

## Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Indian National Congress: A Nationalist Alliance in Politics

### ABSTRACT

*This article explores the significant role played by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the INC in forging a nationalist alliance in the political landscape of India. Azad, a notable politician during the freedom movement, emerged as a pivotal figure in bridging religious and ideological divides within the Congress party. This study delves into the strategies employed by Azad and the Congress to foster a united front against British colonial rule, while simultaneously addressing communal tensions and advocating for an inclusive vision of nationalism. By examining the complexities and achievements of this alliance, this article offers valuable insights into the dynamics of nationalist politics in India's struggle for independence. In the present study, Azad's speeches, writings, and political engagements are analyzed to shed light on his vision of a composite nationalism that transcended religious barriers and aimed for a pluralistic society. By shedding light on this critical alliance, the article offers a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics that shaped the Indian nationalist movement and underscores the instrumental role played by Maulana Azad in realizing India's aspirations for freedom and unity.*

**Keywords:** Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Indian National Congress, All India Muslim League, Khilafat Movement, Hindu-Muslim unity, anti-imperialism

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## **Introduction**

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad a learned Muslim scholar, anti-imperialist, and propagator of composite nationalism commenced his politics from the All India Muslim League's (AIML) platform, and later on joined Indian National Congress (INC). His association with the INC was long-lasting. After entering the politics of India using INC as a platform, he never looked back. He remained politically affiliated with the party even after the partition of India. Analysis of Azad's writings and politics reveals that he was not free from contradictions except on two issues: anti-imperialism and Hindu-Muslim harmony and opposed the idea of Indian partition on communal and religious lines.

Azad began his politics as an activist. He, after Viceroy Curzon's decision about Bengal (1905) met revolutionaries like Shyam Sunder Chakravarty and Aurobindo Ghose and got affiliated with such factions (Azad, 1988, p. 5). He observed that every radical activity was limited to Bengal, so he convinced the Revolutionists to expand their sphere of influence in all parts of India. In several major cities in northern India and Bombay, similar covert societies have been established (Azad, 1988, p. 6). Azad being an anti-imperialist propagated the cause of *Jihad*. He became the mentor for the pupils who were travelling to Turkey for *Jihad*. Azad had contacts with Obeidullah Sindhi and Maulana Mahmud Hassan during that period, intelligence reports show (Datta, 1990, p. 105). Furthermore, he was alleged of participating actively in the Silk Letter Conspiracy; as a result, he was exiled from Bengal and permitted to remain in Ranchi with the condition that he would not indulge in political activities from where later got released on December 27, 1919 (Datta, 1990, p. 106). It was an epoch of Hindu-Muslim unity and *Khilafat* Movement was one of its expressions.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started his political career long before the *Khilafat* Movement. The historical records unfold his presence at the All India Muslim League's (AIML) foundation in Dhaka (Noorani, 2010, p. 11). Azad supported K. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill (a bill favouring free education for Indians) in the AIML's meeting in March 1912 (Noorani, 2010, p. 11). He joined AIML on December 10, 1913, and remained in it till 1928 (Pirzada, 1995, p. 264). In the seventh session of AIML at Agra, he delivered a serious speech pleading for the "immediate repeal of the Press Act" (Noorani, 2010, p. 11). During the eighth session of the AIML in Bombay (December 1915–January 1916), he was a member of the committee for the Scheme of Reforms (Shahabuddin, 2007, 18). Later, at the sixteenth session in Bombay (December 1924), he joined another committee to develop the demand for Muslim representation in legislatures and other political bodies (Shahabuddin, 2007, 18).

Azad desired inter-communal harmony not only to achieve the ideal of peaceful coexistence but also to get rid of foreign domination. In 1913, he urged Muslims to cooperate with Hindus for getting maximum benefits against British Imperialism. At the Special Congress Session held in Delhi on September 15, 1923, he highlighted his part in propagating the cause of India's freedom since 1912. For him, the path to achieving this objective was abandoning communalism and collaboration with INC. He admired the communal harmony achieved in 1916 (Hameed, 1990, 145-146). Turkey sided with Germany against the UK during the First World War. The period from 1916-20 reflects Azad's pro-Turkish activities propagating pan-Islamism against British Imperialism. The *Khilafat* movement was visualized as a comprehensive movement to fulfil his idea of Hindu-Muslim unity.

