I do not believe in Pakistan. But Mussalmans ask for it, Mr. Jinnah asks for it, and it has become an obsession with them. Why not then say 'Yes' to them just now? The same Mr. Jinnah will later realize the disadvantages of Pakistan and will forgo the demand."

I said, "It is not fair to accept as true a thing which I hold to be untrue and ask others to do so in the belief that the demand will not be pressed when the time comes for settling it finally. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely in order to placate Jinnah Saheb. Many friends have come and asked me to agree to it for the time being to placate Mr. Jinnah, disarm his suspicions and to see how he reacts to it. But I cannot be party to a course of action with a false promise. At any rate it is not my method." (76:388)

"To demand the vivisection of a living organism is to ask for its very life. It is a call to war. The Congress cannot be party to such a fratricidal war. If you distrust the Congress, you may rest assured that there is to be a perpetual war between the

Hindus and the Mussalmans, and the country will be doomed to continue warfare and bloodshed. If such warfare is to be our lot, I shall not live to witness it.

"It is for that reason that I say to Jinnah Saheb, 'You may take from me that whatever in your demand for Pakistan accords with considerations of justice and equity is lying in your pocket. Whatever in the demand is contrary to justice and equity you can take only by the sword and in no other manner. . . .'

"The Quid-e-Azam has said that the Muslim League is prepared to take over the rule from the Britishers if they are prepared to hand it over to the Muslim League, for the Britishers took over the empire from the hands of the Muslims. This however will be Muslim Raj. The offer made by Maulana Saheb and by me does not imply establishment of Muslim Raj or Muslim domination. The Congress does not believe in the domination of any group or any community. It believes in democracy, which includes in its orbit Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsees, Jews - every one of the communities inhabiting this vast country. If Muslim Raj is inevitable, then let it be, but how can we give it the stamp of our assent? How can we agree to the domination of one community over the others?

"Millions of Mussalmans in this country come from Hindu stock. How can their homeland be any other than India? ... I ask the Mussalmans, 'If India is not your homeland what other country do you belong to? . . . India is without doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country. Every Mussalman should therefore co-operate in the fight for India's freedom. The Congress does not belong to any one class or community; it belongs to the whole nation. Mutual trust is essential for success in the final nationwide struggle that is to come.'" (76:389-390)

\* \* \*

To avoid partition C. Rajgopalachari came forward with a formula. After studying Rajaji's formula Gandhiji wrote on 9-9- 1944 : (Appendix B)

"His (Jinnah's) contempt for your formula and his contempt for you is staggering. You rose in my estimation that you could have talked to him for all those hours and that you should have taken the trouble to draw up that formula.

[While discussing the formula with Jinnah, Gandhiji reports :]

"He wants Pakistan now, not after independence. 'We will have independence for Pakistan and Hindustan', he said, 'We would come to an agreement and then go to the government and ask them to accept our solution.' I would never be a party to that. I could never ask the Britishers to impose partition on India." (78:88-89)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji tried to convince Jinnah that partition would not be good for any community. He wrote a letter to M. A. Jinnah on 11-9-1944 :

"My life mission has been Hindu-Muslim unity, which I want for its own sake, but which is not to be achieved without foreign ruling power being ousted. Hence, the first condition of the exercise is the right of self-determination in achieving independence by the joint action of all parties and groups composing India.

"May I remind you that the Rajaji formula was designed in the first instance for your acceptance and submission thereafter to the League. The Lahore Resolution is indefinite. Rajaji has taken from it the substance and given it a shape. . . the independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands." (78:88-89)

"The power is to be transferred to the nation that is the provisional government. The formula contemplates peaceful transfer by the British government. So far as I am concerned I would like the transfer to take place as early as possible." (78:93)

On 12-9-1944 Mahatma wrote to Rajaji :

"I am to prove from his own mouth that the whole of the Pakistan proposition is absurd. I think he does not want to break. On my part I am going to be in a hurry.

But he can't expect me to endorse an undefined Pakistan... I want to show him that your formula is the only thing that he can reasonably ask for."

*(Mahatma Gandhi, The Last Phase - Vol. 1; book - 1; pp. 86-87; 78:97)*

Again Gandhiji wrote to Jinnah on 14-9-1944 :

"Indeed in view of your dislike to the Rajaji formula, I have at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am concentrating on the Lahore Resolution in the hope of finding a ground (for mutual agreement)." (78:99-100)

After going through the Lahore Resolution again and again he wrote to Jinnah on the very next day, i.e. 15-9-1944, discussing his two-nation theory.

"You must admit that the Resolution itself makes no reference to the two-nation theory. In the course of our discussion, you have passionately pleaded that India contains two nations, i.e. Hindus and Muslims and that the latter have their homeland in India as the former have theirs.

"I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendents claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock. If India was one nation before the advent of Islam, it must remain one in spite of the change of faith of a very large body of her children.

"You do not claim to be a separate nation by right of conquest, but by reason of acceptance of Islam. Will the two nations become one if the whole of India accepted Islam?

"You seem to have introduced a new test of nationhood. If I accept it, I would have to subscribe to many more claims and face an insoluble problem. The only real, though awful, test of our nationhood arises out of our common political subjection. If you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort, we shall be born a politically free nation out of my travail. If by then we have not learnt to prize our freedom, we may quarrel among ourselves and for want of a common master

holding us together in his iron grip, seek to split up into small groups or nationalities."  
(78:101)

"With this background, I shall present you with my difficulty in accepting your Resolution.

1. Pakistan is not in the Resolution. Does it bear the original meaning Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan, out of which the name was mnemonically formed? If not what is it?
2. Is the goal of Pakistan pan-Islam?
3. What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion? Is he different from a Turk or and Arab?
4. What is the connotation of the word "Muslims" in the Resolution under discussion? Does it mean the Muslims of India of geography or of the Pakistan to be?
5. Is the Resolution addressed to the Muslims by way of education, or to the inhabitants of the whole of India by way of appeal, or to the foreign ruler as an ultimatum?
6. Are the constituents in the two zones to constitute "Independent States" an undefined number in each zone?
7. Is the demarcation to take place during the pendency of the British Rule?
8. If the answer to the last question is in the affirmative, the proposal must be accepted first by Britain and then imposed upon India, not evolved from within by the free will of the people of India.
9. Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "Independent States" will be materially and otherwise benefited by being split up into fragments?

