

Quaid-i-Azam's Views on Terrorism and Liberation Movements

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The 20th century produced giants among the leaders of the world. Each had or has a conspicuous characteristics of his own. Charisma of Churchill, determination of Gen. De Gaulle, frankness of Saudi King Faisal, greatness of Gandhiji, glasnost of Gorbachev, magnetism of Mandela and rationalism of Roosevelt are well known. But towering among the giants was Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who struggled for the independence of the Subcontinent and succeeded in securing the separate State of Pakistan.

In 1944, *Verdict on India* by Beverley Nichols was published, wherein the author's interview with Quaid-i-Azam was reproduced under the title: "Dialogue with a Giant". To quote Beverley Nichols:

The most important man in Asia is sixty-seven, tall, thin and elegant, with a monocle on a gray silk cord... I have called Mr. Jinnah 'the most important man in Asia'...Like all superlatives the description is open to argument, but it is not really so far from the truth. India is likely to be world's greatest problem for some years to come, and Mr. Jinnah is in a position of unique strategic importance. He can sway the battle this way or that as he chooses. His 100 million Muslims will march to the left, to the right, to the front, to the rear at his bidding, *and at nobody else's*...that is

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the point. It is not the same in the Hindu ranks. If Gandhi goes, there is always Nehru, or Rajagopalachari, or Patel or a dozen others. But if Jinnah goes, who is there?¹

Having read the book, Winston Churchill wrote to his wife, Clementine:

I think you would do well to read it. It is written with some distinction and a great deal of thought...I agree with the book and also with its conclusion
— Pakistan.

A number of biographies and hundreds of articles have been written about the sterling qualities of the head and heart of Quaid-i-Azam. I propose to deal with the important topic of terrorism with the extracts from the views expressed by Quaid.

Terrorism is the burning topic in the international world today. Pakistan had suffered a national tragedy on 11 September 1948 when its founder Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah passed away. The world witnessed an international tragedy on 11 September 2001 when the twin towers were destroyed in New York and an attack was made on Pentagon in Washington. It is unnecessary to refer to the resolution of the United Nations condemning terrorism and recommending steps to combat it leading to the tragic wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Mr. Jinnah did not believe in violence at all. In the historic Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress, held in December 1920, Mahatama Gandhi moved his famous resolution on non-cooperation. Though he advocated non-violence but the majority felt that the implementation of the resolution would entail violence. In the presence of 100,000 people, who were present in the session, only one voice was raised against the said resolution and that Mr. Jinnah's. Interestingly enough, within three years Gandhi withdrew the

1 Beverley Nichols, *Verdict on India* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1944), p.188.

movement and acknowledged that it was a Himalayan miscalculation on his part.

Quaid was consistent throughout his career. *Nehru Report* was published in 1928 and showed the designs of the Congress leaders. Quaid-i-Azam strongly opposed it and propounded his own famous 14 points in response to it. The Congress, however refused to accept them. Quaid was disgusted and decided to settle in London to practise before the Privy Council. In 1932 the Musalmans of the Subcontinent were deeply alarmed by the attitude of the Congress. Mahatama Gandhi had declared that if Hindu-Muslim problem could not be settled, the work on constitution-making should proceed. The Muslim leaders realized the implication of such a declaration and requested Sir Abdullah Haroon to seek advice of Mr. Jinnah, who was in London. Mr. Jinnah's reply of 13 January 1932 was clear. It read:

Mussalmans [should] stand united. Urge demands [by] constitutional method. Most unwise [to] join unlawful movement. Moreover, we [are] not opposed [to] responsible self-government provided Muslim safeguards [are] embodied [in] constitution. Don't play in hands [of] extremism of officials.

It may be recalled that an attempt was made on the life of Quaid-i-Azam on 26 July, 1943, in Bombay. The assassin had attacked him with a knife and Mr. Jinnah had received injuries on his chin and jaw. Luckily, however, God Almighty saved his life and he continued to struggle for the creation of Pakistan with still greater devotion and determination. Quaid also demonstrated his objectivity and his deep abhorrence of violence when he spoke in October 1943 on the occasion of Eid day at a meeting held to congratulate him on his Providential escape. He stated:

The grave political issues cannot be settled by the cult of the knife, nor by gangsterism. There are parties and parties, but differences between them

could not be resolved by attacks on party leaders. Nor could political views be altered by threats of violence. The issues involved were too grave to warrant change from the course they had chalked out, and which they meant to pursue.

