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SPEECHES
OF
QUAID-I-AZAM
IN THE
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN
(1947-1948)

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**ADDRESS of Quaid-i-Azam MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH to the
Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on his election as President (11th
August, 1947)**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

I CORDIALLY thank you, with the utmost sincerity for the honour you have conferred upon me—the greatest honour that it is possible for this Sovereign Assembly to confer—by electing me as your first President. I also thank those leaders who have spoken in appreciation of my services and their personal references to me. I sincerely hope that with your support and your co-operation we shall make this Constituent Assembly an example to the world. The Constituent Assembly has got two main functions to perform. The first is the very onerous and responsible task of framing our future constitution of Pakistan and the second of functioning as a full and complete Sovereign body as the Federal Legislature of Pakistan. We have to do the best we can in adopting a provisional constitution for the Federal Legislature of Pakistan. You know really that not only we ourselves are wondering but, I think, the whole world is wondering at this unprecedented cyclonic revolution which has brought about the plan of creating and establishing two independent Sovereign Dominions in this sub-continent. As it is, it has been unprecedented; there is no parallel in the history of the world. This mighty sub-continent with all kinds of inhabitants has been brought under a plan which is titanic, unknown, unparalleled. And what is very important with regard to it is that we have achieved it peacefully and by means of a revolution of the greatest possible character.

Dealing with our first function in this Assembly, I cannot make any well-considered pronouncement at this moment, but I shall say a few things as they occur to me. The first and the foremost thing that I would like to emphasize is this—remember that you are now a Sovereign Legislative body and you have got all the powers. It, therefore, places on you the gravest responsibility as to how you should take your decisions. The first observation that I would like to make is this. You will no doubt agree with me that the first duty of a government is to maintain law and order, so that the life, property and religious beliefs of its subjects are fully protected by the State.

The second thing that occurs to me is this. One of the biggest curses from which India is suffering—I do not say that other countries are free from it, but, I think our condition is much worse—is bribery and corruption. (*Hear, hear.*) That really is a poison. We must put that down with an iron hand and I hope that you will take adequate measures as soon as it is possible for this Assembly to do so.

Black-marketing is another curse. Well, I know that black-marketers are frequently caught and punished. According to our judicial notions sentences are passed, and sometimes fines only are imposed. Now you have to tackle this monster which today is a colossal crime against society, in our distressed conditions, when we constantly face shortage of food and other essential commodities of life. A citizen who does black-marketing commits, I think, a greater crime than the biggest and most grievous of crimes. These black-marketers are really knowing, intelligent and ordinarily responsible people, and when they are indulged in black-marketing, I think they ought to be very severely punished, because they undermine the entire system of control and regulation of foodstuffs and essential commodities, and cause wholesale starvation and want, and even death.

The next thing that strikes me is this. Here again is a legacy which has been passed on to us. Along with many other things good and bad, has arrived this great evil—the evil of nepotism and jobbery. This evil must be crushed relentlessly. I want to make it quite clear that I shall never tolerate any kind of jobbery, nepotism or any influence, directly or indirectly, brought to bear upon me. Wherever I find that such a practice is in vogue, or is continuing anywhere, low or high, I shall certainly not countenance it.

I know there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. Much has been said against it, but, now that it has been accepted, it is the duty of every one of us to loyally abide by it and honourably act according to the agreement which is now final and binding on all. But you must remember, as I have said that this mighty revolution that has taken place is unprecedented. One can quite understand the feeling that exists between the two communities wherever one community is in majority and the other is in minority. But the question

is whether it was possible or practicable to act otherwise than has been done. A division had to take place. On both sides, in Hindustan and Pakistan, there are sections of people who may not agree with it, who may not like it, but in my judgment there was no other solution and I am sure future history will record its verdict in favour of it. And what is more it will be proved by actual experience as we go on that that was the only solution of India's constitutional problem. Any idea of a united India could never have worked and in my judgment it would have led us to terrific disaster. Maybe that view is correct ; maybe it is not ; that remains to be seen. All the same, in this division it was impossible to avoid the question of minorities being in one Dominion or the other. Now that was unavoidable. There is no other solution. Now what shall we do ?

