

# *The Balochistan Muslim League*

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## **Abstract**

The rise and popularity of the Muslim League in Balochistan is indeed a fascinating chapter in the study of political development in an area characterized by ethnic and tribal divisions, urban/rural rifts, and personality clashes. Less than a decade's preserve of the League, Balochistan had become a part of the Sub-continent's national politics. Whereas one could attribute this success to a host of factors, i.e., it was essentially the able leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (onwards Jinnah) and his understanding of the socio-political environment of Balochistan where propagation of extremist views was replaced by a careful and conscious program of accommodation and reconciliation of interests, particularly between the various ethnic, tribal, and social groups in the province. However, there was no gainsaying that, in addition, to Jinnah's able political leadership; it was also the appeal of Islam and the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims, which, in the end, moved the people of Balochistan. The paper deals with the establishment of the Balochistan Muslim League (onwards League) and all these developments happening though this period of the last decade of the British Raj

Since 1920's the most popular demand in Balochistan was the introduction of constitutional and political reforms at par with the rest of the country. This demand was voiced not only by the few educated elite but also by some enlightened tribal chiefs and the Khan of Kalat who wanted to see Balochistan as a full politically autonomous province. The Khan knew that his state would also benefit from these measures provided his status was not challenged. The disagreement between the Sardars and the other parties was on the social and economic reforms, which were aimed at the eradication of the tribal system. The All-India

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Muslim League (onwards AIML), was the only party that had advocated the cause of political reforms in Balochistan since 1927.<sup>1</sup> Jinnah wanted as many Muslim-majority provinces as he possibly could get in the evolving political system of India, anticipating, very rightly, that one day this issue will determine the destiny of the Muslims in South Asia. The Balochistan political leaders knew that he was the only leader who could make a difference in the lives of the people of Balochistan. They frequently visited Jinnah's house in Bombay. For instance, Nawab Mir Yusuf Aziz Magsi, both before his departure to England and after his return to India in 1935 visited Jinnah.<sup>2</sup> This contact proved useful and helped determine the contours of Balochistan political history. Jinnah was known both as advocate of the cause of the Indian Muslims as well as a leader who could lead the Muslims out of their present difficulties.

In 1935, after his return to India, from his self-imposed exile in London, Jinnah launched a hectic campaign to re-organize the AIML with a renewed vigour and enthusiasm. So far the League was a party of the elite and was confined to annual sessions. There was hardly any participation of the masses. Thus, the re-organization of the party was no mean task. However, several factors went on to help his cause and contribute to the popularity of the AIML. One was the Muslim mass contact campaign that was aimed at mobilizing the Muslims in pursuit of their special demands and interests as a community. The second was the distressful rule of the Indian National Congress (onwards Congress) in several provinces of India in 1937-39. The Congress-rule, in fact, gave the Muslims, a rallying point in their struggle for political interests. Many enlightened Baloch leaders stepped forward and joined hands with Jinnah and the League. The third factor was the beginning of the Second World War, which unlike the Congress leadership, Jinnah correctly assessed to be prolonged and to result eventually in the victory of the British and their allies. Last but not the least; Jinnah was keen to re-organize the League in the Muslim-majority provinces as well. In January 1939, a young lawyer from Balochistan, Qazi Mohammad Isa, went to Bombay, he had recently returned from England after studying law.<sup>3</sup> Jinnah was impressed with him, and, indeed, assigned him the task

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1 Syed Noor Ahmad, *Martial Law Say Martial Law Tak* (Lahore, 1970), Urdu, pp. 79-81.

2 Shariful Mujahid, *Quaid-i-Azam and His Times: A Compendium, Vol. I, 1876-1937*(Karachi, 1990), p. 196. "On January 31, 1935, Jinnah met Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan of Baluchistan for the last time at his Malabar Hill residence. He had met him several times before, and had discussed with him the conditions in Baluchistan."

3 Qazi Muhammad Isa, "Quaid-i-Azam Meri Zindagi Main; Chand Jhalkian", *Mah-i-Nao* (Islamabad, November-December, 1976), pp. 229-230. Qazi Isa wrote that;

of reorganizing the League in Balochistan. The League had recently been established in Balochistan thanks to efforts of a few enlightened Muslim leaders of Quetta.

According to Abdul Ghafoor Khan Durrani,<sup>4</sup> a certain Dr. Syed Fazal Shah, after realizing the necessity of establishing a branch of the AIML in Balochistan, consulted some of his close associates. In early 1938, about fifty prominent Muslims met at the Meat Market in Quetta presided by Malik Jan Muhammad Kansi and discussed the matter at some length. The meeting resolved to urge the Muslims of Balochistan to join the League. Just after this inaugural session, the enlistment campaign for new membership was launched in and around Quetta, which was further expanded to other adjacent areas.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the year, Qazi Isa had returned to Quetta from London. He was approached by the founding leaders of the new party who were in search of a prominent person like Qazi Isa to lead it to success. He was elected as the new President of the Provincial Balochistan Muslim League (Onwards BML). He proved an asset in promoting the influence of the AIML in Balochistan.<sup>6</sup>

But with the inception of the party few problems did arise when one of the founder of one of the branch of the League in Balochistan, Muhammad Ismail Nausherwani belonging to the Baluchistan Mazloom Labour Union, Quetta, wrote a letter to Liaquat Ali Khan complaining the hostile behaviour of the BML leaders. He further threatened to resign the BML and to join the Congress if their complains were not addressed. He claimed to have established his branch at Quetta on April 10, 1939 at

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He had already seen Jinnah in 1934 at London where he had gone for his studies and had idealized him. Secondly he went on an all India tour before settling at Karachi for his legal practice. At Bombay Race Course ground he was introduced with Jinnah by his friend Nawab Tallah Muhammad Khan, the ruler of Palanpur State. Jinnah invited him to a Lunch at his house next day. After Lunch Jinnah spent a sufficient time with him and discussed politics of Balochistan and assigned him the task of organization of a branch of Muslim League over there.

4 Khan Abdul Ghafoor Khan Durrani, *Aainah* (Quetta, 1997), Urdu, pp. 6-8. Also Interview with him at Quetta on April 2, 2001.

5 Arif Seemabi Sialkoti in an article, "Quaid-i-Azam Aur Balochistan," *Mah-i-Nao* (Islamabad, 1976), pp.235-237, he writes about the foundation of the Balochistan branch of the AIML, that, "In Summer of 1938 a journalist from Multan namely Abdul Jamil Abdul Karim appeared at Quetta and started weekly *Al-Farooq* and also founded a branch of AIML and its inaugural session was held at MacMahon Park, Quetta with a few participants."