10. Please satisfy me that these Independent Sovereign States will not become a collection of poor States, a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.
11. Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how the independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the Resolution?
12. How are the Muslims under the Princes to be disposed off as a result of this scheme?
13. What is your definition of "minorities"?
14. Will you please define the "adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the Resolution?
15. Do you not see that the Lahore Resolution contains only a bare statement of the objective and does not give any idea as to the means to be adopted for the execution of the idea and the concrete corollaries thereof? For instance:
  - a) Are the people in the regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so, how is it to be ascertained?
  - b) What is the provision for Defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore Resolution?
  - c) There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the preponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have not been practically disfranchised?
  - d) Does this not lead again to placing the Resolution of the League before the people of the zones concerned as a whole for acceptance?

As I write this letter and imagine the working of the Resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India. Believe me, I approach you as a seeker.

Though I represent nobody but myself, I aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India, for I realize in my own person their misery and degradation, which is their common lot, irrespective of class, caste or creed. I know that you have acquired a unique hold on the Muslim masses. I want you to use your influence for their total welfare, which must include the rest.

In this hastily written letter, I have only given an inkling of my difficulty."  
(78:102-103)

Letters were exchanged between the two leaders as Gandhiji was trying to come to some agreement so as to avoid Pakistan. He again wrote to Jinnah on 19-9-1944 :

"Can we not agree to differ on the questions of 'two-nation' and yet solve the problems on the basis of self-determination?"

(78:117)

He wrote on 22-9-1944 :

"The more I think about the two-nation theory the more alarming it appears to be. . . I am unable to accept the proposition that the Muslims of India are a nation, distinct from the rest of the inhabitants of India. . . The consequences of accepting such a proposition are dangerous in the extreme. Once the principle is admitted there would be no limit to claims for cutting up India into numerous divisions, which would spell India's ruin. I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be.

"If the regions holding Muslim majorities have to be separated according to the Lahore Resolution, the grave step of separation should be specifically placed before and approved by the people in that area.

You seem to be averse to a plebiscite. In spite of the admitted importance of the League there must be clear proof that the people affected desire partition. In my opinion all people inhabiting the area ought to express their opinion specifically on

this single issue of division. Adult suffrage is the best method but I would accept other equivalent." (78:122)

He again wrote on 24-9-1944 :

"I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations, but as one family consisting of many members of whom Muslims living in the North-West zones, i.e. Baluchistan, Sind, N.W.F.R and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India.

"The areas should be demarcated by a commission, approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the area demarcated should be ascertained through the votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation, it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate state as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination and can, therefore, be constituted into two sovereign independent states.

"There shall be a treaty of separation, which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Communication, Customs, Commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties.

"The treaty shall also contain the terms for safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two states.

"Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League, the two shall decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of the independence of India.

"If you do not agree to these terms, could you let me know in precise terms what you would have me to accept in terms of the Lahore Resolution and bind myself to recommend to the Congress?" (78:126)

Jinnah refused even to discuss Gandhiji's proposal as he (Gandhiji) was not vested with authority, he represented nobody.

Gandhiji wrote on 26-9-1944 :

"I confess I am unable to understand your persistent refusal to appreciate the fact that the Formula presented to you by me in my letter of 24th as well as the Formula presented to you by Rajaji give you virtually what is embodied in the Lahore Resolution, providing at the same time what is absolutely necessary to make the arrangement acceptable to the country. . . The best way for us who differ in approach to the problem is to give body to the demand as it stands in the Resolution and work it out to our mutual satisfaction. It is on this plan that Rajaji's Formula is to be conceived and it is on the same plan that I have tried to work it out in the course of and as a result of our talks. I contend that either gives you the substance of the Lahore Resolution. Unfortunately, you regret both. And I cannot accept the Lahore Resolution, as you want me to, especially when you seek to introduce into its interpretation theories and claims, which I cannot ever hope to induce India to accept.

"Your constant reference to my not being clothed with representative authority is really irrelevant. I have approached you so that, if and I can agree upon a common course of action, I may use my influence I possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country." (*The Hindu* 29-4-1944; 78:131-132)

Answering the journalists Gandhiji said:

"We are not inhabiting a country full of deserts and wastelands. We are a densely populated country and I do not see the slightest chance for such redistribution. In that respect the Lahore Resolution is quite sound. Where there is

an obvious Muslim majority they should be allowed to constitute a separate state by themselves and that has been fully conceded in Rajaji's Formula or my Formula. There is not much distinction between them. That right is conceded without the slightest reservation. But if it means utterly independent sovereignty so that there is to be nothing in common between the two, I hold it as an impossible proposition. That means war to the knife. It is not a proposition that resolves itself into a voluntary or friendly solution. . .

"I think our formula should be critically and sympathetically examined and it would be found that the formula concedes everything that could reasonably be conceded if we consider ourselves to be one family. . . When two brothers separate, they do not become enemies of one another in the eyes of the world. The world will still recognize them as brothers." (The *Bombay Chronicle* 29-9-1944; 78:140-141)

Answering to some of the questions raised by Shri T. B. Sapru, Gandhiji said on 29-2-1945 :

"The break down took place because we could not come to an agreement of the two-nation theory of Quaid-e-Azam.

"As the correspondence shows I wanted to avoid a Central Government. I suggested an authority acceptable to both the parties, but he would insist first on complete partition as between two nations and then an agreement between them on foreign affairs etc. He would not agree to anything simultaneous.

"Quaid-e-Azam would not have the plebiscite of the Muslims because he thought the League represented the Muslims of India and that the other communities should have no voice as to Pakistan, which was Muslims' exclusive right wherever they were in majority.

"Although I could not agree to the two-nation theory, I agreed on the basis of members of a family desiring severance of the family tie in matters of conflict but not

in all matters so as to become enemies of one of the other as if there was nothing common between the two except enmity." (79:165-167)

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As the war came to an end the British Government was eager to hand over power to Indians. The Cabinet Mission came to find out how best they could implement their decision to quit. Gandhiji met the representatives of the Mission and exchanged letters with Lord Patrick Lawrence and Sir Stafford Crips. While analysing the final proposal he wrote in the *Harijan* - 20-5-1946:

"After four days of searching examination of the state paper issued by the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, my conviction abides that it is the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances. It reflects our weakness, if we would be good enough to see it. The Congress and the Muslim League did not, could not agree. We would grievously err if at this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation. The Mission has not come all the way from England to exploit them. They have come to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule. We must be brave enough to believe their declaration until the contrary is proved. . .

"Their one purpose is to end British rule as early as may be. They would do so, if they could, by their effort, leave a united India not torn asunder by internecine quarrel bordering on civil war." (84:169-172)

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But the efforts failed. Even plans presented later by Lord Wavell could not bring the Congress and the League together. Lord Wavell was keen to bring Muslim League in the Interim Government. Gandhiji's answer to Lord Wavell was.

