

MOVE TO PARTITION PUNJAB AND BENGAL

Text of Mr. Jinnah's Statement

I. and B. Department,
New Delhi, 4th May 1947.

Following is the text of Mr. Jinnah's statement opposing partition of the Punjab and Bengal:-

"I find from press reports that Congress has now started by emphasising that in the event of Pakistan and Hindustan being established, the Punjab will be partitioned, and the Hindu Mahasabha has started vigorous propaganda that Bengal should be partitioned.

"I would like to point out that there is a great deal of confusion created on purpose. The question of a division of India, as proposed by the Muslim League, is based on the fundamental fact that there are two nations - Hindus and Muslims - and the underlying principle is that we want a national home and a national state in our homelands which are predominantly Muslim and comprise the six units of the Punjab, the N.W.F.P., Sind, Baluchistan, Bengal and Assam. This will give the Hindus their national home and a national state of Hindustan, which means three-fourths of British India.

"Now the question of partitioning Bengal and the Punjab is raised, not with a 'bona fide' object, but as a sinister move actuated by spite and bitterness, as they feel that India is going to be divided, firstly to create more difficulties in the way for the British Government and the Viceroy and secondly to unnerve the Muslims by opening and repeatedly emphasising that the Muslims will get a truncated or mutilated moth-eaten Pakistan. This clamour is not based on any sound principle, except that the Hindu minorities in the Punjab and Bengal wish to cut up these Provinces and cut up their own people into two in these Provinces. The Hindus have their homelands, as I said, consisting of six vast Provinces. Merely because a portion of the minorities in the Pakistan Provinces have taken up this attitude the British Government should not countenance it, because the result of that will be logically that all other Provinces will have to be cut up in a similar way, which will be dangerous, as to embark on this line will lead to a breaking up of various Provinces and create a far more dangerous situation in the future than at present. If such a process were to be adopted it will strike at the root of the administrative, economic and political life of the Provinces which have for nearly a century developed and built up on that basis and have grown and are functioning under the present constitution as autonomous Provinces.

"It is a mistake to compare the basic principle of the demand of Pakistan and the demand of cutting up Provinces throughout India into fragmentation. I do hope that neither the Viceroy nor His Majesty's Government will fall into this trap and commit a grave error.

"It is obvious that if the Hindu minorities in Pakistan wish to emigrate and go to their homelands of Hindustan they will be at liberty to do so and 'vice versa' and those Muslims who wish to emigrate from Hindustan can do so and go to Pakistan; and sooner or later an exchange of population will have to take place and Constituent Assemblies of Pakistan and Hindustan can take up the matter and subsequently the respective Governments in Pakistan and Hindustan can effectively carry out an exchange of population wherever it may be necessary and feasible.

"Complete Division of India"

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly, in a press interview on April 30th, declared that if there was to be a division of India, and Mr. Jinnah insisted on it, it should be as complete and thorough as possible, including division of the Punjab and Bengal, so that there might not be left any room for contention or conflict. "If that requires division of the defence forces, that should also be brought about, and the sooner the better." Neither Congress nor the Hindus or Sikhs, said Dr. Rajendra Prasad, ever wanted the division of India. It was the Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah who had been insisting on it.

Recalling the Muslim League's Lahore resolution on the division of India, which demanded the demarcation of contiguous units with the necessary territorial adjustments and the creation of independent states out of zones where Muslims were numerically in the majority, Dr. Rajendra Prasad says division of the Punjab and Bengal was in terms of that resolution. According to that resolution, the League cannot demand any areas to be included in the Muslim zones which are not contiguous and in which Muslims are not numerically in a majority. "If areas of the Punjab and Bengal where Muslims are not in a majority demand fulfilment of the League's resolution, how does it lie in the mouth of Mr. Jinnah to accuse them and abuse them. He cannot have it both ways." If division was insisted on, it could only be on a basis which suited both parties and not him alone.

Referring to Mr. Jinnah's remark that partition of the Punjab and Bengal would disrupt the life of the Provinces, Dr. Rajendra Prasad said: "He forgets he is responsible for disrupting these and many more valuable ties which have been forged in the course of centuries, by seeking to divide India."

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Z. H. ZAIDI

M.A., LL.B. (Alig), Ph.D. (London)

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF PAKISTAN

M. A. Jinnah to Winston Churchill

Chur 2/43: f 98¹

10 AURANGZEB ROAD, NEW DELHI, INDIA,
2 May 1947

Dear Mr. Churchill,

I thought I should send you the accompanying statement that was issued by me recently, as perhaps your attention may not be drawn to the full text.