6 *Chhota Aligargh*, Journal of the Islamia High School, Quetta, Vol. I, n.d. pp.15-30.

the direction of Sir Seth Abdullah Haroon.<sup>7</sup> The ensuing period also witnessed another dimension of political development, that is, the Pashtoon and the Baloch divide. Most of the Pashtoon population lived in the directly administered areas of Balochistan whereas; the Baloch population was mainly concentrated in indirectly administered zone or in the Balochistan states. Gradually, this division started showing in the composition of political parties. This divide became more visible especially in 1940's when the Baloch/Pashtoon leaders, Jafaar Jamali and Qazi Isa respectively clashed severely. Such differential claims and opposition was natural in the split society like Balochistan having divided on ethnic lines specially. Qazi Isa being a Pashtoon had his own liking and disliking and priorities. Such things were reported to the central party office.<sup>8</sup> Qazi defended his position in a lengthy letter to the Secretary All India Muslim League, Liaquat Ali Khan;

I as the President of the Provincial League, am still carrying on without having formed the Working Committee, and the other office holders; nor do I intend to doing so in the near future, because once these office holders are announced, I would at once create an opposition, which would not be an opposition to the cause but to the personage so appointed. Therefore I intend using every individual to help me in their own spheres of influence to enlist as many members as possible. Such persons would be sort of lieutenants and thus no question of tribal jealousies would be tempered with... I always try to keep their Mulla with me.<sup>9</sup>

Qazi Isa convened the first session of the re-organized BML at Quetta from June 10–11, 1939. Again writing to Liaquat Ali Khan, Qazi Isa demanded to send the speakers for the session, "Maulvi type of people would be very helpful, who should play on the Islamic sentiments of the people." He justified his point of view writing, "It has come to my knowledge that the Congress party intend sending for Attaullah Shah Bokhary. We do not want that they should have better speakers than ours."<sup>10</sup> This session was presided over by Syed Zakir Ali who was

7 *Freedom Movement Archives*, (Onwards *FMA*), with the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad. Vol. 293. Letter dated, June 20, 1939. pp. 6-8. Liaquat Ali Khan replied this letter consoling him, *Ibid*, p.11.

8 *FMA*, Vol.293 Letters from Jaafar Jamali, Vice President, BML to President Committee of Action, AIML, Delhi dated January 10, 1944, complaining against Qazi Isa, pp. 82-85. Another letter from Jamali to Liaquat Ali Khan dated, March 31, 1944, pp. 55-57. There was also a firing incident at a BML meeting held at Usta Mohammad in which there were few deaths and casualties. A report was sent to the Chairman Committee of Action, AIML, Delhi, on May 30, 1947 by Qazi Isa blaming Jaafar Jamali for the mishap. *FMA*, VOL, 371, pp. 52-73.

9 *FMA*, VOL. 293, Letter dated May 16, 1939, pp. 2-3.

10 *Ibid*. Letter dated May 22, 1939, p. 4.

invited from the United Provinces (U.P.), especially for this purpose. Contrary to the expectations of the authorities who had never witnessed more than a few hundred delegates in the meetings of the political organizations, the *Weekly Intelligence Summary* (onwards *WIS*), reported the presence of about three thousand participants in this meeting.<sup>11</sup> The presence of Prince Abdul Karim, brother of the Khan of Kalat, made it even more noteworthy. Another important feature of this conference was that it was also attended by a large number of tribal Sardars from various tribes like the Achakzai, Bugti, Jomezai, Kansai, Mandokhel, Rind, Shahwani, etc. It must be mentioned here that most of the Sardars were disappointed with the attitude of the Kalat State National Party (onwards the National Party), because of its anti-tribalism and its association with the Congress.

It was an amazing achievement of the BML that because of its carefully and consciously drawn programme, it was able to attract such a large number of people from all walks of life. In this context, it was important to bear in mind that the League leadership was essentially pro-British. It did not want to defy the British, as that would have created more sufferings for the already suppressed people of Balochistan. Secondly, the social transformation of the province from a purely tribal society to a radical, egalitarian system also seemed far-fetched and fraught with dangers of intra-tribal conflicts. The AIML knew what had to be its priorities in Balochistan. As Qazi Isa, after his election as the President of the BML, an office that he held for the next twelve years, exclaimed: "The Muslims of Balochistan are Muslims first, Balochi next and Indian third".<sup>12</sup> Within a month, the newly elected President claimed that this new branch of the Muslim League had seven thousand supporters.

Qazi Isa was particularly successful in his home town, Pishin. He was able to win over the religious groups. In a meeting of 400 Ulema held on June 25, 1939, Qazi Isa assured them that the Muslim League would never act against the Shariat. In return, the Ulema assured him of their full support. Earlier, Nawab Muhammad Khan Jomezai had pledged to support the "Old Islam" (AIML) and to oppose "New Islam" (the Congress and the *Anjuman-i-Watan* (onwards *Watan*), led by Abdul Samad Achakzai.<sup>13</sup> In fact, the BML was mainly dominated by Pashtoons and non-Baluch elements usually drawn from the *Watan*. On July 14,

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11 *Extracts From Weekly Intelligence Summaries of British Baluchistan, OIOC No. L/P&S/12/3219, (onwards WIS), June 16, 1939.*

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Zamindar, Lahore, June 30, 1939.*

1939, the BML workers patrolled Quetta city with placards and posters advising the public not to attend the *Watan's* first annual conference, as it was an ally of the Congress.<sup>14</sup>

The major problem of Balochistan was the lack of political leadership. The tribal chiefs, enfeebled under the British-controlled Sardari system could not do much, since they depended heavily on the British power and treasury. Secondly, the Sardars had learned to depend on the British administrators who had assumed the role of arbitrators in conflicts between themselves and the tribes.

Qazi Isa was against those Sardars only who were subservient to the British rulers and, thus, were prepared to do anything to please them. He was, however, on very good terms with those Sardars who were humane, progressive and patriotic and cared for the people of Balochistan. For example, he valued the friendship of Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Tareen, Sardar Baz Khan Jogezi, Sardar Abdul Ghaffar Khan Achakzai, and the like. Under Qazi Isa's presidency, the BML opened branches in all parts of Balochistan. It carefully chalked out a program for the social, economic and political uplift of the Muslims. The Muslims of Balochistan thus forged links with their counterpart brethren in other parts of British India.

Jinnah was well aware of the political developments in Balochistan. He sent quite a few prominent Muslim leaders to Balochistan to study the situation and present the League viewpoint to the Muslim masses of the area. Prominent leaders who visited Balochistan included, among other, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang, Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Liaquat Ali Khan. They toured the area and helped turn the public opinion in favour of the League point of view. The first such tour was reported by the *Weekly Intelligence Summary* of August 4, 1939, when Maulana Zafar Ali Khan reached Quetta on July 28, 1939, and was warmly welcomed at the Railway Station. Even *Khaksars* presented him a Guard of Honour. The same day, he addressed a public meeting at Quetta. There were some 14,000 participants at the venue.<sup>15</sup> The Maulana declared that Muslims were a separate nation and not a "minority". He condemned the pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim policies of the Congress.<sup>16</sup> On August 1, 1939, he went to Fort Sandeman. The next day, he visited Loralai along with Qazi Isa and addressed a big public

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14 *Ibid.*, July 16, 1939.