"The Congress is ready provided the League is willing to come in a straight way. Let Jinnah seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and come to an honourable understanding. It will be a great day if and when the Congress and the League come

together in the Interim Government after a mutual understanding, without any mental reservations, and not to non-co-operate and fight."

*(Mahatma Gandhi, The Last Phase, 1; 261; 85:383)*

Gandhiji' wrote a letter to Lord Wavell on 27-9-1946 :

". . .You were good enough to explain to me at length the result so far of your effort at peace making between the Congress and the Muslim League. In the course of our conversation you told me that your leanings were towards the League. In your opinion there was left only one point of difference between the two parties, viz. the question of representation of a non-League Muslim out of the Congress quota. You recognized fully the reasonableness of the Congress position but you held that it would be an act of high statesmanship if the Congress waived the right for the sake of peace. . . It was the question of non-performance of a duty, which the Congress owed to non-League Muslims. . . If, however, the worst happened and the Muslim League boycott of the Constituent Assembly persisted and the British Government decide to discontinue the Constituent Assembly, I would hold it to be perfectly honourable . . .

"I told you that ... the National Government, having been once summoned, should continue to function unless they themselves felt unable, owing to their own incompetence or inability, to do so. I added that the Congress had put up its very best men, not all in the spirit of gaining power for the party but in the spirit of selfless service of the whole nation. They were so considerate towards you and the League that they had hesitated to fill in the two Muslim seats in the hope of the League coming into Interim Government." (85:385-386)

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Gandhiji was very much perturbed by the communal riots that spread over North India. In a prayer meeting held at Dattapara 10-11-1946 he said:

"If India is destined to be partitioned, I cannot prevent it. But I wish to tell you that Pakistan cannot be established by force. . . What I wish to tell my Muslim brethren is that, whether they live as one people or two, they should live as friends with the Hindus." (86:106)

\* \* \*

In a press interview at Shrirampur on 2-12-1946 he said:

"The question of the exchange of population is unthinkable and impracticable. This question never crossed my mind. In every province everyone is an Indian, be he a Hindu, a Muslim or of any other faith. It would not be otherwise if Pakistan came in full. . . The logical consequence of any such step is too dreadful to contemplate.

"I find that my Ahimsa does not seem to answer the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of the events in Noakhali." (86:182)

\* \* \*

He said at a prayer meeting at Patna on 12-3-1947 :

"Muslims are demanding Pakistan. They should therefore explain its advantages. No one will oppose it if he sees its advantages. But if they want to establish it forcibly, it will be Napakistan (impure land) instead of Pakistan (pure land).

"If we continue to fight among ourselves, the shackles of slavery will never be removed. The British are bound to quit this country. They are a nation of businessmen. They calculate the profit and loss from every transaction. They have realized this, it is no longer profitable to rule India. But what good will that freedom be to us if we continue to fight among ourselves after the British leave?" (87:73)

At another prayer meeting at Patna he said on 13-3-1947.

"If we seek freedom it should be for the whole of India. It is not proper to seek freedom for Hindustan, Pakistan, Achhutistan, or Sikhistan. . . This tendency is wrong. We are all Indians and an evil deed committed anywhere in India is the concern of every Indian. I shall stick to my pledge of 'Do or Die', so long as the whole of India does not become free." (87:77)

\* \* \*

On 20-3-1947 Gandhiji wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru :

"I have long intended to write to you asking you about the Working Committee Resolution on the possible partition of the Punjab. I would like to know the reason behind it. I have to speak about it. I have done so in the absence of full facts with the greatest caution. Kriplani said in answer to a question in Madras that it was possible that the principle might be applied to Bengal also. I was asked by a Muslim leader of note ... if it was applicable to the Muslim majority provinces why it should not be so to a Congress majority province like Bihar. I think I did not know the reason behind the Working Committee Resolution nor had I the opportunity. I could only give my own view, which was against any partition based on communal grounds and two-nation theory. Anything was possible by compulsion. But willing consent required an appeal to reason and heart. Compulsion or a show of it had no place in voluntariness."

*(Mahatma Gandhi, The Last Phase - Vol II pp. 34-35; 87:124.)*

\* \* \*

In the interest of India Gandhiji drafted this agreement on 4-4-1947 to be placed before the concerned parties :

1. " Mr. Jinnah to be given the option of forming a Cabinet.

2. The selection of the Cabinet is left entirely to Mr. Jinnah. The members may be all Muslims, or all non-Muslims, or they may be representatives of all classes and creeds of the Indian people.
3. If Mr. Jinnah accepted this offer, the Congress would guarantee to co-operate freely and sincerely, so long as all the measures that Mr. Jinnah's Cabinet bring forward are in the interests of the Indian people as a whole.
4. The sole referee of what is or is not in the interests of India as a whole will be Lord Mountbatten, in his personal capacity.
5. Mr. Jinnah must stipulate, on behalf of the League or of any other parties represented in the Cabinet formed by him that, so far as he or they are concerned, they will do their utmost to preserve peace throughout India.
6. There shall be no National Guards or any other form of private army.
7. Within the framework hereof Mr. Jinnah will be perfectly free to present for acceptance a scheme of Pakistan even before the transfer of power, provided however, that he is successful in his appeal to reason and not to force of the arms which he abjures for all time for this purpose. Thus, there will be no compulsion in this matter over a province or a part thereof.
8. In the Assembly, the Congress has as decisive majority. But the Congress shall never use that majority against the League policy simply because of its identification with the League but will give its hearty support to every measure brought forward by the League Government, provided that it is in the interest of the whole of India. Whether it is in such interest or not shall be decided by Lord Mountbatten as a man and not in his representative capacity." (87:199)

\* \* \*

At a prayer meeting at New Delhi he said on 7-4-1947 :

"Are the Muslims fighting for Pakistan? They say that they would have Pakistan at any cost. Would they have it by compelling us to give it? Would they take it by force? By force they cannot have an inch of land. By persuasion they may have the whole of India. I would welcome if Jinnah Saheb became the first President of India and formed his own cabinet. But, there would be one condition, namely that with God as witness he should regard Hindus, Muslims, Parsees and all others as equal." (87:244)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji tried to convince the British, the League and the Congress not to go in for partition. Regarding participation in the Constituent Assembly and the division of certain provinces Gandhiji finally worked out a formula :