To preserve Khalifat and protect the Holy places of Muslims, the Khilafat Movement was launched in India after the First World War. Azad deemed it binding for all Muslims to defend the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire and to resist the one who would raise arms against him since the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire was the *Khalifa* and the *Imam* of the Muslim world. Azad was convinced that Khilafat is fundamental to the existence of society (Ashraf, 1985, p.82). *AlHilal* and *AlBalagh* during the movement propagated anti-imperialism and promoted pan-Islamism. He along with others signed the fatwa on non-cooperation (Hassan, 1981, p. 908). His speech at the Khilafat Conference, February 28-29, 1920 as a president settled the philosophical orientations of the movement, focusing on Khilafat, non-cooperation and communal relations of Indians (Qureshi, 1999, p. 141). A delegation consisting of 35 delegates met the Viceroy on January 19, 1920, including Ali Brothers, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Ansari, Abdul Bari, Seth Chotani, Abul Kalam Azad, Hasrat Mohani and Gandhi on the Khilafat issue (Bamford, 1974, p. 148). In May 1920, the Central *Khilafat* Committee constituted a subcommittee consisting of Chotani, Shaukat Ali, A. H. S. Khatri, Muhammad Ali of Dharair and Abul Kalam Azad to draft a scheme for the plan of action for non-cooperation (Bamford, 1974, p. 152).

The non-cooperation promoted abandoning titles, resigning state's jobs and stopping giving taxes. Azad sturdily supported Gandhi during the entire period and remained closely associated with his agitational politics during the *Khilafat* episode. Azad was detained on December 10, 1921, for addresses at Mirzapur Park in Calcutta on July 1 and 15, 1921 (Datta, 1990, p. 121) followed by a year's sentence on February 9, 1922, under section 124-A of the Indian Penal Court (Datta, 1990, p. 121). During the *Khilafat* and Non-Cooperation Movements Gandhi and Azad worked together. Azad operated as the Ideologist of the *Khilafat* agitation. He legitimized non-cooperation from the Quranic citations in his various speeches and attempted to bring together the Hindus and the Muslims. He wrote *Masala-e-Khilafat wa Jazirat-u-Arab* in 1920 dealing with the anti-imperialist stance.

Azad in *Khutbat-e-Azad* rejected the notion of *Sangathan* (organization) on communal lines. He declared that INC was the only *Sangathan* which was the need of the hour (Azad, 1981, p. 207-208). Azad wanted a strong INC to combat the imperialist policies, therefore when Congress was caught up in the dilemma; he came forward for its salvage. By 1923, INC was divided into "Gandhites" and the "Swarajists". Azad tried to bridge the gulf between them. He convinced both groups to carry out their plans and told them that there could be no conflict between them so long as both were sturdily united in their common cause of Indian freedom. It was because of Azad that "Swarajists" were allowed to fight the Council elections, even though they had launched the *Swaraj* party in January 1923 (Datta, 1990, p. 129-130) He facilitated the re-entrance of the followers of C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel (the Swarajist) into the Congress. Azad saved Congress from a split and reconciled both groups to a compromise formula and made the opportunity for both groups to follow the programme they wanted.

Azad's antipathy to communal politics was one of the factors in his unshakable ties to the progressive sections of the INC. Using the platform of INC; he earned the status of a significant national leader. Azad served the Congress Working Committee and remained general secretary and president many times. In September 1923, he became the youngest president of the INC at the age of thirty-five (Azad, 1988, 12). Azad's speech as president at the special INC meeting held in Delhi on September 15, 1923, reflected a variety of thoughts. He highlighted the problems India was facing, urged the people to strive for change and declared the British Government 'blatantly unjust' and that the British Government draws its strength from 'our negligence' (Johri, 1993, p. 314). Azad wanted non-violence and non-cooperation as tools for the achievement of his objectives. He justified these methods with the argument that 'confrontation', 'non-cooperation' and 'civil disobedience' are effective tools for fragile nations (Johri, 1993, p. 321). For him, to counter the proliferating of 'evil' the 'non-cooperation' is the ultimate law (Johri, 1993, p. 321). The programme of non-cooperation as provided in his presidential address declared "self-sacrifice", "self-restraint" and "moral strength" to be used as the "prescribed weapons". For him, non-violence was a soul of non-cooperation.

