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**Sir Mohammad Shafi and All-India Muslim League:
Differences & Complications (1906-1917)**

Abstract

The Muslim demand for separate electorates was accepted in Minto-Morley Reforms 1909 and later it became the basic point around which the Muslims' politics evolved till the obtaining of partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. Sir Mohammad Shafi made personal efforts in getting the iconic milestone i.e. separate electorates through his contacts with office of the Viceroy. These efforts in some detail are analyzed. Soon after the reforms, however, some of the prominent leaders of the Muslim League got upset with the government over the issue of annulment of partition of Bengal and the Balkan wars. They started seeking cooperation with the Hindus rather than depending upon the government. But Shafi who had succeeded in securing Muslim rights through cooperation with the British did not agree. He was not in favour of anti-British campaign at any cost. He still stood firm in his belief that Muslim interests as a whole could be achieved through cooperation. The result was a host of difficulties with the All India Muslim League and its leadership. These developments are analyzed systematically in the paper.

Key words: Separate electorates, annulment, Balkan, partition, non-cooperation, reforms, constitution, minority

The demand for separate electorates for the Muslims was accepted in Minto-Morley Reforms 1909 and later it became the basic point around which the Muslims' politics revolved till very partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. Sir Mohammad Shafi made personal efforts in getting these separate electorates through his contacts with Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary to the Viceroy. These efforts in some detail will be analysed. Soon after the reforms, however, some of the prominent leaders of the Muslim League got upset with the government over the issue of annulment of partition of Bengal and the Balkan wars. They started seeking cooperation with the Hindus rather than depending upon the government. But Shafi who had succeeded in securing Muslim rights through cooperation with the British did not agree. He was not in favour of anti-British campaign at any cost. He still stood firm in his belief that Muslim interests as a whole could be achieved through cooperation. The result was a host of difficulties the All India Muslim League and its leadership. Let us analyse these developments systematically.

Issue of Separate Electorates

The formation of Congress and the spread of western education provided political consciousness to the India. However, as indicated early the Congress claim to be representative of all Indians and its demand of democratic institutions on the western pattern alarmed the Muslim leadership. The leaders felt that the demand, though innocuous on the face of it, was quite harmful for the Muslims because they were economically weak, educationally backward and numerically far less than the Hindus. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and many other Muslim leaders had opposed the idea on this ground. They were convinced that, in the end it would lead to permanent Hindu domination. In fact, Syed Ahmad Khan had launched his Mohammedan Defence Association of Upper India to counter precisely such demands of the Congress Shafi played an important role in this organisation and had sponsored the all important resolution for separate electorates.¹

With the advent of the new century, the Muslim had to face new challenges. The partition of Bengal and the Congress's opposition to it and the announcement pertaining to the introduction of new instalment of reforms made the Muslims realize that they better act fast to secure their own interests in the new dispensation. Consequently, Simla Deputation 1906 was arranged to put a number of demands, including that of separate electorates before the Viceroy. Shafi participated actively in the discussion to prepare the address, and also

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joined the Deputation in its meeting with Viceroy.² In the same year, of course as indicated early, the All-India Muslim League was found through which the case of separate electorates was pleaded most emphatically.

The question of parliamentary reforms³ was under consideration for long, and along with other Muslim leaders, Shafi was also conscious of its importance. In the meantime, the Government of India asked for the opinion of the various parties on the subject of reforms. In response, the Punjab Provincial Muslim League held a meeting of its Executive Committee in 1907. Shafi drafted and presented a resolution stating:

‘The Punjab Provincial Muslim League re-affirms its previous resolution to the effect that Mohammedans are, in view of their numbers and importance entitled to adequate and separate representation... Separate representation at all stages is, in the opinion of the League, the only effective method of safeguarding the Mohammedans interests on proposed councils.’⁴

Shafi had great concern over the issue of separate electorate and this was readily acknowledged even by his opponents. Azim Hussain, wrote sympathetic biography of his father and of the main pillar of Muslim political Leadership in the Punjab, Sir Fazli Husain, for instance, wrote that: ‘most of the work in connection with Muslim demands was the result of efforts of Mian Mohammad Shafi and Mian Shah Din.’⁵