1. "So far as Pakistan is concerned and so far as the Congress is concerned nothing will be yielded to force. But everything will just be conceded readily if it appeals to reason. Since nothing is to be forcibly taken, it should be open to any province or part thereof to abstain from joining Pakistan and remain with the remaining provinces. Thus, so far as the Congress is aware today, the Frontier Province is with it (Congress) and the eastern part of the Punjab where the Hindus and the Sikhs combined have a decisive majority will remain out of the Pakistan zone. Similarly, the East Assam is clearly outside the zone of Pakistan and in the western part of Bengal including Darjeeling, Dinajpur, Calcutta, Burdwan, Midnapore, Khulna, 24 Parghanas, etc., where the Hindus are in a decisive majority will remain outside the Pakistan zone. And since the Congress is willing to concede to reason everything just, it is open to the Muslim League to appeal to the Hindus, by present just treatment, to reconsider their expressed view and not to divide Bengal.
2. It is well to mention in this connection that if the suggested agreement goes through, the Muslim League will participate fully in the Constituent Assembly in

a spirit of co-operation. It might also be mentioned that it is the settled policy with the Congress that the system of separate electorates has done the greatest harm to the national cause and therefore the Congress will insist on joint electorates throughout with reservation of seats wherever it is considered necessary.

3. The present raid of Assam and the contemplated so-called civil disobedience within should stop altogether.
4. Muslim League intrigues, said to be going on, with the frontier tribes for creating disturbances in the Frontier Province and onward should also stop.
5. Frankly, anti-Hindu legislation hurried through the Sind Legislature in utter disregard of Hindu feeling and opposition should be abandoned.
6. The attempt that is being nakedly pursued in the Muslim majority provinces to pack civil and police services with Muslims irrespective of merit and to the deliberate exclusion of Hindus must be given up forthwith.
7. Speeches inciting to hatred, including murder, arson and loot should cease.
8. Newspapers like the *Dawn*, *Morning News*, *Star of India*, *Azad* and others, whether in English or in any of the Indian vernaculars, should change their policy of inculcating hatred of Hindus.
9. Private armies under the guise of National Guards, secretly or openly armed, should cease.
10. Forcible conversion, rape, abduction, arson and loot culminating in murders of men, women and children by Muslims should stop.
11. What the Congress expects the Muslim League to do will readily be done in the fullest measure by the Congress.
12. What is stated here applies equally to the inhabitants of Princes' India, Portuguese India and French India.

13. The foregoing is the test of either's sincerity and that being granted publicly and in writing in the form of an agreement, the Congress would have no objection whatsoever to the Muslim League forming the whole of the Cabinet consisting of Muslims only or partly Muslims and partly non-Muslims.
14. Subject to the foregoing, the Congress pledges itself to give full co-operation to the Muslim League Cabinet if it is formed and never to use the Congress majority against the League with the sole purpose of defeating the Muslims. On the contrary every measure will be considered on its merits and receive full co-operation from the Congress members whenever a particular measure is probably in the interests of the whole of India." (87:246-247)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji told visitors from South Africa :

"India is now on the threshold of independence. But. . . to my, mind it will be no independence if India is partitioned and the minorities do not enjoy security, protection and equal treatment ... If what is happening today is an earnest of things to come after independence, it bodes no good for the future. . . I therefore feel ill at ease. But I am content to leave the future in God's good hands." (87:257)

In a letter to Vallabhbhai Patel on 13-4-1947 he wrote :

"I also notice that there are frequent differences between your approach and mine. Such being the case, would it be advisable for me to meet the Viceroy even as an individual? . . .

"Please do not see the slightest suggestion of a complaint from me in this. I am thinking of my duty in terms of the country's good. It is quite possible that what you can see while administrating the affairs of millions may not be realized by me. If I were in the place of you all, I would perhaps say and do exactly what you are saying and doing.

*(Bapuna Patro Vallabhbai ne 352-353; 87:271)*

Aruna Asaf Ali and Ashok Mehta met Gandhiji on 6-5- 1947. They wanted to know whether there was any alternative to Pakistan. Gandhiji's reply was.

"The only alternative to Pakistan is undivided India. There is no via media. Once you accept the principle of partition in respect of any province you get into a sea of difficulties. By holding fast to the idea of undivided India, you steer clear of all difficulties.

"The Congress feels helpless. It is not in favour of division. But it says, and with perfect logic, that if Pakistan is to be conceded, justice should be done to non-Muslim majority areas of Bengal and the Punjab, and to the Sikhs, and those provinces should be partitioned on the same principle on which the Muslim League demands the partition of India.

"I do not agree with the view. In my opinion, the Congress should in no circumstances be a party to partition."

Their other question was - If the Britishers go to whom are they to hand over power? Gandhiji's answer was :

"They can hand over power either to the Muslim League or to the Congress. I do not mind which. If they hand it over to the Congress, the Congress will come to a just settlement with the League. But even if they make it over to the League, Congress has nothing to fear. Only let the transfer of power be complete and unqualified." (87:421)

\* \* \*

His spirit crushed by disillusionment, anguish and isolation; he told Manu on 1-6-1947 :

"Today I find myself all alone. (Even the Sardar and Jawahar) think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to remain if partition is agreed

upon. They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention or under British rule.

"But somehow in spite of my being alone in my thoughts I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God himself was lighting my path before me and am able to fight on single-handed.

"I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking of it. Let not the coming generation curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection. But everybody today is impatient for independence. Therefore, there is no alternative." (88:50-51)

\* \* \*

When it was finally decided to divide the country he said on 2-6-1947 :

"I feel helpless. I do not know that a parallel between Ireland and India can be drawn. The Congress and the League have come to terms, the former no doubt unwillingly. That being the case, one has to do the best that is possible under the circumstances. This I am trying to do according to my lights." (88:64)

\* \* \*

At the prayer meeting in New Delhi on 7-6-1947 he said:

"I am being told that while I kept on opposing (the idea of Pakistan) till the Viceroy's declaration and saying that we would not agree to anything under coercion, now that I have become silent, I am being rightly told so. I must confess that I am not happy about this decision. But many things happen in the world that are not to our liking, and yet we have to put up with them. We have to put up with this thing in the same manner ... I also think that the A.I.C.C. is fully entitled not to accept the proposal. But we should not suddenly oppose the Congress to which we have

been loyal all this time and which has earned reputation in the world and has done so much work." (88:97)

"Now it becomes the duty of the Congress to give up what has been granted as Pakistan and make its best efforts in the portion that remains with it. Let the people in Pakistan go ahead in their efforts to bring progress to their land. If this happens the two can live in amity and happiness." (88:99)

\* \* \*

At the prayer meeting in New Delhi on 9-6-1947 he said:

"A friend points out how ineffective were my words when I said that vivisection of the country would be the vivisection of my own body and calls upon me strongly to oppose the partition of the country. But I do not think I am in anyway to be blamed in this matter. When I said that the country should not be divided I was confident that I had the support of the masses. But when the popular view is contrary to mine, should I force my own view on the people? . . . And today I can say with confidence that if all the non-Muslims were with me, I would not let India be divided. But I must admit that today the general opinion is not with me, and so, I must step aside and stay back . . .