Now if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

I cannot emphasize it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities—the Hindu community and the Muslim community—because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Veshnavas, Khattris, also Bengalese, Madrasis and so on—will vanish. Indeed if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain its freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free peoples long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection ; nobody could have conquered you, and even it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time but for this. (*Applause.*)

Therefore we must learn a lesson from this. You are free ; you are free to go to your temples ; you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—

Future programme of work as a team.

Mutual differences responsible for India's subjection.

Freedom of religious practice.

that has nothing to do with the business of the State. (*Hear, hear.*) As you know, history shows that in England conditions some time ago were much worse than those prevailing in India today. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some States in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God we are not starting in those days. We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. (*Loud applause.*) The people of England in course of time had to face the realities of the situation and had to discharge the responsibilities and burdens placed upon them by the Government of their country and they went through that fire step by step. Today you might say with justice that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not exist ; what exists now is that every man is a citizen, an equal citizen, of Great Britain and they are all members of the Nation.

Equal citizenship for all in Pakistan.

Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.

Well, gentlemen, I do not wish to take up any more of your time and thank you again for the honour you have done to me. I shall always be guided by the principles of justice and fairplay without any, as is put in the political language, prejudice or ill-will, in other words, partiality or favouritism. My guiding principle will be justice and complete impartiality, and I am sure that with your support and co-operation, I can look forward to Pakistan becoming one of the greatest Nations of the world. (*Loud applause.*)

REPLY of Quaid-i-Azam MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH to the Message of His Majesty King George VI delivered by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India (Lord Louis Mountbatten of Burma) to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan (14th August, 1947)

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

I THANK His Majesty the King on behalf of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and myself for his gracious message. I know great responsibilities lie ahead, and I naturally reciprocate his sentiments and we greatly appreciate his assurance of sympathy and support, and I hope that you will please communicate to His Majesty our assurance of goodwill and friendship for the British nation and him as the crowned head of the British Government.

I thank Your Excellency for our expressions of goodwill and good wishes for the future of Pakistan. It will be our constant effort to work for the welfare and well-being of all the communities in Pakistan, and I hope that everyone would be inspired by the ideas of public service, and they will be imbued with the spirit of co-operation and will show their political and civic virtues which go to make a great nation.

I once more thank you and Lady Mountbatten for your kindness and good wishes. Yes, we are parting as friends and I sincerely hope that we shall remain friends.

I wish to say that we appreciate the spirit in which those in the Government service at present and in the Armed Forces and others have so willingly and ungrudgingly volunteered themselves provisionally to serve Pakistan. As servants of Pakistan we shall make them happy and they will be treated equally with our nationals. The tolerance and goodwill that the great Emperor Akbar showed to all the non-Muslims is not of recent origin. It dates back thirteen centuries ago when our Prophet not only by words but by deeds treated the Jews and Christians handsomely after he had conquered them. He showed to them the utmost tolerance and regard and respect for their faith and beliefs. The whole history of Muslims, wherever they ruled, is replete with those humane and great principles which should be followed and practised by us.

Finally, I thank you for your good wishes for Pakistan, and I assure you that we shall not be wanting in friendly spirit with our neighbours and with all the nations of the world.

Before I conclude, I wish to express our thanks for some of the messages of goodwill and friendship that have been received. The first one is from President Truman on behalf of the great American Nation ; the second is from Egypt, third from France, fourth from Syria and fifth from Nepal, our neighbour. I am sure you will all join me in expressing our cordial thanks for these friendly messages that have been received from these countries.

Speech of Quaid-i-Azam MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH, delivered on 23rd February, 1948, on the Condolence Resolution on the tragic death of Mr. Gandhi.

I SHARE the expressions of sorrow and grief given by this House and I associate myself in the tribute that has been paid to his greatness. I would further add that he died in the discharge of the duty in which he was engaged. He was a man of principles and when he was convinced and when he believed that it was his duty, he took it upon his shoulders to perform it and his tragic death occurred in the discharge of his duty. However much it may be deplored and condemned, it was a noble death, as he died in the discharge of his duty in which he believed. I will convey the message as desired by you, Mr. Prime Minister, in due course.

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