I hope you will give very careful consideration to it, as I understand His Majesty's Government are about to take their decision regarding the grave issues that are facing us.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH

Rt. Hon'ble Winston S. Churchill,
Leader of the Opposition,
Houses of Parliament,
London

¹Churchill Collection, Churchill College, Cambridge.

Enclosure to No. 379

Chur 2/43: ff 99-100

Statement by Jinnah on Partition of India

[30 April 1947]

I find from Press reports that the Congress has now started

emphasising that, in the event of Pakistan and Hindustan being established, the Punjab will be partitioned,¹ while the Hindu Mahasabha has started a vigorous propaganda that Bengal should be partitioned.²

I would point out that there is a great deal of confusion created on purpose. The question of the division of India, as proposed by the Muslim League, is based on the fundamental fact that there are two nations, Hindus and Muslims, and the underlying principle is that we want a national home and a national State in our homelands, which are predominantly Muslim and comprise the single units of the Punjab, the Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan, Bengal and Assam.

This will give the Hindus their national home and their national State of Hindustan, which means three-fourths of British India.

Now the question of partitioning Bengal and the Punjab is raised, not with a bona fide object, but as a sinister move actuated by spite and bitterness, as they feel that India is going to be divided — firstly to create more difficulties for the British Government and the Viceroy, and secondly to unnerve the Muslims by repeatedly emphasising that the Muslims will get a truncated or mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan.

This clamour is not based on any sound principle, except that the Hindu minorities in the Punjab and Bengal wish to cut up these Provinces and cut up their own people into two in these Provinces. The Hindus have their homelands, as I said, consisting of six vast Provinces.

Merely because a portion of the minorities in the Pakistan Provinces has taken up this attitude, the British Government should not countenance it, because the result will be logically that all other Provinces will have to be cut up in a similar way, which will be dangerous. To embark on this line will lead to the breaking up of the various Provinces, and create a far more dangerous situation in the future than at present. If such a process were to be adopted, it would strike at the root of the administrative, economic and political life of the Provinces, which have for nearly a century been developed and built up on that basis and have grown and are functioning under the present Constitution as autonomous Provinces.

NO COMPARISON

It is a mistake to compare the basic principle of the demand for Pakistan and the demand for the cutting up of the Provinces throughout India into fragmentation. I hope neither the Viceroy nor His Majesty's Government will fall into this trap and commit a grave error.

It is obvious that if the Hindu minorities in Pakistan wish to emigrate and go to their homelands of Hindustan, they will be at liberty to do so and, vice versa, those Muslims who wish to emigrate from

Hindustan can do so and go to Pakistan; and sooner or later an exchange of population will have to take place, and the Constituent Assemblies of Pakistan and Hindustan can take up the matter and subsequently the respective Governments in Pakistan and Hindustan can effectively carry out the exchange of population wherever it may be necessary and feasible.

The Congress propaganda is intended to disrupt and put obstacles, obstructions and difficulties in the way of an amicable solution. It is quite obvious that they have put up the Hindu Mahasabha in Bengal and the Sikhs in the Punjab and the Congress Press is inciting the Sikhs and misleading them.

The Sikhs do not stand to gain by the partition of the Punjab, but will be split into two halves. More than half of their population will have to remain in Pakistan even if a partition of the Punjab takes place according to their conception, whereas in Pakistan, as proposed by the Muslim League, they will play, as one solid minority, a very big part.

SMOOTH TRANSFER

We have always been very willing to meet them in every reasonable way. Besides, the White Paper of February 20³ lays down that power will be transferred to the authority or authorities in a manner that will be smooth and will create the least amount of difficulty and trouble.

If power is to be transferred to various Governments, it can only be done successfully to the Pakistan Group and the Hindustan Group, which will establish stable, secure Governments and will be able to run these Governments peacefully and successfully.

The transfer of power to the Pakistan and Hindustan Governments must mean a division of the Defences as a *sine qua non* of such a transfer, and the Defence Forces should be completely divided and, in my opinion, can be divided before June 1948. The States of Pakistan and Hindustan should be made absolutely free, independent and sovereign. This is a clear-cut road and the only practical solution of India's constitutional problem.⁴

¹See Annex to No. 124, Resolution No. 3.

²The Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution at Calcutta on 16 March calling on the British Government as well as the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly to partition Bengal immediately and to set up a separate province for Bengali Hindus before any transfer of power. *Civil & Military Gazette*, 18 March 1947. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee had insisted on the division of Bengal into Hindu and Muslim provinces irrespective of the partition of India. See *IOR, Mountbatten Papers, MSS Eur F. 200/22, Bengal, Partition, Notes by Mookerjee*.

³No. 1.

⁴This statement has also been reproduced in *TP*, X, Annex I to No. 276, pp. 543-545.