15 *WIS*, August 4, 1939.

16 *Zamindar*, August 5, 1939.

meeting. On August 4, he sought an interview with Khan of Kalat who contributed five hundred rupees to the Muslim League Fund.<sup>17</sup>

Qazi Isa's first priority was to establish the BML branches in Quetta, the most important centre of political activities in the province. Due to his preoccupation in holding public meetings and tours, he could not attend to the organizational matters of the party. For example, till August 1939, he could not form the Working Committee of the party to which he was elected President a couple of months before.<sup>18</sup> The hostile parties, especially *Watan* tried to make political capital out of this situation and encouraged factional leaders like Muhammad Ismail Nowsherwani, one of the founders of a branch of BML, who was in close contact with Abdul Samad Achakzai, the head of the *Watan*. Nowsherwani became the self-styled leader of the "Young Party of Baluchistan Muslim League".<sup>19</sup>

In the meanwhile, Jinnah decided to give a proper representation to Balochistan in the AIML Working Committee. He informed Qazi Isa that he had reserved five seats for Balochistan in the above mentioned body and that he should send him suitable names for the purpose. On August 27, 1939 Qazi Isa, accompanied Prince Abdul Karim, brother of the Khan of Kalat and a few other leaders of the BML attended the meeting of the Council of the League at Delhi.<sup>20</sup> In September 1939, he along with Prince Abdul Karim, Arbab Karam Khan, Malik Abdullah, Abdul Ghaffar Khan Achakzai and Nawab Mehrab Bugti attended the meeting of the League Working Committee, held at Delhi. On this occasion, Jinnah himself announced the affiliation of the BML with the All-India

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17 *Ibid.* August 7, 1939.

18 *FMA, VOL. 293*, Letter dated August 12, 1939, pp.11-12. Qazi Isa protested to Liaquat Ali Khan, "You have written to a person who has nothing to do with our office, and I doubt if he is our member even... The only thing I can gather from this is that you people at the centre have no faith in me or my work." He further suggested to enquire through Syed Zakir Ali Shah and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan or to visit himself to understand the real situation. Liaquat Ali Khan invited him to come to Delhi for discussion and to attend the meeting of the League to be convened there on August 27, 1939.

19 Inamul Haq Kausar, *Jido Jihad-i-Azadi Main Balochistan Ka Kirdar* (Islamabad, 1976), Urdu, pp. 37-39. Nausherwani had already differed with the provincial League leadership.

20 *Ibid.* Also *FMA, VOL. 293*, Letter dated August 14, 1939, p.14. Liaquat Ali Khan asked him to send five names from Balochistan with full addresses to be nominated to the AIML Working Committee.

Muslim League,<sup>21</sup> and called upon Qazi Isa to come to the stage and address the participants. Qazi Isa was greeted very enthusiastically. Jinnah appointed him the member of the All India Muslim League Working Committee. He was the youngest member of this supreme body.<sup>22</sup>

After his return from Delhi, Qazi Isa held a meeting of BML Working Committee at Quetta on September 30. In view of the opposition of the *Watan* and the Congress towards the British war efforts, the meeting resolved to favour the British "Whole-heartedly" without any reservations following the AIML line of action. The pro-British stance of the mother party was also reflected in this resolution of BML.<sup>23</sup>

As a matter of fact, the League had very few options. They were already disappointed with the attitude of the Congress during its provincial rule of India in 1937-39. Thus, it was not surprising that the League was happy to celebrate the 'Day of Deliverance' after the resignation of Congress ministries. However, reaction in Balochistan to the League's policy was mixed. So far as the anti-Muslim and pro-Hindu policies of the Congress government were considered, the Muslims of Balochistan commonly hated the Congress. But they approved its anti-British stand at the same time due to their own grievances against the British and were disappointed at the attitude of the League in helping the British during the war years. The result was that a split took place in the BML. Partly out of this dichotomy and partly because of the growing popularity of Qazi Isa, a relatively less known member of BML, Atta Muhammad, headed a splinter group who wanted to remove Qazi Isa from the party leadership. Differences also surfaced over the nomination of Mehrab Bugti as a member of the Working Committee. Qazi Isa was also accused of having a dictatorial attitude and Master Yar Mohammed, one of the dissenters, even decided to present a vote of no confidence against him.<sup>24</sup> The initial response of the Sardars towards the Muslim League was supportive. But with the passage of time when they realized that Qazi Isa represented primarily the interests of the

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21 *FMA, VOL. 293*, Letter dated September 8, 1939, p.14. The Secretary AIML informed Qazi Isa about the affiliation of the Balochistan Muslim League (onwards BML) with the AIML.

22 Kausar, *Jido Jihad*, pp. 37-38.

23 *FMA, VOL. 293*, Letter dated November 2, 1939, p. 15. The resolution also thanked and appreciated the AIML to have given representation to the BML in its high forums.

24 *FMA, VOL. 293*, pp.11-12.



lower middle urban class and was not always responsive to their narrow, tribal interests, they started creating problems for him and the League in the province. However, there was not much that they could do because the BML was now a part of the larger, all-India organization. Very soon, their disappointments and frustrations were to be drowned in the new enthusiasm of the Muslims of Balochistan for Pakistan idea generated by the Lahore Resolution.

The Muslim League leaders were conscious of the anti-British feelings of the people of Balochistan. They also knew that the British would not tolerate anti-British activities in an area like Balochistan, which, strategically, was perceived more sensitive than any other part of British India. A pronouncedly pro-British Muslim leader from the Punjab, Malik Feroz Khan Noon, visited Quetta and addressed a public meeting on September 29, 1939, praising the British Government, and appealing to the Muslims to help the British in their war against the Axis powers.<sup>25</sup>

Loralai was a stronghold of the BML due to the support of local religious leaders. Qazi Isa had admitted having an idea of using the religious wicket and to play this religious card to get popularity especially in the religious minded Pashtoon society. In fact, Haji Zaman, Imam of Loralai Jamia Mosque, in a public meeting held on October 6, condemned the speeches of *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam* (Onwards *Jamiat*)<sup>26</sup> leaders demanding the ouster of British from India. He warned: "If they were driven out it would result in the *Ram Raj* (Hindu-Raj)". He praised the British government for its policy of religious tolerance. He advised the Muslims to join the Muslim League and help the British in its war efforts.<sup>27</sup>

The BML was very well aware and conscious of the problems Muslims faced in other parts of India. On one such occasion, the BML responded and raised a voice against firing on unarmed Muslims in Sindh (The Manzal Gah Mosque, Sukkur, firing case). BML Working Committee held a meeting on November 22, 1939,<sup>28</sup> and decided to convene a public meeting on November 24, to show their concern for their Sindhi brethren. Accordingly, a public meeting was held in

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25 *Ibid.* October 6, 1939.