The annual session of All-India Muslim League held at Amritsar in December 1908 viewed Secretary of State for India, Morley’s Electoral College scheme with great alarm and disappointment, in which reservation of seats was suggested for Muslim instead of granted them separate electorates, simple and pure. However, there was a difference of emphasise between the Punjab delegates and the Muslim Leaders from other provinces, in their reaction to Morley’s scheme. Unlike leaders from other province the Punjab delegates were critical of the scheme as a whole because of the lack of adequate safeguards for the Muslims. Shafi insisted that no scheme would be acceptable to the Muslim which did not provide them representation in the Legislative Council and municipal and district boards through an electorate system of separate electorates. He demanded that scheme should be formulated keeping in mind the circumstances and political condition prevailing in India. He and other Punjabi leaders were ready to thank Minto, the Viceroy, for his acceptance of principle of separate electorates, but they were not prepared to ingratiate Morley, who they felt had hurt their vital interests.⁶ Despite the different perception, however, a joint resolution was passed thanking both Minto and Morley, but emphasising, nonetheless, that the Muslims wanted separates electorates not reservation of seats.⁷

In a series of private and confidential letters to Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Shafi discussed in detail various aspects of the reforms scheme. But, in the end he pointed out that the scheme was not acceptable to the Muslims. He insisted that ‘separate electorates’ were the need of the Indian condition.⁸ In his letter of 8th January 1909, he openly admitted that he was expressing the ‘Anglo-Mohammedan’ point of view in which the interests of the Muslims were identical with those of the British Government and of the Anglo-Indian community. Shafi pointed out that the most important change which had been incorporated in the new scheme as for as the constitution of municipal and district boards is concerned, ‘...is the removal of all ‘official’ participation in their ordinary administration in the condition laid down the scheme that the system of nominating official Presidents of their bodies shall, in future, be put a stop to.’⁹ He criticised the proposal because it had been tried before and had been an utter failure, and, in particular was not found suitable in the provinces of the Punjab, Eastern Bengal and Sindh. It was the duty of Deputy Commissioner or other such officers to hold the balance between the different groups in those bodies. In his opinion, the government by eliminating the process of nominations, willingly or unwillingly, was handing over the whole administration to the Hindus, the majority community. In fact, he claimed, this would prove to be the first step in the realization of their dream of the ‘Swaraj’.¹⁰

In his letter of 10 January, 1909 he asked Smith to persuade the Viceroy to ponder over the five resolutions¹¹ which were passed unanimously by the All-India Muslim League session, 1908 at Amritsar. He stressed once again that if the minorities were not given adequate and safe representation through separate electorates and the British government insisted on mixed or joint electorates, the minorities interests would be severely undermined. The only gainers would be the Hindus, supporters of the Swaraj. In addition, Shafi criticised the constitution of the provincial councils.¹² Indeed the upshot of Shafi’s whole argument was that the Muslims should be given representation in the councils; not simply according to their numerical strength but also keeping in mind their political importance and place in the society.¹³ In the subsequent letter, Shafi was of course pleased that Morley, the Secretary of State, had sought an interview with the King Emperor to discuss the whole issue of Muslim representation in India.¹⁴

Arguing the case of separate electorates Shafi, yet arguing in this letter of 18 June 1909, observed that India was divided into two major religious communities, Muslim and Hindus. Therefore, he maintained representation of the two communities should be on the basis of that division. He pointed out that the Hindu

community constituted a vast majority of the masses of India. It was only logical to expect that elections based on joint electorates were bound to result in the election of a very large number of the Hindus councils.¹⁵

While not oblivious to other aspects of the reform scheme, Shafi in one of his letters to Smith also expressed his anxiety and concern over the issue of the appointment of an Indian member on the executive councils of the Viceroy and of the Governors of Bombay and Madras. He thought it was a dangerous proposal. Instead, he advised the government to appoint two members, a Hindu and a Muslim as councillor.¹⁶

Shafi was against the retention of official majorities in all provincial councils, and indeed, warned that it would give a fresh cause for agitation to the people of India. In his opinion, it was advisable to maintain a small official majority in those provinces where its maintenance was essential. In all other provinces the official majorities should be dispensed with. But while dispensing with it the British Government must keep a number of non-official seats in its own hands and should fill them by nominations if required.¹⁷ Shafi strongly suggested the need for a 'Mohammedan Electoral College' in the Punjab¹⁸. Furthermore, he insisted that if appointment were to be made in various executive councils, the Muslims should be given their due share along with the others.¹⁹