In this regard, let me also refer to the historic joint statement issued by Quaid-i-Azam and Mahatama Gandhi on 15 April 1947:

We deeply deplore the recent acts of lawlessness and violence that have brought the utmost disgrace on the fair name of India and the greatest misery to innocent people, irrespective of who were the aggressors and who were the victims. We denounce for all time the use of force to achieve political ends, and we call upon all the communities of India, who whatever persuasion they may belong [to] not only to refrain from all acts of violence and disorder but also to avoid both in speech and writing, any words which might be construed as incitement to such acts.

When attempts were made to obstruct the establishment of Pakistan, Quaid adopted a firm stand. It is well known that in 1946 Pandit Nehru and the British Cabinet Mission went back on their pledges. Quaid-i-Azam gave a call for direct action. Addressing the meeting of the Council of Muslim League in 1946, he said:

Today we have said good-bye to constitutions and constitutional methods. Throughout the painful negotiations, the two parties with whom we bargained held a pistol at us; one with power and machine-guns behind it, and the other with non-co-operation and the threat to launch mass civil disobedience. This situation must be met. We also have a pistol.²

And then quoting Firdausi,

he concluded:

We want peace. We do not want war. But if you want war, we accept it unhesitatingly.³

2 Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan* (Karachi: National Publishing House, 1970), Vol.II (1924-1947), p.560.

3 *Ibid.*, p.562.

Mr. Jinnah made a clear distinction between terrorism and struggle for liberation. He had a similar approach to Kashmir and Palestine. The distinction between these two concepts is quite clear though some countries and leaders try to create confusion. The Indian Congress itself made such a distinction. During the trial of the leaders of Indian National Army, the defence taken by the leading counsel, Mr. Bhola Bhai Desai, assisted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was that the INA was justified in organizing an army and taking up arms against alien powers. The same plea was taken by the Kashmiri leader Shaikh Abdullah in his trial in or about 1946 when he was prosecuted by the Maharaja of Kashmir. The life of the great leader of the third world, Mr. Nelson Mandela and the stand he took all along against Apartheid also reflect the distinction between these two concepts.

I would not like to deal with the dispute of the State of Jammu and Kashmir at this stage when the negotiations are going on between the leaders of India and Pakistan and the representatives of the people of Kashmir for resolving this dispute. However, let me refer to the extracts from *Gandhi's Passion* by Stanley Wolpert:

Though he never sought conventional power or any job in India's government, Gandhi had waited within earshot of Nehru and Patel, hoping that they might invite him to replace Lord Mountbatten. Mountbatten had sense enough to realize that Gandhi truly deserved the job he retained as the historic hangover of his previous position as viceroy. So Mountbatten was quite ready to let the old man, whom he never really understood but who had done rather well in keeping Calcutta more or less calm, take over as India's governor-general. Every Indian spoke of him as "Father" of the nation, after all, so why not let him end his life as its head of state? But Nehru, who had come to look up to Mountbatten for martial advice and strategic support as well as assistance in dealing with many delicate problems of state, rejected the idea of having Gandhi as his governor-general. Were Gandhi India's governor-general now he could easily have launched another summit with his old friend Jinnah. Together they might

have been able to agree on a formula to stop the slaughter — Gandhi's most passionate aspiration.⁴

I would like to conclude with a quote from a speech of Quaid-i-Azam delivered in October 1947:

Search your hearts and see whether you have done your part in the construction of this new and mighty State...We are going through fire: the sunshine has yet to come. But I have no doubt that with unity, faith and discipline we will not only remain the fifth largest State in the world but will compare with any nation of the world. Are you prepared to undergo the fire? You must make up your mind now. We must sink individualism and petty jealousies and make up our minds to serve the people with honesty and faithfulness. We are passing through a period of fear, danger and menace. We must have faith, unity and discipline.

4 *Ibid.*, pp.246-47.