26 A Pan-Islamic, pro-Ottoman Caliph and pro-Congress party founded by the Khilafatists and Deoband Ulema in 1919.

27 *Ibid.*, October 13, 1939.

28 *FMA*, VOL. 293, Telegram from Qazi Isa to the Secretary AIML, Delhi, dated November 21, 1939, p. 17. "Holding special meeting tomorrow morning regarding Sukkur riots and Manzalgaah."

McMahon Park, Quetta on November 24. About 1100 people attended. Qazi Isa presided over the meeting and Maulvi Sanaullah, Secretary, Sind Muslim League, and other leaders made fiery speeches.<sup>29</sup>

The AIML had started a campaign to expose the anti-Muslim policies of the Congress ministries (1937-39), and appointed several committees to prepare detailed reports on the working of these ministries highlighting, in particular, the discrimination and atrocities meted out to the Muslims.<sup>30</sup> These reports were widely publicized and when the Congress finally decided to resign from the ministries, Jinnah asked the Muslims and other minorities to celebrate the “Day of Deliverance” on December 22, 1939. The BML also participated in these celebrations and distributed Jinnah’s message through *Al-Islam* the newspaper of the party across the width and breadth of Balochistan.<sup>31</sup>

During August 1939, The AIML moved the issue of introduction of political reforms in Balochistan but the Congress and the British Government officials opposed the move and got it rejected. The Propaganda Secretary of BML, Dr. Ghulam Nabi took notice of it and wrote a detailed note about it firstly thanking the party and its member, Ghulam Bhik for presenting the case and further he gave arguments to support the issue. He pleaded that the population of Balochistan was 868,615 not 136,000 as quoted by the authorities.<sup>32</sup>

The Muslim press of Lahore fully supported the Baloch cause. Whenever a Baloch leader visited Lahore, he was invited by the editors and publishers of the newspapers for discussions. Khan Bahadur Arbab Karam Khan and Arbab Abdul Aziz visited the offices of *Ehsan*, *Inqilab*, *Shahbaz* and, *Zamindar* on February 9, 1940, “inducing the editors to favour the reforms in Balochistan”. They also approached the Nawab of Mamdot, President of the Punjab Muslim League for his support.<sup>33</sup> Their demands included the abolition of the Jirga and Sardari Systems, which were obviously aimed at the removal of authoritarianism of the Sardars. There was a strong rumour that Qazi Isa had drafted a resolution to that effect which was to be moved in the Central Legislative Assembly of

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29 *Ibid.*, November 28, 1939.

30 Aziz, K.K., *Muslims Under Congress Rule; 1937-39 Vols.1&2* ( Islamabad,1978-79). The Reports were, The Pirpur Report, *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind* Resolution, A.K.Fazlul Haq’s Report and The Shareef Report.

31 *Al-Islam*, Quetta, December 15, 1939.

32 *FMA*, VOL. 293. pp.18-20.

33 *WIS*, February 16, 1940.

India. Few conservative Sardars got naturally upset with these developments.<sup>34</sup>

There were a good number of Baloch students at Islamia College, Lahore. They were encouraged by the local Muslim leaders to take active part in politics. The Muslim journals of Lahore used to provide them a proper coverage. A report of a meeting in a newspaper of Lahore showed that Baloch students of Islamia College Lahore had formed "The Balochistan Students Union" on February 20, 1940.<sup>35</sup> Office bearers of this organization were also elected.

When the All-India Muslim League decided to put forward the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims in its Lahore session scheduled on March 22-24, 1940, preparations started all over Balochistan to contribute to its success. A meeting of the BML was convened on February 26, 1940 to discuss ways and means to support AIML. It was decided that fifteen members and thirty volunteers in uniform would be proceeding to Lahore. Prince Abdul Karim announced a donation of twenty decorated belts and two hundred yards cloth for the uniform of volunteers. Eventually, a strong contingent from Balochistan left for Lahore to participate in the historic session.<sup>36</sup>

A smart Balochi headed the Guard of Honour presented to Jinnah at the Lahore Railway Station upon his arrival. Qazi Isa, representing the province of Balochistan, forcefully seconded the Lahore Resolution.<sup>37</sup> Impressed by their zeal and enthusiasm at the session, three Baloch students Fazal Ahmad Ghazi, Malik Abdullha Jan Kansi, and Fateh Muhammed Baloch, along with Qazi Isa, were invited by Jinnah to a tea party.<sup>38</sup> In a meeting with Sardar Muhammed Usman Khan Jomezai, Jinnah advised him to expand the party into villages. He told him, "Take young students with you and organize mini-Leagues throughout Balochistan".<sup>39</sup>

The Lahore Resolution was welcomed by the people of Balochistan. A public meeting was held at Pishin. The meeting enthusiastically approved the Resolution. Prominent participants were Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Tareen, Arbab Karam Khan Kansi, Haji Rahmatullah Doomer, and Sardar Usman Jomezai. Later, some prominent leaders also

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34 *Ibid.*, March 1, 1940.

35 *Ehsan*, Lahore, February 23, 1940.

36 *Jang*, Quetta, March 27, 1987.

37 *Ibid.*

38 Interview with Fazal Ahmad Ghazi April 1, 2001.

39 *Aulas*, (Pashtu, Salnamah, Quetta), 1968. pp.16-17.

met at Jomezai's residence at Qila Saifullah, and approved the Lahore Resolution.<sup>40</sup>

To project and popularize the idea of Pakistan and to explain the Lahore Resolution to the Baloch masses,<sup>41</sup> Qazi Isa, on Jinnah's advice, invited Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni for a visit of Balochistan. Maulana Badayuni toured Balochistan from April 18-22, 1940. During the visit, he addressed public meetings at Rojhan, Quetta and Pishin. In his speeches, he strongly criticized the Congress and the so-called 'nationalist' Muslim leaders. He charged the Khilafat Committee, formed in 1919, having spent seventy thousands rupees just to project Gandhi's image and make him a national level leader.<sup>42</sup>

Yusuf Ali Magasi was a torch bearer of Balochistan's political awakening. He contributed a lot for the cause of education in Balochistan and hence he was regarded as the Sir Syed of Balochistan. He met a tragic death at Quetta on May 31, 1935 earthquake. Both the BML and the *Watan* held him in high esteem. The BML celebrated the "Magasi Day" on May 31, 1940, and held a public meeting at Quetta. Prominent leaders addressed the meeting. Maulvi Nurul Haq was one of the main speakers. He condemned the *Jamiat* members who, according to him, used to go to *Wardha* and present themselves before Gandhi with folded hands and bowed heads.<sup>43</sup> Such condemnations not only hurt the cause of the *Jamiat* and its supporters in the Congress but paved the way for the popularity of League in the province.