Indeed, in Shafi's estimate, the only right way to settle the Muslim claims for representation in the proposed constitutional reforms was to concede then separate electorates in the legislative councils and in the various local bodies. In his letters to Smith, he kept on reminding him again and again, that the government should not deviate from its promises to the Muslim community. In turn, he continued to assure the government that the Muslims would remain loyal to the British.²⁰ His efforts finally bore fruit when the government, in the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909, conceded separate electorates for the Muslims. But, then, it was not a full concession. The Punjab was neither given separate electorates nor adequate representation. Shafi was disappointed and distressed. He strongly protested against this omission both from platform of Provincial Muslim League and the Punjab Legislative Council, and vowed to struggle for realisation of all the Muslim demands in the future.²¹

Difference with Progressive Muslim Leadership

As indicated above, Shafi wanted separate representation not only on all India level but also in the Punjab especially for the Punjab Legislative Council. In order to achieve this goal however, he continued to express his complete loyalty to the British. Indeed, while proceeding over the anniversary of the foundation of the Punjab Muslim League at Lahore on 22 October, 1909, he pointed out that:

...the first aim of our League is to promote among Indian Mussalamans feelings of loyalty towards the British Government and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intentions of government with regard to any of its measures....and the second object with which the Muslim League organization has been founded is to protect the political and other rights of Indian Mussalmans and to place their needs and aspiration before the government in temperate language...²²

Shafi discussed the issue of separate electorates with the members of Viceroy's executive council. He showed to them the number of Muslim representatives in municipal committees and district boards of the Punjab, and argued that it was necessary for a fair representation of the Muslims in the province that they, too, should be provided separate electorates without any further delay, but to no avail.²³ In the annual session of the Punjab Muslim League on 26 May, 1912, Shafi again stressed the need for separate electorates in the Punjab, and indeed got two resolutions passed on the subject to pressurize the Government.²⁴ Shafi was keenly interested in the legislature work in the Punjab Legislative Council. He supported the colonisation of government lands 'Punjab Bill' and acknowledged that the grant of property rights of tenants or payment of a moderate price would help settle satisfactorily various conflicting claims on government lands. In his opinion 'this measure would be greatly appreciated by the various communities involved, and thus would in calculate sense of loyalty to the British government. It was due to his persistent effort that, in the end, the motion to approve the Bill was successful.²⁵ Indeed, in passionate speech, he assured the government that:

...a prosperous and contented agricultural population is an asset in the hands of government, the value of strength of which, in the course of law and order, it is impossible to exaggerate. Give them the rights and privileges which are their just due and you need entertain no anxiety for the permanence and stability of existing conditions...in bowing before the supposed intellectual superiority of the urban population, the interest of the agricultural classes, have in the past been often neglected, to the detriment, not only of the majority of the inhabitants of this province but, I am afraid, of the interests of the government itself.²⁶

This of course, showed not only his great concern with agricultural interests but, also, more importantly, is abiding loyalty to the British government. Shafi was convinced that he could secure Muslim interests only by cooperating with the British. He did his best to convey to the government that the Muslims, of every class and group, were 'loyal' subjects, and thus they deserved a special treatment. While doing so, however, he betrayed his ignorance of the fast changing attitude of the Muslim community towards the British especially in the wake of annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911, which had upset the Muslims like never before. This and host of other issues of deep concern to the Muslim community led to his pronounced difference with the 'progressive' Muslim League leaders who were not in favour of depending solely on the British for the protection of their rights and interests.

Indeed, many young and progressive Muslim leaders were now sure that it was necessary and indeed desirable to seek ways and means of cooperation with the Congress.²⁷ The annulment of the partition of Bengal had particularly showed to them that their policy of loyalty to the British had not been fruitful. Instead, he felt that the agitation politics of Hindus had been more successful. The so-called 'progressive' group in the Punjab in particular was convinced that agitation was the only way to success.²⁸ So, they came out in the open opposition to the British. Conversely, it brought them close to Congress. The conservatives like Shafi, of course, remained wadded to their own notions of absolute and unconditional loyalty to the British government.²⁹