Azad on the one hand was propagating non-cooperation but at the same time, he was asking not to boycott the Councils and Assemblies as an alternative platform for propagating their views (Johri, 1993, p. 327). He wanted to give tough resistance to British Imperialism and devised a twofold strategy to cope with British imperialism by suggesting in the 1923, INC session that few Congress members should join the Councils to check on imperialist policies and another section "should continue its activities outside" (Johri, 1993, p. 327). He urged the Muslims to leave the "policy of aloofness" and wanted them to trust the Hindus by abandoning the "policy

of communalism". He believed that India's need was one "Single Sangathan" that is "the INC" for the acquisition of ultimate freedom.

The period from 1923-27 witnessed communal unrest. Delhi, Nagpur, Lucknow, Saharanpur, Kohat and Allahabad were the main affected areas (Mathur, 1980, p. 165-166). 1923 witnessed 11 riots, 1924 had 18, 16 in 1925, 35 in 1926 and 1927 had a figure of 31 (Datta, 1990, p. 132). One noticeable feature of the riots which occurred before 1925-26 was that they were exclusively confined to the cities (Mathur, 1980, p. 166) but afterwards, they also spread to the villages. Efforts were made to bring harmony to the country and to eliminate the communal tension. A Unity Conference was convened on September 26, 1924, under Muhammad Ali Johar's chairmanship (Datta, 1990, p. 132), 300 delegates belonging to various political parties attended the conference (Datta, 1990, p. 130-131). Azad at this conference strived to decrease the tension between the two communities and declared that Islam does not include cow sacrifice as an integral part, and Muslims reducing their consumption of beef to promote communal harmony" (Iyer, 1968, p. 37). A resolution initiated by Azad was passed stressing to resolve all disagreements on the issue through local adjudication or by judicature (Desai, 1946, p. 62).

Communal tension was created due to propagated Hindu tinge in the nationalist thoughts and its propaganda at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It supported the spread of a Muslim tinge among the Muslim nationalists. The communal consciousness escorted the demand for political representation in the legislature on a communal basis. The Post *Khilafat* movement period witnessed growing communal consternation, especially among the Hindus and the Muslims. To repress the increasing communal rift, Motilal Nehru and Azad issued a manifesto in the form of a circular letter about the formation of the Indian National Union on July 31, 1926. The latter was supported by Tej Bahadur Sapru, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Sarojini Naidu, Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Syed Mahmud, Lala Duni Chand and Choudhry Khaliqzaman (Mitra, 1926).

The Indian National Union (INU) was up to those who did not belong to any communal organization. It aimed to resolve disputes among different sections of the village community. The above-mentioned manifesto aimed at organising those sections of enlightened Indians who agreed the communal tensions will damage nationalism and will lead to eventual devastation (Datta, 1990, p. 133). On December 10, 1926, a convention was called to finalize the objectives of the INU. The draft rules and regulations were aimed firstly at promoting and fostering the feeling of one nation negating separate identities and secondly at launching vigorous propaganda in nurturing mutual goodwill (Datta, 1990, p. 133). This manifesto and Indian National Union was an effort for inter-communal concord but it could not accomplish its ultimate purpose as the leadership of the AIML was trying to protect the

rights of the Muslims, whereas Azad was ready to sacrifice many Muslim demands which could be a threat to the cordial relations with the Hindus, as he had mentioned in his address to the Unity Conference in 1924 regarded the beef eating habit of the Muslims.

The efforts for communal harmony were also made on the All India Muslim League front. A group of prominent Muslims met in Delhi in March 1927 for some solution. Muhammad Ali Jinnah being President formulated the formula for the solution to the Hindu-Muslim dilemma, commonly known as the Delhi proposals. A resolution was passed demanding Sindh's separation and NWFP and Balochistan were asked to be given reforms. The most striking feature of the Delhi proposal was the Muslim surrender of the 'separate electorate' as a goodwill gesture. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad endorsed the Delhi Proposal at the League session at Calcutta in January 1928, which according to him secured Muslims' majority in five provinces against nine Hindu majority provinces, providing Muslims with an opportunity to treat their counterpart on equal footing. For Azad, it would help the "assertion of Muslim rights" (Pirzada, 1995, p. 264).

In 1927, the Simon Commission was set for the solution of constitutional questions in India. This brought the Indian leaders to formulate a scheme of the Indian constitution acceptable to all the parties. From 1927 onwards the constitutional question dominated Indian politics and various attempts were made to resolve it. The Nehru Report, Jinnah's Fourteen Points, All Parties Conference, Simon Commission Report and the Three Round Table Conferences from 1930-32 could not settle the communal problem. For this reason, Gandhi called the communal problem a "problem of problems" (Hassan, 1979, p. 266). The point of disagreement in all the above-mentioned events was the legislative representation of minorities, particularly Muslims. The "all-white" commission with "non-inclusion of Indians" in it promoted protests all over India, followed by a nationwide boycott (Bandyopandhay, 2007, p. 314). When the Commission arrived, Azad visited Punjab for propagating INC's boycott of the commission (Ahluwalia & Ahluwalia, 1985, p. 127). Simon was asked to go back. The Simon Report's second section presented the Commission's recommendations and proposals to resolve the constitutional issue and communal rift.