With the passage of time, the meetings of BML started attracting more and more people from Balochistan and other parts of India. On July 26-28, 1940,<sup>44</sup> the annual conference of BML was addressed by League leaders from the U.P. such as Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni and Liaquat Ali Khan.<sup>45</sup> Jinnah was also invited but he could not come because of illness. In a message read at the conference, he exhorted the people of Balochistan to "organize, unite and stand by the policy of AIML like a block of steel and we shall succeed and realize our goal."<sup>46</sup> The conference pressed for constitutional reforms in Balochistan,

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40 *Ibid.*

41 *Inqilab*, Lahore, April 30, 1940.

42 *WIS*, April 26, 1940.

43 *Inqilab*, June 3, 1940.

44 *FMA*, VOL. 293. p.41. A press release was issued to the Associated Press of India, Delhi by AIML office on July 25, 1940.

45 *WIS*, August 2, 1940.

46 *The Quaid-i-Azam Papers*, National Archives of Pakistan, Islamabad, File No. 302, P.42. Also *Inqilab*, August 1 & 2, 1940.

electoral system in Quetta Municipal Committee, and demanded that all Muslim teaching institutions should be affiliated with the Aligarh Muslim University. In his Presidential Address, Liaquat Ali Khan proclaimed:

Your province of Balochistan, on account of its geographical situation, holds a unique position. The people of the province are the gatekeepers of India and for that reason at least, if for nothing else, God has made them of fine physique and martial temperament. The British Government has treated the province most unjustly, so much so, that its parallel cannot be given anywhere else in India.<sup>47</sup>

So far, the *Khaksar* party of Balochistan had been quite close to the BML. They had been supporting the League's programme and its activities. In this conference, the *Khaksars* came in large numbers. In turn, the leaders of the League expressed their grief and concern over the incident of firing at the *Khaksar* gathering on March 19, 1940 at Lahore. Some speakers in the second annual BML conference held at Quetta on March 25, 1941 strongly condemned the Punjab Premier Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, for his role in the firing on the *Khaksars*. Malik Jan Muhammad was most vocal in this condemnation. Finally, a resolution in favour of *Khaksars* and expressing confidence in the leadership of Jinnah and Allama Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi was passed.<sup>48</sup>

The first "Pakistan Day" was celebrated at Quetta with great enthusiasm. A large procession was taken out on March 23, 1941. Qazi Isa took salute of the Muslim League National Guards.<sup>49</sup> In fact, after this event BML became more active and started participating in the League sessions all over India. In April, Qazi Isa led the party delegates and National Guards to the AIML annual session held at Madras in April 1941.<sup>50</sup>

A well-attended session of the BML was held at Quetta on May 31, 1941.<sup>51</sup> The party continued to hold its sessions regularly and each meeting manifested its growing strength. Prominent League leaders from other provinces kept on visiting, addressing and guiding the League

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47 *Inqilab*, August 2, 1940. See also, *FMA*, VOL. 293. pp.42-47. A long note of his address is available in Qazi Isa's handwriting. The other main topics were the two nation-theory, the Congress rule and its refusal to share power with the Muslims, etc.

48 *Al-Farooq*, Quetta, March 25, 1941.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *WIS*, April 16, 1941.

51 *Al-Farooq*, June 3, 1941. A well-attended session of BML was held at Quetta on May 31, 1941.

members of Balochistan in their struggle for Pakistan. Nawab Iftikhar Mamdot a League leader from the Punjab presided the fourth annual session of the BML in July 1942. Support for the Pakistan demand, provincial self-government for Balochistan, a demand to release political detainees, including Nawabzada Abdur Rehman Bugti,<sup>52</sup> and expression of confidence in Jinnah's political leadership were the main highlights of this session.<sup>53</sup>

Jinnah had a special attachment with Balochistan. In 1943, he toured the province for three weeks, from June 26 to July 18, 1943. The BML paper, *Al-Islam*, Quetta, covered the visit and reported every detail of his activities. This was Jinnah's first visit to Balochistan, and judging by the response of the people, he indeed manifested such qualities that both friends and foes flocked to see him, to seek his guidance and to ask for his help on various issues of interest. Jinnah knew that he was visiting to a tribal society, with its peculiar traditional social structure, but he was also keen to encourage a positive political change. Accompanied by his sister, Fatima Jinnah, and Lady Abdoola Haroon, Jinnah impressed upon the Muslims of Balochistan the need to keep women along in every walk of life. The conservative tribal leaders were generally opposed to women's education and, consequently, their participation in political affairs. Jinnah's initiative, however impressed them, and Begum Qazi Isa and some other educated women of the province came forward to set a precedent. This visit not only mobilized the people of Balochistan in favour of Pakistan but also boosted the image of Muslim League in the area. In addition, Prince Abdul Karim and Khan of Kalat's Secretary Abdur Rauf sought an audience with Jinnah, and assured him of Khan's full support for the cause of Pakistan.<sup>54</sup> In Quetta, Jinnah was visited not only by the leaders and members of the BML but also the leaders of the *Jamiat* and National Party, on July 2 and 7, 1943, respectively.<sup>55</sup>

The BML held a public meeting in honour of Jinnah on July 1, 1943 at Quetta, Qazi Isa presided. Next day, Jinnah hoisted the Pakistan flag on the BML office situated at the Sandeman Road in a ceremony. Jinnah also inaugurated the annual session of the BML held on July 3, 1943. Jinnah's address was aimed at highlighting the social and economic

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52 *FMA, VOL. 293*, pp.51-52. He was a radical Baloch but due to differences with his father, a pro-British Nawab of Bugti tribe, he was tried and imprisoned. His daughter Gran Bibi sent a petition to Jinnah on April 20, 1939 for release of her father.

53 *Pasban*, Quetta, July 3, 1942.

54 *Al-Islam*, July 3, 1943.

55 *Ibid.*, July 4 & 10, 1943.

problems of Balochistan. He lamented that the lack of local self-government even at the level of Quetta Municipality was due to the deliberate negligence and indifference of the government. He was dismayed at the lack of development both in the urban and the rural areas of Balochistan and promised that he would raise these issues in the Central Legislative Assembly of India. He also asked the people to strengthen the Muslim League and to help him achieve Pakistan for the benefit of all the Muslims including the Muslims of Balochistan. He further stressed:

Your strength lies by being with your own people. Take more interest in their betterment and happiness. Don't depend on the patronage of the officials. This patronage will be only momentary and would be withdrawn the moment their ultimate purpose is served. Seek your proper and real place in the hearts of your people and not at local Darbars.<sup>56</sup>

Jinnah wanted the people of Balochistan to adopt a more positive and progressive attitude, and warned them:

Baluchistan has got a wonderful history but you have (you will forgive me), lived the same life. You have not made progress with the world or even with India; you have still your own system. You have been indifferent to what was going on in the world. I wanted to awake you up from fast sleep.<sup>57</sup>

True to the traditional culture of Balochistan, the organizers of this convention presented him a historical sword. While accepting it, he did not forget to remind the people of Balochistan that the real strength was not in the sword but in the pen, in education. As one writer has noted:

The extent of his (Jinnah) faith in the primacy of education could be gauged from the fact that when Baluchistan Muslim League in its conference on 4 July 1943 presented him a historical sword, which was announced to have been wielded in several battles in defense of Islam, he was not moved. He told them it will rise only in defense. But for the present the most important thing is education. Knowledge is a greater force than sword, go and acquire it. When you have done it then comes sword, which we have been wielding for the last thirteen centuries.<sup>58</sup>

During the conference Yahya Bakhtiar, Vice President of the All India Muslim Students Federation, moved a resolution demanding more resources and opportunities for education in Balochistan. Sardar Usman Jomezai seconded this resolution forcefully.<sup>59</sup> Apparently, Jinnah's words

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56 *Ibid.*, July 6, 1943.

