

## *The Direct Action Day (1946): Myth and Reality*

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The results of the general elections (1945-46) greatly strengthened the position of Quaid-i Azam as the undisputed leader of entire Muslim India<sup>1</sup> and gave urgency to the need of a solution of Muslim-Hindu conflict. The Viceroy's failure to settle the political and constitutional issues through Simla Conference in 1945 paved the way for the British Government's announcement, in February 1946, of its decision to despatch a group of three cabinet ministers to seek, with the help of Indian leaders, an agreement on constitutional issues. The Cabinet Mission offered its own solution by proposing a three tier constitutional plan:

Union of India, embracing both British India and the states, which should deal with the subjects of foreign affairs, defence, and communications and have the power to raise the necessary finances.

Three groups of provinces:

Section A, comprising the six Hindu majority provinces;

Section B, the provinces of the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan, and

Section C, the provinces of Bengal and Assam.

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1. The Muslim League that had won 453 out of 524 Central and Provincial seats (86.6 per cent votes) in the 1945-46 elections, had become fully justified in its claim to speak on behalf of Muslim India. Sharif al-Mujahid, *Quaid-i Azam Jinnah: Studies in Interpretation* (Karachi: Quaid-i Azam Academy, 1981), 208; I. H. Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi: University of Karachi, 1988), 202-203.