"There is nothing in common between me and those who want me to oppose Pakistan except that we are both opposed to the division of the country. There is a fundamental difference between their opposition and mine. How can love and enmity go together?" (88:117-118)

"I now assume that the division of India is a fact and the Congress has been forced to accept it. But if the partition cannot make us happy, why should it make us unhappy?

"We must save our hearts from being fragmented. Otherwise Jinnah Saheb's claim that we are two nations will stand vindicated. I have never believed in it. When

we are descendents of the same ancestors can our nationality change simply from our changing our religion?

"I am happy that Jinnah Saheb has said that Pakistan will not belong to an Emperor, but that it will belong to the people and the minorities too will get a square deal there. I would only like to add that he should put into practice what he says. He should also impress this upon his followers and tell them to forget all talks of wars."  
(88:125)

"Mr. Jinnah is doing something very big. Nobody had ever dreamt that in this day and age Pakistan would become a possibility. But today Pakistan is a reality. True, it is not yet formed. But surely by 15th August it will be formed . . . The Congress says there was no alternative to division. Jinnah says that he will not rest till India is divided. So let there be division. But shall I throw up my hands and accept division? . . .

"Today my tongue, my words have lost their power. But he (Jinnah) still has that power. He is the ruler of Pakistan and nobody can deny it. So I ask the ruler of Pakistan what he intends doing ... He should make his intentions public.

"Pakistan has been granted. The Congress has agreed, willingly or unwillingly. Now the Punjab is to be divided, Bengal is to be divided. I tell you that it is in the hands of the leader of Pakistan to stop the division of the Punjab and Bengal. Why does he not say, 'I now have Pakistan. Why do you fear? We have fought. Let us forget who has been or has not been at fault. I have just signed the declaration with Gandhi that we shall not resort to swords to gain political ends. We shall try to gain those ends by argument. Let us then argue. I will not resort to a referendum" . . . Why should he not say what shape Pakistan is going to take? If he says this, everyone will be happy.

"Pakistan is not something imaginary. India is not something imaginary. I should ask the Congress also to explain. No poison must be spread.

"Pakistan was not inevitable. But when they saw that Hindus and Muslims could not make up their minds to work together in the Constituent Assembly, what could they do? Then they talked with both the parties and both agreed on Hindustan and Pakistan being separate entities ... I shall only say that Mr. Jinnah carries a great responsibility. He has to reassure the world. At any rate, he has to reassure those who are in Pakistan, and those whom he wants to be in Pakistan. He has to draw them to him. If he cannot do so it is bad for India and it is bad for Pakistan. It is bad for the Hindus and for the Muslims." (88:134-136)

"I am eager to hear from them that all are well in Pakistan and that temples also are well looked after. When I see that, I shall bow my head to them. But if this does not happen then I shall know that Mr. Jinnah was uttering a falsehood and I shall begin to suspect Lord Mountbatten who although a commander of high rank was in such a hurry." (88:153)

\* \* \*

In his speech at the A.I.C.C. Delhi 14-6-1947 he said:

"You will no doubt agree that no one could be as much hurt by the division of the country as I am. And I don't think that anyone can be as unhappy today as I am. But what has happened has happened . . . The Working Committee has on your behalf accepted partition. Now we have to consider what our duty is. If you want to throw out the resolution you can do so. But you cannot make any changes in it. And this decision has been taken jointly by the Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government.

"The Working Committee does not approve of the scheme in its entirety. But even so it has accepted it. The Cabinet Mission Plan had been devised by the British Government, but not this new plan. Both, the Congress and the League have a share in its formulation.

"The decision that has been arrived at has been reached with your complicity and yet you complain of the Working Committee, the Working Committee which has men of such great calibre on it. Those people have always said that the Congress would not accept Pakistan and I was opposed to Pakistan even more. However, we may leave aside my position. The decision has not been mine to take and the Working Committee has accepted it because there was no other way. They now see it clearly that the country is already divided into two camps.

I criticize them, of course, but afterwards what? Shall I assume the burden that they are carrying? Shall I become a Nehru, or a Sardar, or a Rajendra Prasad? Even if you should put me in their place I do not know what I should be able to do." (88:153-154)

"The demand of the times is that we should bridle our tongues and do only what will be for India's good . . . We have to draw something good out of this bad thing. I am not the one to be upset by defeat.

"This decision puts our religions on trial. The world is watching us. .. If you show the generosity of true Hinduism, you will pass in the eyes of the world. If not you will have proved Mr. Jinnah's thesis that Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations, that Hindus will forever be Hindus and Muslims forever Muslims, that the two will never unite, and that the Gods of the two are different." (88:155)

"Let us not recognize Pakistan in our hearts; let us not consider anyone an enemy or an outsider. . . our thoughts turn in wrong directions. People continue to proclaim that they will teach the Muslims a lesson. We thus lend support to the argument for the perpetuation of Pakistan.

"It is Mr. Jinnah who created Pakistan. We had not thought it possible even in our dreams that he would manage to get it. But he is a brave man. With the help of the British he has succeeded in getting Pakistan. If we now shut our eyes to it and

go about saying that we shall teach the Muslims a lesson, it is not going to undo the fact of Pakistan." (88:168)

He said in his speech at the prayer meeting in New Delhi on 7-7-1947 :

"What has happened has happened. Nothing is to be gained by brooding over it or blaming others. . .

"The easiest way would be for the Congress and the League to come to an understanding without the intervention or help of the Viceroy. . . I do not in the least imply by this that the decision about Pakistan should be undone. It should be taken as final, no more open discussion now. But if ten representatives of either party sit together in a mud hut and resolve that they have arrived at an understanding, then I can say that the decision they arrive at will be a thousand times better than the present Bill which is before the British parliament, and which envisages the setting up of two Dominions." (88:296-297)

\* \* \*

He expressed his views in discussion with visitors on 17-7-1947 at New Delhi.