Before the arrival of the Simon Report, the All Parties Conference summoned by INC appointed Motilal Nehru as its chairman to draft a report for the unanimously acceptable Constitution the Report recommended full central and provincial responsible governments. The report endorsed the formation of NWFP and Sindh's separation from Bombay on the grounds of Sindh's financial self-sufficiency. It rejected the separate electorate and the principle of weightage. It recommended the unitary form of government at the centre. The Nehru Report took the view that adult franchises as a solution to the Muslim representation issue in India (*The All Parties Conference,*

1928). Shaukat Ali, Hasrat Mohani and Muhammad Ali Johar opposed the Report on the ground that Muslims were denied the federal form of Government and one-third representation in the legislature. Agha Khan and Muhammad Shafi rejected it based on the rejection of separate electorates. "The nationalist Muslims like Azad, M. A. Ansari, Syed Mahmud and Saifuddin Kitchlew supported the Report" (Mitra, 1929). On 31<sup>st</sup> March-1<sup>st</sup> April, 1931 session of the Jamiat, at Karachi, Azad endorsed in his Presidential address the Nehru Report claiming that the 'safeguards' agreed upon were sufficient to convince Muslims to collaborate with the INC (Rozina, 1981, p. 605).

Azad suggested that Muslims should demand only such safeguards that are necessary for the protection of their personal and religious laws. For him, there were no distinctions between Hindus and Muslims other than religion, both have common ancestors and living together for over a thousand years (Desai, 1946, p. 123). He supported the Nehru Report and endorsed abandoning the separate electorate based on religion. He demanded an autonomous India, which was committed to secularism (Ekbal, 2009, p. 77). In 1929, some nationalist Muslims left AIML and established the All India Nationalist Muslim Party (AINMP) in July same year (Datta, 1990, p. 137). The prominent members included Abul Kalam Azad, M. A. Ansari, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Syed Mahmud, Saifuddin Kitchlew, the Raja of Mahmudabad, T. A. K. Sherwani and Choudhary Khaliquzzama (Datta, 1990, p. 137). Azad secured significant responsibility in AINMP. According to V. N. Datta he was its "convener" (Datta, 1990, p. 137) whereas Shashi Ahluwalia states Azad was president (Ahluwalia & Ahluwalia, 1985, p. 127). The aims of the party were firstly inculcating nationalism independent of communalism, secondly encouraging Muslims to strive hard for the national cause and finally culminating cordial relations between minority and majority communities (Mitra, 1929).

The limitation of the Nationalist Muslim Party was that it did not have an independent identity and was guided by Congress's political doctrine. The Nehru Report demanded Dominion status for India whereas Simon Commission did not give any importance to the demand for Dominion Status. Lord Irwin, the then Indian Viceroy, recognized the demand for Dominion Status as the main issue in the Indian Constitutional progress. The Congress in 1929 was convinced that the *Swaraj* and complete independence, was the ultimate goal of India and not the Dominion status and a Civil Disobedience Movement was launched.

The Nehru Report did not provide an acceptable solution for the Muslims of India. A convention of all parties known as the All Parties Conference met at Calcutta in 1928 to analyze the Nehru Report. Muhammad Ali Jinnah tried to convince the members of 1/3 Muslim seats in centre, representation in Bengal and Punjab according to the populace and residual authority vested

in provinces but Jinnah's efforts remained unfruitful. Muslim's attempt to consolidate their position culminated in the All Parties Muslim Conference under the chairmanship of Agha Khan. This conference was followed by Jinnah's Fourteen Points in 1929 representing the rights of minorities, especially Muslims.