57 Rais Ahmad Jaafri, *Khutbat-i-Quaid-i-Azam* (Lahore, n.d.), Urdu, pp. 380-83.

58 Sikandar Hayat, *Aspects of the Pakistan Movement* (Islamabad, 1998), pp. 256-257.

59 *Al-Islam*, July 6, 1943.

had moved them. Jinnah also went to Kalat on 5 days tour from July 10 to 14, 1943. Prince Abdul Karim accompanied him from Quetta. The Khan of Kalat offered warm hospitality and pledged to support him to achieve his goal of Pakistan.<sup>60</sup>

Before his departure from Quetta, Jinnah assigned Qazi Isa the task of writing a booklet highlighting the Balochistan case and asked that it would be distributed among the members of the Central Legislative Assembly and the press. Qazi Isa prepared the report and submitted it to Jinnah for further dissemination.<sup>61</sup>

During the early 1940s, the politics of Balochistan was dominated by the League public meetings, resolutions in favour of Pakistan, demanding political reforms in Balochistan and identifying the cause of the Palestinians with the struggle for freedom.<sup>62</sup> The Nawab of Bhopal and the Maharaja of Jodhpur visited Quetta on September 20, 1944.<sup>63</sup> Such visits familiarized the Indian leaders with the situation in Balochistan and the need for political development in Balochistan in the mainstream politics of the Sub-continent. Jinnah was conscious of the commercial domination of the non-Muslims in the province. In spite of the fact that Balochistan was predominantly a Muslim-majority area, the commerce was largely in the hands of non-Muslims, who were concentrated mainly in Quetta. Because of the constant efforts of the BML, the Balochistan Muslim Chamber of Commerce was established in 1944.<sup>64</sup>

Nawab Muhammed Khan Jogezi and other leaders of Balochistan sent telegrams to the Viceroy urging that the "Muslim League is the sole representative of Muslims and Jinnah is the sole official spokesman of the Indian Muslims at Simla Conference."<sup>65</sup> The BML strongly approved the stand taken by Jinnah at the Simla Conference 1945.<sup>66</sup>

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60 *Ibid.* July 17, 1943. See also Ahmadzai, Mir Nasir Khan, *Tarikh-i-Baloch Wa Balochistan*, Vol. VII (Quetta, 2000), Urdu, pp. 380-81." Jinnahs (both Jinnah and Fatimah), were weighed in Silver and Gold during their Kalat visit at *Meeri* (Khans residence) and the amount was donated in AIML Fund. He was given a protocol of a head of state, 21 Gun Salute and Guard of Honour on arrival at Kalat."

61 *FMA*, Vol.293, pp. 82-130. Published by the Daily Gazette Press, Karachi, January 1944.

62 *Inqilab*, March 25, 1944.

63 *WIS*, September 29, 1944.

64 *Ibid.* October 4, 1944.

65 *Ibid.* July 18, 1945.

66 *Inqilab*, July 20, 1945.



Jinnah again came to Balochistan on a five week tour i.e., September 14 to October 20, 1945. This time Jinnah stayed at Kalat House, Quetta. During a public meeting, Jinnah declared the Islamia School Quetta, as “Mini-Aligarh.”<sup>67</sup>

Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan of Peshawar who was previously a staunch Congressite and deputy leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislative Assembly and had written a very critical book<sup>68</sup> against Muslim League, came to Quetta to plead Abdul Samad Achakzai’s case. During his stay, he sought an interview with Jinnah on September 21, 1945 and assured him of his full support and cooperation in the struggle for Pakistan. He further invited him to visit the N.W.F.P. Khan Qaiyum also addressed a public meeting at Quetta on September 20, 1945, and criticized the British Foreign Secretary’s statement that “Baluchistan was not political- minded” and that, “There were few Sardars who were sufficiently educated”. He also denounced the Congress policies of opposing the introduction of political reforms in Balochistan.<sup>69</sup> During Jinnah’s stay at Quetta, a prominent Punjab Muslim League leader, Sir Feroz Khan Noon, also visited Balochistan.

At this stage, the *Khaksar* and the *Majlis-i-Ahrar*<sup>70</sup> (onwards *Ahrar*) leaders had started opposing the AIML and Jinnah. The Hindu press extensively published the hostile assertions of the *Khaksar* leader, Allama Mashriqi, and Maulvi Mazhar Ali Azhar, a prominent leader of the *Ahrar*. Jinnah, of course, refuted their allegations and declared them “mean actions.” Jinnah also went to Mastung (a town between Quetta and Kalat), and stayed there for a week. He was guest of the Khan of Kalat. At Mastung, Jinnah visited a school, Mir Abdul Baqi Baluch, then a student recited a poem: “O God! This is the cry of the Muslims of India: Give us the country that is known as Pakistan”. Jinnah spoke in Urdu and assured his audience: “We will definitely achieve Pakistan.”<sup>71</sup>

It is usually argued by some Baloch nationalists that Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd was opposed to the Pakistan Movement, but the details of Jinnah’s visits to various Kalat state institutions, including the one to the Mastung School, shows a different picture. Aziz Kurd, the Law and Justice Minister of Kalat state, not only himself welcomed Jinnah but his close family members presented him bouquets. On October 15, 1945 his

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67 WIS, September 26, 1945.

68 Khan, Abdul Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier* (Bombay, 1945).

69 *Inqilab*, September 26, 1945.