"The British have not partitioned the country. It has been done with the consent of the Muslim League and the Congress. . . The leaders had no other alternative. They thought it was better to partition the country so that both the parts could live happily and peacefully rather than let the country go to pieces. About this I did hold a different view. My view was that no one could take an inch of land by resorting to violence and murder. Let the whole country be reduced to ashes. . . But though nonviolence is a creed with me, it is not with the Congress. . . It is true that I had believed that our Satyagraha struggles were based on non-violence, only lately I realized that it was not true. I admit my mistake." (88:356)

\* \* \*

At a prayer meeting in New Delhi on 12-9-1947 he said:

"Just because the country has been divided into India and Pakistan, it does not befit us to slaughter the Muslims who have stayed behind. The Government of Pakistan has forgotten its duty. I shall appeal to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah who is the Governor General of Pakistan to desist from such politics. I would tell him that the Hindus and Sikhs have remained in Pakistan to serve him. Why are the Hindus and Sikhs scared now? Because they are afraid that they and their wives would be abducted. They are in danger and so they are fleeing. . . Should I say that Hindus and Sikhs of Delhi and those who come from outside should become barbarians because Muslims are becoming barbarians? . . .

"The people of Pakistan resorted to ways of barbarism and so did the Hindus and Sikhs. And so, how could one barbarian find fault with another barbarian? That is why I would like to appeal to all of you to save Hinduism and Sikhism. Save India and Pakistan and thus save the whole country. I would like you to return evil with good. . .

"I appeal to the Muslims that they should open-heartedly declare that they belong to India and are loyal to the union. If they are true to God and wish to be in the Indian Union, they just cannot be enemies of the Hindus. And I want the Muslims here to tell the Muslims in Pakistan, who have become enemies of the Hindus, not to go mad. If you are going to indulge in such madness, we cannot co-operate with you. We will remain faithful to the Union and salute the tricolour. We have to follow the orders of the government."

"The Muslims wanted Pakistan and they have got it. Why are they fighting now and with whom are they fighting? Because they have taken Pakistan do they want the whole of India too? That will never happen. Why are they killing the weak Hindus and Sikhs? Let both the governments come to a mutual agreement that they have to protect the minorities in their respective countries.

(Prarthana Pravachan - I; 298-305; 89:173-177)

"I did not like the statement made by Quaid-e-Azam. He says the Muslims are being taken to Pakistan because they have been harassed in the Indian Union. He says there should be food for them and land to settle them. Pakistan, he says, is a poor country and so those who have money should send it there."

(Prarthana Pravachan - I; 305-310; 89:183)

\* \* \*

At a prayer meeting in New Delhi on 14-9-1947 he said:

"It is a failure of the government of Pakistan that the minorities had to run away from there. . . Today the situation in Pakistan is such that even good people are running away. Lahore is almost empty." (89:185)

At another prayer meeting he said:

"Let us forget Pakistan. Let it do whatever it wants. Let us think only about India. Then the whole world will admire us and be with us. Otherwise, the world which has been looking towards India all this time will start ignoring it. The countries of the world regarded India as a great country inhabited by good people who could not be corrupted. That faith then would be destroyed." (89:215)

At the prayer meeting in New Delhi on 13-1-1948 he said:

"... But before partition became a fact the hearts had already become divided. Muslims were also at fault here, though we cannot say that they alone were at fault. Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims all are to blame. Now all of them have to become friends again. Let them look to God, not to Satan. . . In the name of religion we have become irreligious.

"Since I have undertaken the fast in the cause of the Muslims, a great responsibility has come to devolve on them. They must understand that if they are to live with the Hindus as brothers they must be loyal to the Indian Union and not to

Pakistan. I shall not ask them whether they are loyal or not. I shall judge them by their conduct."

(Prarthana Pravachan - II; 293-300; 90:414-415)

Referring to Vallabhbhai Patel's statement to the press regarding the question of payment of Rs. 55 crore to Pakistan (Appendix C and D) Gandhiji said at a prayer meeting on 16-1-1948.

"It is never a light matter for any cabinet to alter a deliberate settled policy.\* Yet our cabinet, responsible in every sense of the term, has with equal deliberation, yet promptness unsettled their settled facts. They deserved the warmest thanks from the whole country, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Assam Frontier. And I know that all the nations of the earth will proclaim this gesture as one which only a large-hearted cabinet like ours could rise to. This is no policy of appeasement of the Muslims. . .

"What then was the actuating motive? It was my fast. It changed the whole outlook. With the fast they could not go beyond what the law permitted and required them to do. But the present gesture on the part of the Government of India is one of unmixed goodwill. It has put the Pakistan Government on its honour. It ought to lead to an honourable settlement not only of the Kashmir question, but of all the differences between the two dominions. Friendship should replace the present enmity. Demands of equity supercede the letter of the law. I have been asked to end the fast because of this great act of the Union Government. I wish I could persuade to do so. . .

"In the name of the people our Government has taken a liberal step without counting the cost what would be Pakistan's counter gesture. The ways are many if there is the will. Is it there?" (90:435)

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\*Government's earlier stand regarding the payment of cash balance to Pakistan.

## Appendix A

### [The Lahore Resolution - 23rd March 1940]

The resolution was in these terms:

"Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, the geographically continuous units are demarcated in regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority and in the North-western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

"That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the Constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a majority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the Constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them."

"This session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles 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."

*[History of Modern India - Vol. I - V. D. Mahajan - pp. 310-311]*

## Appendix B

### Rajaji's Formula (1944)

1. Subject to the terms set out below as regards the Constitution for Free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional Interim Government for the transitional period.
2. After the termination of the war, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the northwest and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign state separate from Hindustan, such decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either state.
3. It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.
4. In the event of separation, mutual agreement shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.
5. Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.
6. These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility of the governance of India."

## Appendix A

### [Vallabhbhai Patel's Statement to the Press - New Delhi, 12th January 1948]

I am sure all of you have read the Press statement of Mr. Ghulam Mohammad, Finance Minister of Pakistan, on the payment of cash balances to the Pakistan Government. The Finance Minister of Pakistan has had a varied career of responsibility as a civil servant—Finance Minister of Hyderabad State, and a participant in 'big business'. One would not normally expect in his statements the defects of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. But I regret to observe that not only does his statement abound in these, but in his utter desperation at seeing his financial anticipations wrecked by the actions of his own Government in regard to Kashmir, he has cast discretion and judgment to the winds and descended down to the familiar arts of a bully and a blackmailer.

I use these epithets deliberately, for to anyone reading his statement dispassionately it would be obvious that he has tried to browbeat the Reserve Bank of India into submission by a liberal use of threats and insinuations, has charged the Government of India with bad faith in the hope that the charge would gain for him his coveted ransom, and has tried to invoke the assistance of international opinion in the expectation that the threatened exposure before the world would make the Government of India bend in its attitude on this subject. I quite concede that the desperate situation in which he finds himself calls for rather drastic remedies but we are entitled to expect of him a balanced approach to this problem rather than these filibustering tactics, the failure of which is as certain as daylight. Further, in his overzeal to achieve his object by all manner of means, the Pakistan Finance Minister has, I would presently show, paid little attention to truth and shown little regard for facts.