The Nehru Report instead of uniting the Muslims divided them into two distinguished nationalist groups. During the 1930's Azad toured the Muslim Majority provinces and convinced them to join the movement for independence in a non-violent way (Ahluwalia & Ahluwalia, 1985, p. 127). Gandhi was arrested in May 1930 (Datta, 1990, p. 138) followed by Motilal Nehru's arrest making Azad acting President of INC but in August 1930 he was also arrested (Ahluwalia & Ahluwalia, 1985, p. 127) for six months. He was released later on May 11, 1932 (Datta, 1990, p.139). In 1932, he was given a notice warning to restrain participation in Civil Disobedience Movement, but he ignored this warning which led to his arrest once again (Ahluwalia & Ahluwalia, 1985, p. 127). Indian History witnessed the three Round Table Conferences to resolve the Indian problems but could not bring about any agreed settlement acceptable to all concerned parties.

The Communal Award of 1932 retained a separate electorate for all the minority communities. Weightage was given to the Muslims where they formed a minority whereas the Punjab and Bengal accommodated Sikhs and Hindus. In Punjab where Muslims formed 57%, Hindus 27 % and Sikhs 13 % populace, Muslims got 49 % Hindus 27 % and Sikhs 18 % representation in the legislative body. Similarly, in Bengal where the Muslims constituted 55 % and Hindus 43 % of the total population, Muslims received 48 % and Hindus 43 % of the total provincial seats." (Qureshi, 2000, p. 55-56) Azad was upset over Communal Award. He was deeply concerned about the minority problem. He took the initiative of bringing about an agreement among the communities on the communal question. He was supported by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Syed Mahmud and Shaukat Ali (Datta, 1990, p. 139).

The recommendations of Round Table Conferences provided the basis for the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament to draft the Act of 1935. The Government of India Act 1935 guaranteed provincial autonomy and Sindh was separated from Bombay and NWFP was invested with full provincial power. Communal representation and safeguarding of minorities were ensured. The Act was followed by the elections. Azad was given the responsibility for organizing INC for upcoming elections (Agarwal, 2008, p. 19). Azad was critical of the raise in un-elected members in the central legislature in the Indian Act of 1935 and restrained himself from contesting a seat (Agarwal, 2008, p. 19).



Azad while serving the Congress office supported dialogue with Jinnah and AIML between 1935-37 to have a Congress-League partnership (Ekbal, 2009, p. 78). He was designated as a member of the "Congress Working Committee" and "parliamentary sub-committee" on April 16, 1936, (Datta, 1990, p. 145) and came to be known as "High Command" (Datta, 1990, p. 145). His function was to supervise the working of legislatures and ministries in Bengal, Punjab, North West Frontier Province and United Province (UP). In 1937, the INC contested the elections. Azad refused to contest the elections but continued coordination and union amongst the Congress Governments elected in various provinces (Ekbal, 2009, p. 78). The results showed Congress victory and the party was able to form ministries in seven provinces including United Province, Bihar, Bombay, Central Province, Madras, North West Frontier and Assam. On the formation of provincial ministries in 1937, Azad was keen on the Congress-League coalition government. In his view, this opportunity for working together and power-sharing might prove helpful in resolving the communal question.

In UP, the Muslims were in the minority but in urban areas, they held a very strong position. Muslim League and Congress both contested elections in UP. Congress agreed to include two League members in the cabinet to form a coalition government in the province. The post-result situation presented that INC had offered seats to the Muslim League on certain conditions. UP League leader was Choudhry Khaliqzaman and Azad played the role of convener in Congress League settlement and dialogue, on behalf of the Congress. On July 12, 1937, Azad met Choudhry Khaliqzaman at Lucknow to initiate the dialogue process. Azad proposed Hafiz Ibrahim as a cabinet member but Choudhry Khaliqzaman proposed the name of Nawab Ismail Khan. Both resolved cooperation on a wider basis as a coalition government (Khaliqzaman, 1993, p. 160). On July 15, 1937, Azad and Govind Ballabh Pant met Khaliqzaman and handed over a document for possible collaboration (for details see Khaliqzaman, *Pathway Way to Pakistan*, p. 161).

These terms and conditions were appended with a short note by Azad hoping members of AIML agree to the terms for collaboration and join INC for the formation of Provincial Cabinet (Khaliqzaman, 1993, p. 161). This document was rejected by the Muslim League and was considered a "death warrant" of the Muslim League Parliamentary Board and Muslim League organization. By offering this document, Azad proved his loyalty to the INC. It exposed the intentions of the INC to emerge as a supreme organization and the Congress rule in all provinces showed its authoritarian behaviour. From this point onwards the Muslim League consolidated itself as an organization for safeguarding Muslim rights being Muslim sole representative. Jinnah was supported by Muhammad Iqbal, Sikandar Hayat, Fazal-ul-Haq and the Aligarhites in strengthening the cause for a separate homeland for the

Muslims. Azad, though wanted a coalition government, was not strong enough to convince other members of the INC to a compromise formula. The real decision on the coalition ministry rested with members of the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee including Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and the leader of UP Legislative Party, Govind Ballabh Pant (Datta, 1990, p. 152).