70 A pro-Congress party established by nationalist Ulema at Lahore in 1931.

71 WIS, October 3, 1945.

nephew, Mir Yusuf Kurd, presented him bouquet from his uncle to Jinnah, who, in his address, advised the students to remember that; “they are first Muslims and Pakistani then Baloch.”<sup>72</sup> Before leaving Balochistan, Jinnah also addressed the Muslim students of Quetta on October 17, 1945 and advised them to study politics as part of their education.<sup>73</sup>

During his visit to Balochistan, Jinnah was presented two silver bars weighing about 15 maunds by an unidentified Muslim. Balochistan was the highest contributor to the cause of Pakistan as compared to other areas of the Sub-continent in terms of population. They provided “silver shells” in place of “bullets.”<sup>74</sup>

Whenever there was an occasion, the Baloch leaders presented their case for introduction of political reforms to the British authorities. For instance, when the British parliamentary delegation reached Karachi in 1946, Mir Jaafar Jamali (member Sindh Legislative Assembly and Vice President BML), Malik Usman and Maulvi Ubaidullah Soomro presented a memorandum for introduction of political reforms in Balochistan.<sup>75</sup>

Apart from the Baloch, the Pashtoons were very conscious of their provincial rights. The tribal Pashtoon chiefs sent telegrams to the Cabinet Mission in 1946 pressing for Balochistan’s separate entity.<sup>76</sup> For instance, Nawab Muhammed Khan Jomezai and seven prominent Pashtoon chiefs told the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission, that they were strongly opposed to the division of Balochistan or its merger with neighbouring provinces i.e., NWFP, Sindh and the Punjab. They insisted that the unity and separate entity of Balochistan must be maintained at all costs. The Nawabs, Sardars, Maliks and Motabirs were worried about the rumours of the dismemberment of Balochistan. They demanded the unity and integrity of the province.<sup>77</sup> The BML always demanded local Muslim’s representation in public offices. BML Council resolved in its meeting held on April 3, 1946, “A Muslim Education Superintendent should be appointed in place of a European Lady. A Muslim lawyer should be appointed as sub-judge at Sibi. A non-Muslim’s appointment was protested.”<sup>78</sup> Furthermore another Muslim organization, *Anjuman-i-*

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72 *Al-Islam*, October, 20, 1945.

73 *Ibid.*

74 *Ibid.* See also *Inqilab*, October 22, 1945.

75 Kausar, *Jido Jihad*, pp. 241-43.

76 *Ibid.*

77 *WIS*, May 1, 1946.

78 *FMA*, VOL. 371. p. 33.

*Islamia*, Balochistan, was also active in this respect. It demanded the preservation of Muslim rights in respect of educational and employment sectors.<sup>79</sup>

In addition to the youth, children were also involved in the struggle for Pakistan. At Sibi, a "Children Muslim League" was formed.<sup>80</sup> Another "Children Muslim League" was also formed at the Loralai meeting at Jamia Mosque on May 24, 1946.<sup>81</sup> The Muslim students, as a whole, were very active in the struggle for Pakistan. The Balochistan Muslim Students Federation played a major role in this respect. It held a meeting in the BML office at Quetta and pledged, "To sacrifice their lives for the cause of Pakistan".<sup>82</sup>

On May 31, 1946, Qazi Isa, in a public meeting of BML demanded the release of Nawabzada Abdul Rahman Bugti (a staunch Leaguer and brother of Late Nawab Muhammad Akbar Khan Bugti). He also protested against the atrocities on the Muslims committed by the Dogra Government of Kashmir.<sup>83</sup> It showed that the party was alive to both local and national issues.

The BML was deeply interested in the affairs of Quetta Municipal Committee the right of only Muslim members to elect a Muslim member of the Central Legislative Assembly of India. The party also demanded that Balochistan Muslim representatives should be democratically elected, and the thirteen non-Muslim members of Quetta Municipal Committee should not vote for the election of the Muslim member.<sup>84</sup>

In fact, the first show of strength between pro-Pakistan and anti-Pakistan forces in Balochistan was staged on the issue of elections to the Central Legislative Assembly of India. There were two candidates in the field representing the AIML and the Congress respectively. Nawab Mohammed Khan Jomezai represented the League. In addition, he had the support of some forty Muslim members of Shahi Jirga. All of them went to the Agent to the Governor General to plead his case. The other candidate was Abdul Samad Achakzai who was supported by the pro-Congress elements. He tried to divide the votes by encouraging more candidates stand for elections, but he could get only 13 votes in his

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79 *Ibid.* pp.34-35, 38, 41.

80 *Pasban*, May 4, 1946.

81 *WIS*, May 29, 1946.

82 *Ibid.*, June 5, 1946.

83 *Al-Islam*, June 2, 1946.

84 *Ibid.*, June 8, 1946.

favour. Jogezeai received 61 votes as reported by Mir Jaafar Khan Jamali to Jinnah.<sup>85</sup>

With the passage of time, the Pakistan Movement gained momentum in the province and the BML also progressed. Impressed by its efforts, the local Muslim members of other organization started joining the Muslim League. The *Nazim-i-Aala* of the *Khaksar* party, Abdul Samad Khan, joined the BML on August 23, 1946.<sup>86</sup> When in 1946, the AIML protesting against the attitude of the British Government over the issues of Pakistan resolved to renounce the official titles, the BML whole- heartedly responded to the central organization's decision and, on August 29, Eid Day, its leaders announced their renunciation of titles from the Eid Mosque rostrum, Quetta. Most prominent leaders to do so were Nawab Arbab Karam Khan Kansi, Seth Fida Ali, Ali Bhai, Malik Faqir Mohammad Kansi, Sardar Ghulam Muhammed Khan Tareen, Malik Shahjahan Khan, and Maulvi Abdul Rashid Khan.<sup>87</sup>

The Pashtoons of Balochistan were very much involved in the fight for Pakistan. They were quite emotional about it. They would not allow any abusive language used against Jinnah or Pakistan. One instance of this emotionalism was demonstrated on the night of October 9, 1946, when a Muslims youth, Faiz Muhammed stabbed to death one Ram Chand at Fort Sandeman. Faiz Muhammed alleged that the Hindu fellow had abused Jinnah, which he could not tolerate.<sup>88</sup>

By the end of 1946, the demand for Pakistan had gained considerable support and strength among the Muslim masses of India. The result was communal tension growing day by day. Balochistan was also charged with this tension. Being wealthy businessmen, non-Muslims were quite influential in Quetta. In addition, they had the support of the British authorities. The Muslims felt insecure, and indeed started preparing themselves for physical resistance, if need be. A "Jinnah Physical Club" was opened at Quetta to train the Muslim youth in martial arts. The non-Muslims had already started their own preparations. The Sikhs had started exercises with *Kirpans* (a small sword), the Hindus had opted for *Lathis* (sticks).<sup>89</sup>

By this time, the division of the Sub-continent had become imminent. But unfortunate fallout of this development was the communal

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85 Kausar, *Jido Jihad*, pp, 291-95.

86 *Al-Islam*, August 25, 1946

87 *WIS*, September 4, 1946.

88 *Ibid.*, October 16, 1946.