Let us first deal with his statement that 'none of us had the slightest indication that the Kashmir problem would be dragged in', his accusation of bad faith and

similar other statements of an accusatory nature. To deal with these I would give in brief a resume of the course of negotiations. The series of meetings held between the representatives of the Pakistan and the Indian Governments in the last week of November were intended to iron out all our differences including the question of Kashmir. The discussions held were not confined to mere partition issues, but covered Kashmir, refugees and other important evacuation matters as well. On the 26th November talks on Kashmir were held in an atmosphere of hope, goodwill and cordiality, and were continued simultaneously with the discussions of financial and other questions on subsequent days. On the 27th November, informal and provisional agreement was reached on the two issues of division of cash balances, and the sharing of the uncovered debt. The Pakistan representatives were in some haste and tried to hustle us into agreeing to announce these agreements. We resisted it. Indeed, on the 27th evening, I issued a statement to the Press asking them not to speculate on the nature of the talks, but to wait until an authoritative statement was issued after the talks had concluded.

Here is what I said then: "All-out efforts are being made for a settlement on all outstanding matters, but any speculations on the nature of the talks would do more harm than good. All that I can say at present is that discussions are being held and the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government are staying on till Saturday. A detailed statement will be issued when the talks are concluded. Till then reports about any settlement on any individual item or issue between the two Governments must be regarded as premature and lacking authority."

The next morning my statement which was read at a meeting at Government House at which both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of Pakistan were present, that we would not regard the settlement of these issues as final unless agreement had been reached on all outstanding issues. I made it quite clear then that we would not agree to any payment until the Kashmir affair was settled. Accordingly, no announcement of the agreement was made. In the meantime,

Pakistan representatives postponed their departure and talks on Kashmir and other matters were continued with rather varying results on different issues. Working in this somewhat improved atmosphere, we reached a settlement on all other outstanding issues relating to partition, and the informal agreement was reported to the Partition Council at its meeting on the 1st December, though they were to be reduced to writing later. This was completed on the 2nd December, but it was agreed even then not to make an announcement on the subject until after the Lahore discussions on Kashmir and other outstanding issues had been, as was then hoped, successfully concluded.

The position was further confirmed by the submission made on the 3rd December by both the parties before the Arbitral Tribunal that the prospects of all the references being settled were very good, that a further meeting was to be held on the 8th and 9th at Lahore and the situation would then be clearer. The discussions were resumed at Lahore on the 8th and 9th December. But in the meantime, it was found that feverish attempts were being made by the Pakistan Government to secure the payment of Rs. 55 crores which it had been agreed to allocate to Pakistan out of the cash balances. We resisted these attempts. Nevertheless evidently in an attempt to isolate the issue and force our hands contrary to the understanding reached, the Pakistan High Commissioner on the 7th December gave a Press interview announcing the agreement reached on the financial issues. When, however, we stuck to our previous position and reiterated it during the Lahore discussion, though in deference to Pakistan's insistence on the announcement of the agreement on financial issues we agreed to make a short statement on the 9th December in the Legislature, which was then sitting in Delhi, the Pakistan Finance Minister showed also such indecent haste in rushing to the Press in this matter that he actually gave an interview on the subject on the 7th December itself. Pakistan's game was by then quite clear. Armed with this understanding on the question of public announcement by us of the agreement on financial issues, their attitude on

the Kashmir stiffened and the prospect of agreement which seemed so near at Delhi receded. I then felt it necessary in my statement to the Assembly on 9th December to make it quite clear that the implementation of this agreement was to be as far as possible simultaneous with the settlement of the Kashmir issue. The Pakistan Government did not take any exception to this statement at the time. In the subsequent detailed statement which I made on the 12th in the presence of the Pakistan High Commissioner, I again repeated that the successful implementation of this agreement depended on the continuation of goodwill, spirit of accommodation and conciliation on the other vital issues. Quite obviously Kashmir was one of such issues. Pakistan still made no protest. To all approaches for payment of the Rs. 55 crores, we returned a negative answer. Then came the final talks on the Kashmir issue on the 22nd December. It was then for the first time during these discussions that the Pakistan Prime Minister took exception to our stand that the financial and Kashmir issues stood together as regards implementation and asked for immediate implementation of the payment of Rs. 55 crores. We made it clear to him then and subsequently in our telegram dated the 30th December that we stood by the agreement but that in view of the hostile attitude of the Pakistan Government in regard to Kashmir the payment of the amount would have to be postponed in accordance with our stand throughout the negotiations.

Thus, it is our case that far from our having done anything unfair to Pakistan or in breach of any agreement, it is the Pakistan representatives who were all the time trying to soft-pedal the Kashmir issue in order to secure concessions from us on the financial issues and to manoeuvre us into making an isolated public announcement on the subject without reference to other vital issues between the two Governments. We consistently and successfully resisted this despite attempt by the Pakistan High Commissioner and Finance Minister to force our hands. Far from there being bad faith on our part, we genuinely and sincerely meant this settlement

as part of an overall settlement which would have been conducive to the maintenance of friendly and peaceful relations between the two sister Dominions.

It is also our claim that in agreeing to these terms of the financial settlement, we were actuated by generous sentiments towards Pakistan and a sincere desire, as I made clear in the Partition Council, "to see Pakistan grow into a prosperous neighbour". We hoped that Pakistan would reciprocate on other issues which unfortunately still divided us. That the financial settlement was attractive to Pakistan and would be a great asset to Pakistan's economy is clear from the statements issued by the Pakistan High Commissioner and Sir Archibald Rowlands (former Finance Member of Viceroy's Council). It is, therefore, quite plain that having secured terms which were essential to hold Pakistan's finances together, the Pakistan Government failed in their obligation to respond to India's gesture on other issues.

I would also point out that the Government of India took a more comprehensive view of our obligation to the securing of a just and peaceful settlement than the Pakistan Government. We realized throughout that neighbourly relations between ourselves and Pakistan could be restored and maintained only if the spirit of amity, tolerance and goodwill pervaded throughout the entire field of controversy; the Pakistan Government obviously intended to take undue advantage of our generous attitude and exhibit these virtues in a narrow, restricted and selfish sphere. The need for a comprehensive view was and still is quite clear. Apart from other factors, India has taken over the entire debt of undivided India and depends on Pakistan's bona fides and goodwill to make equated payment by easy and long-term installments of its debt to India after a four-year moratorium period. We cannot, therefore, afford to let conflicts endanger our credit and security and throw into the melting-pot some of the vital points in the financial agreement itself. Obviously, therefore, India must provide against strained relations worsening into open breach

and thereby, as I was careful to point out in my statement of the 12th December, "placing all the good work achieved in jeopardy".