Azad blamed Jawaharlal Nehru for the failure as he was not ready to include two League members in the UP cabinet, which further alienated Jinnah and Muslim League from Congress (Engineer, 1988, p. 2634). Nehru was one of the chief organizers of the party's election in the UP. He opposed the idea of giving two ministerial berths to the League; he "disliked the bargaining of seat" (Nehru to Prasad, 21 July 1937, *RPP*, File No. 1/37, Letter No. 42). He wanted Rafi Ahmad Kidwani, his friend, in the Cabinet and Hafiz Ibrahim who was defeated by the League candidate (Datta, 1990, p. 152). The underlying objective of the conditions sent through Azad to Khaliqzaman was to prevent the League from entering the coalition government. In Nehru's own words, the terms for the merger were "stringent", the inherent objective was restraining AIML to accept the conditions (Nehru to Prasad, 21 July 1937, *RPP*, File No. 1/37, Letter No. 42). Nehru was influenced by the leftists thus Azad's efforts for a Congress League coalition failed (Gandhi, 1989, p. 23).

According to Azad, Nehru wanted only one of them which was not acceptable for the AIML. (Engineer, 1988, p. 2634) Azad considered it regrettable as Nehru's response provided AIML with further growth in UP (Engineer, 1988, p. 2635). Khaliqzaman charged Azad for being influenced by Nehru and was considered responsible for parting the Jamiat-ul-Ulema Hind and AIML on May 17, 1937. This act practically sealed the fate of negotiations for any political understanding in the coming days. Most scholars are of the view that it was the issue of the coalition ministry in UP that initiated the notion of a separate Muslim territory. The issue discussed above indeed was one of the reasons for parting ways between the two parties and the partition of India. Lord Mountbatten also held INC in favour of partition. He in an interview said, "Instead of having enough sense to have coalition government and bringing in AIML . . . they convinced AIML that that was the kind of treatment they in fact would get if they did not try and stand out for independence." (Collins, & Lapiere, 1983, p. 32)

The situation led to the rise of Hindu-Muslim antagonism once again. There were riots in Jubbulpore, Allahabad and Benares in 1937 (Rajput, 1957, p. 153). In 1938, riots were reported in Bombay, Bihar, UP, North West Frontier and Madras (Rajput, 1957, p. 153). Azad was upset with the situation and wrote to Rajendra Parsad on August 15, 1938, that the present situation would have been avoided had INC settled the representation issue in time (Kaura, 1977, p. 122). During the Congress rule 1934-39, Azad

worked in the Parliamentary Sub-Committee and blame may be laid on him for not eliminating the evils and ill-treatment of the Muslims under his sphere of influence. The period added dissatisfaction among the Muslims although Azad was holding the office. The grievances of the Muslims were reflected in the *Pirpur Report* and the *Shareef Report*. The atrocities of the ministries are expressed in *Kamal Yar Jung Report* and Maulvi A. K. Fazal-ul-Haq's book *Muslim Sufferings under the Congress Rule*. The resignation in November 1939 (Rajput, 1957, p. 157) was commemorated as the Day of Deliverance under the banner of AIML.

Thus Azad's dream of Hindu-Muslim unity hereafter could never be materialized as the experiment of power sharing and accommodation within various communities failed. The desire of the INC for concentrating power and being unjust with other communities paved the way for a separate homeland for the Muslim community which had now emerged as a strong nation. Muslims now were ready to consider AIML as their only liberator and stood behind its flag. Azad, disillusioned with the behaviour, delivered the message on December 21, 1939, and termed these celebrations of AIML after Congress resignation as their inability to acknowledge that the resignations were made for the greater cause of India's freedom and oppressed people of the East (Kumar, 1991, p. 81).

The political attitude of Congress during the period was marked by its purpose of concentrating power by often ruling out any communal adjustment. It opposed Muslim politics under the cover of its claims of a nationalist organization. The effective consciousness of interest-motivated politics of Congress could not make its existence notable to Azad. He was seduced by the idealism of nationalistic politics propagated by Congress. Under this spell, he was unable to have a real insight into the conditions of Muslims and their demand for a separate homeland which augmented in the coming years.

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