89 *Ibid.*, October 23, 1946.

conflict in which Hindu-Muslim riots created problems everywhere. In Bihar, the Muslims were main victims which disturbed the Muslims of the other parts of India. Qazi Isa toured throughout Balochistan and addressed public meetings to inform the Muslims of the current situation. At the appeal of Qazi Isa, a "Bihar Day" was observed and a "Bihar Fund" was also generated to help the calamity-stricken Muslims there. Relief mission from Balochistan was sent to Bihar to help them. Muslim League National Guards were sent to Patna to help the Muslims of Bihar in dealing with the difficult communal situation. They setup a camp at Patna. The Balochistan Muslims also helped their famine-stricken co-religionists in Bengal. The BML was keen to forge unity in the Muslim community and to help it as much as they could. Qazi Isa's two speeches in this regard are worth quoting. He addressed a public meeting at Chaman on December 2, 1946, informing the masses about the "Bihar Massacre".<sup>90</sup> Two days later he addressed a gathering at an *Imambargah* in Quetta emphasizing "Shia-Sunni unity".<sup>91</sup>

The Quetta Municipal Committee was the only public forum where different sections of public opinion were represented. By the end of 1946, its elections were held. Although these elections were conducted on the basis of joint electorate system, but since the non-Muslims were very influential and opposed to the League, they tried their best to defeat the BML candidates but they could not succeed. The BML managed to get all its candidates elected. They were Seth Fida Ali, Ali Bhai, Haji Ali Bahadur, Hafiz Salim Ahmad, Khan Abdul Ghafoor Khan Durrani, and Malik Haji Muhammad Azim. The *Watan* party candidates Mohammed Hashim and Sultan Muhammed along with Agha Ahmad Shah of *Jamiat* were all defeated.<sup>92</sup>

At the time of Quetta Municipality elections, the communal situation was very tense and the danger of Hindu-Muslim riots was very high, but the League leaders worked hard to control the situation. Nawab Muhammed Khan Jomezai was the only elected member of the Central Legislative Assembly of India from Balochistan. Some anti-League circles tried to make a dent in his relations with the AIML. He promptly issued a press statement in support of the party.<sup>93</sup> He gave proof of his loyalty when the League central command decided to boycott the Central Legislative Assembly proceedings. Jomezai, in a press statement, declared that Balochistan would follow the League's decision. He further

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90 *Al-Haq*, Sibi, December 3, 1946, in the *FMA*, VOL. 371. p.16.

91 *Ibid.*, December 7, 1946.

92 *WIS.*, , December 11, 1946.

93 *Ibid.*, December 17, 1946.

assured: “Baluchistan is hundred percent with the AIML and will offer every sacrifice to achieve Pakistan”.<sup>94</sup>

Balochistan had sent volunteers to agitate against the incident of *Khaksar* firing at Lahore in 1940. In 1946-47, the BML again sent workers to the Punjab for agitation against Khizar Hayat’s Unionist Government for its anti-Pakistan policies. They also courted arrests along with their Punjabi brethren at Lahore.<sup>95</sup> By now, the Muslim League was a very popular Muslim organization throughout Balochistan. Even in the Princely States the branches of the party had been established. However, when the Kalat State Muslim League applied for affiliation with the central organization on February 24, 1947, Jinnah refused. His argument was that, according to the party constitution, its jurisdiction was limited only to the British India; it could not operate in the states<sup>96</sup>.

The formation of Pakistan was quite near but the League leader did not take it easy and were busy forcing their point of view to ward off any mishap at the critical point, so BML convened a Pakistan Conference at Quetta on April 27-28, 1947. Chaudhry Khaliqzaman, a top-ranking League leader from the U.P. was invited. He reached Quetta on April 24, 1947.<sup>97</sup> The conference resolved in favour of self-government in Balochistan and pressed for the creation of Pakistan.<sup>98</sup> Balochistan’s women were also active in the struggle for Pakistan. A meeting of the Muslim League Girls Federation was held at Quetta on June 1, 1947. About 200 women attended the meeting. Dr. Ziauddin of Peshawar and others spoke on the occasion.<sup>99</sup> A minister in the Interim Government of India and a top-ranking League leader, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, also visited Quetta from June 29 to July 2, 1947. Many progressive Sardars called on him including Bugti

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94 *Ibid.*, February 22, 1947. The BML issued a Press Release on February 25, 1947 exposing the conspiracies of the Congress and like-minded anti-League elements. *FMA, VOL. 371*. pp. 48-49.

95 *Ibid.*, February 19, 1947.

96 Kausar, *Jido Jihad*, p.421.

97 *WIS*, April 30, 1947.

98 Ch. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Karachi, 1967), p.1046.

99 *Ibid.*, pp.1046-47. The author has quoted a wrong date of his arrival i.e. April 26, 1947.

and Jogezai. All of them assured him of their support for Pakistan.<sup>100</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Though youngest in formation and less equipped with the necessary network, the BML had emerged only in nine years, from 1938 to 1947 as the most important political organization in Balochistan. Although the Congress had emerged as a powerful political party in the 1936-37 elections but it refused to share power with the AIML and lost the Muslim confidence and secondly during the Second World War, it started demanding that the British, if they needed their help during the war, should pledge that they would leave India after the war. When the British did not entertain this idea, the Congress leaders became extremely critical of the colonial rule. It was their anti-British tone that attracted some political groups in Balochistan to their cause. But the problem was that while the Congress hated the British and wanted them to leave India, it was not prepared to support the Balochistan demand for political reforms. The result was that soon the pro-Congress elements in Balochistan felt alienated by the people. The important fact of history throughout this period is that neither of the top Congress leaders could ever care or dare to step in Balochistan to support their favourites here, nor a formal branch of the party could be launched throughout Balochistan. Furthermore, even Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the popular leader of the Pashtoons failed to mobilize his ethnic associates in Balochistan. Most of their audience consisted of non-Muslim pro-Congress population of Balochistan. Whereas the AIML had always been supportive of the introduction of political reforms in Balochistan but its leaders did not indulge in that kind of anti-British rhetoric that was music to the ears of many leaders in Balochistan but Jinnah's strong support of the Balochistan's cause, popularity of the idea of Pakistan, and the deteriorating relations between the Hindus and the Muslims, ultimately won the day for the Muslim League and Pakistan. Almost all the prominent AIML leaders from other provinces came here to address its meetings and to mobilize the Muslim masses in favour of the League and Pakistan. In spite of

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100 *WIS*, July 9, 1947.

his hectic and busy schedule, Jinnah also spent a considerable time in Balochistan, promoting the cause for making of Pakistan. He was convinced that Pakistan promised the long-neglected inhabitants of Balochistan a fair share in socio-economic and political development. The BML helped him in establishing the roots of Pakistan Movement in Balochistan. The top League leadership (including Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Ch. Khaliquzzaman, Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan etc.) was ever ready to come to the area whenever and where ever it was requested by the BML. Indeed, when the time came to approve the establishment of Pakistan and Balochistan's accession to the new nation-state, the League did not encounter any notable opposition.