We are, therefore, fully justified in providing against Pakistan's possible continuance of aggressive actions in regard to Kashmir by postponing the implementation of the agreement. We have made it clear to the Pakistan Government more than once that we stand by the agreement which we reached. The agreement does not bind the Government of India to any fixed date for payment and we cannot reasonably be asked to make a payment of cash balances to Pakistan when an armed conflict with its forces is in progress and threatens to assume an even more dangerous character, which is likely to destroy the whole basis of the financial agreement and would endanger other parts of the agreement, such as arrangements over taking over of debt, and division of stores, etc.

The Pakistan Finance Minister claims the amount of Rs. 55 crores as belonging to Pakistan. He has apparently overlooked the fact that on the 14th August 1947, after the Partition Council had decided to allocate the working balance of Rs. 20 crores to the Pakistan Government, the then undivided Government of India issued an order in the following terms to the Reserve Bank:

"PLEASE TRANSFER TWENTY, HALF OF FORTY CRORES, FROM CENTRAL CLOSING CASH BALANCE ON THE 14TH INSTANT TO PAKISTAN AND BALANCE TO INDIAN DOMINION AS OPENING BALANCE ON THE 15TH."

A copy of this telegram was endorsed to the Pakistan wing of the then Finance Department, and no objection was, or has been, raised to this accounting. It follows from this that so far as the bank accounts are concerned, there is no balance of the old undivided Government to be operated upon; the money stands in the name of the Indian Dominion and it is only on the authority of the Indian Dominion that any share can be allocated to the Government of Pakistan. The relevant portion of the Partition Council minutes also runs thus:

"In addition to the 20 crores, already made over to Pakistan Rs. 55 crores will be allocated to Pakistan in full and final settlement of its claim for a share of the undivided Government's cash balance and of the cash balance investment account."

It is clear, therefore, that nothing belongs to Pakistan until the Government of India transfer the amount to its account.

This clear-cut position makes the Pakistan Finance Minister's outburst against the Reserve Bank appears somewhat hysterical and rhetorical. The Reserve Bank cannot do anything without the specific instructions of the Government of India who are the only competent authority to operate the account. He has accused the Government of India of interfering in the discharge of its duties towards the Pakistan Government and has characterized this alleged interference not only as an unfriendly act, but as an act of aggression. I wish to say in the most emphatic terms that this accusation is completely baseless and devoid of any element of truth whatsoever. I understand that the Reserve Bank of India first received the demand for the payment of Rs. 55 crores on the 6th of this month in a memorandum handed over to the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank at Karachi. I also understand that the Governor to whom this memorandum was telegraphed by the Deputy Governor has sent an appropriate reply. So far as the Government of India are concerned, I would say that when the Reserve Bank mentioned from the Bank, the Government of India made it clear to the Bank that it was a matter for the Bank alone to decide. Indeed, the Government of India have made every effort to avoid dragging the Reserve Bank into the controversy. The blame for attempting to force the Reserve Bank into taking sides must rest with the Pakistan Finance Minister. Neither the manner nor the nature of the attempt reflects creditably on the honesty of purpose and the motives of the Pakistan Government.

Gentlemen, I think I have said enough to prove how unfounded and insubstantial are the allegations made by the Pakistan Finance Minister against the Government of India. We have also shown how we have held consistently to the

position that the settlement of the financial issues cannot be isolated from that of other vital issues and has to be implemented simultaneously. There can be no question of our repudiating the agreement reached. We only desire that the appropriate atmosphere conditioned by the agreement must be created for its implementation. If the Pakistan Government desires for payment of cash balance in advance, it is obvious that they are motivated by factors wholly opposed to the spirit underlying the agreement. We are thus fully justified in resisting these machinations which, if successful, would vitiate the very basis of the agreement and adversely affect, by facilitating Pakistan's aggressive designs on India, the implementation of other vital parts of the agreement.

The *Bombay Chronicle*, 13-1-1948 (90 : 550-555)

## Appendix D

### [Government Communique]

The Government of India have fully clarified their position in regard to the financial settlement arrived at between them and the Government of Pakistan. They have declared that they abide by that settlement, but that the implementation of it, in regard to the cash balances, must be considered as part of an overall settlement of outstanding questions in issue between India and Pakistan. They regret that the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government should have advanced arguments which are unsupported by facts and which they cannot accept. The factual position has been clearly stated in the statements issued by the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Finance Minister of the Government of India. The facts and arguments contained in these statements represent the deliberate and unanimous opinion of the Cabinet. They regret that the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government should have again challenged these incontrovertible facts which justify fully the position taken up by the Government of India both on legal and other grounds.

The Government have, however, shared the worldwide anxiety over the fast undertaken by Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation. In common with him they have anxiously searched for ways and means to remove ill will, prejudice and suspicion, which have poisoned the relations between India and Pakistan. Impelled by the earnest desire to help in every way open to them in the object which Gandhiji has at heart, the Government have sought for some tangible and striking contribution to the movement for ending the physical suffering of the nation's soul and to turn the nation's mind from the present distemper, bitterness and suspicion to constructive and creative effort. The Government are anxious to remove as far as possible, without detriment to the national good, every cause, which leads to friction between India and Pakistan.

In view of the appeal made by Gandhiji to the nation, the Government have decided to remove the one cause of suspicion and friction between the two States which, consistently with national honour and interest, it is in their power to remove. They make this spontaneous gesture in the earnest hope that it will be appreciated in the spirit in which it is made and that it will help in producing an atmosphere of goodwill for which Gandhiji is suffering crucifixion of the flesh and thereby lead this great servant of the nation to end his fast and add still further to his unparalleled services to India.

The Government have decided to implement immediately the financial agreement with Pakistan in regard to the cash balances. The amount due to Pakistan on the basis of the agreement, i.e., Rs. 55 crores, minus the expenditure incurred by the Government of India since August 15 on Pakistan account will, therefore, be paid to the Government of Pakistan.

The decision is the Government contribution, to the best of its, ability, to the non-violent and noble effort made by Gandhiji in accordance with the glorious traditions of this great country, for peace and goodwill.

*The Hindustan Times*, 16-1-948 (90 : 555-556)

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