The matters came to the fore over the issue of the proposed Muslim University at Aligarh raising the standard of the Aligarh College. In 1912, the government announced that all the schools and colleges in the confines of the province could be affiliated with the proposed Aligarh Muslim University. The Muslims were demanding that the proposed University should be authorized for the affiliation of schools and colleges from all over India. Thus, a strong feeling of dismay and disillusionment prevailed among the Muslim community. Strong articles were written in the press and even the *Paisa Akhbar* adopted strong stand on the issue.³⁰ The Muslim leaders argued that they had demanded the university as a matter of right and not as a matter of favour. In the process, progressive leaders such as Fazli Husain received much attention and importance as they were not in favour of blind cooperation with the government.³¹ So, the difference between the two groups, the conservatives and the progressives became all the more sharp and pronounced in the Punjab.

In 1911, G.K. Gokhale presented Elementary Education Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council. Shafi opposed the Bill on the floor, as well as from the Muslim League platform.³² In March 1912, at the Calcutta Session of the All India Muslim League, he again opposed the resolution supporting Gokhle's Bill.³³ In fact, he dared:

... the supporters of the Bill to point out a country, where compulsion was used in education. Compulsion in education was nearly the thin end of the wedge. It would be given and effected weapon into the hands of a dominant majority at the sacrifice of minority... if the Bill were passed into law, it would lead to apolitical disabilities, for then it would be powerful at the expense of Urdu.³⁴

However, the Bill was passed in the League session,³⁵ in spite of Shafi's opposition. The progressive group was jubilant. It claimed it 'only title holders and members of councils were opposing the Bill, in order to show their loyalty,'³⁶ and they were not really off the mark. As one writer describes it; "in win the popular support in the Punjab was in support of the measure. The Young Party Muslims took strong exception to Mohammad Shafi's conduct in having opposed the Bill at the above mentioned (Calcutta Seesion1912) meeting of the All India Muslim League."³⁷ There is no denying that in all this, Shafi expectedly remained firm in his loyalty to the British and ignored the changing trends and attitudes. The result was that soon the graph of his importance in the Punjab came down sharply. Fazli Husian, the leader of progressive group emerged instead as the strong man of the Punjab, the man who showed the 'seeds of communal disharmony' and still was considered a 'nationalist and democrat'.³⁸ But Shafi was not prepared to either concede his political role or indeed political creed. Thus, while presiding over the annual session of the All India Muslim League, held in March 1913 at Lucknow he asserted;

...to those who entertain the wild dream of turning the British out of India and of trampling upon the just rights of our community, we have no hesitation in declaring that when ever and whenever the interests of British administration may so require, we Mohammedan subjects of his gracious Majesty, the King Emperor will be unflattering in our loyalty support of peace and order, not by means of words merely but by acts and deeds... and avail ourselves of all legitimate methods of defending our community's interests.³⁹

Clearly, Shafi, in spite of what was happening with the Muslim rights and interests and what changes had come about in the perceptions of the Muslim community, was not repaired to criticize 'let all one defies the British

government'. This unconditional loyalty to the British, however, came to harm his political career in the coming years. The progressive group succeeded in having Congress-League cooperation at the Centre and Shafi lost his importance in the Punjab as well as in the rest of the country.

Politics of Rapprochement with Congress

Shafi and some other proponents of the 'Anglo-Mohammedan School of Politics' and helped in the formation of the All-India Muslim League to counter the hostile activities of the Congress and Hindu majority community. They tried to protect and promote Muslim rights by cooperating with the British. They succeeded in securing separate electorates in Minto-Morley Reforms. They were convinced that these electorates were conceded largely due to their loyalty of the British government. But just after the introduction of these reforms, two developments went on to test loyalty and reliance on the British. The annulment of the partition of Bengal caused feelings of great disillusionment among the Muslims. The failure of the British to help in establishing a Muslim University at Aligarh also disappointed the Muslims. Apart from these internal setbacks, the Balkan Wars and Britain's anti-Turkish policies suggested to the Muslims that they should revise their policies towards the British government. The progressive Muslim group insisted that it was not good for the Muslims to keep aloof from the Hindus in particular, they stressed the need to work closely with Congress whereas the conservative group also began to criticize the government too, and they were not favourably disposed towards any close association with the Congress to help solve the Muslim problems.

Shafi was of the opinion that the Muslims must secure their rights with the help of the British. It was in this spirit that he had demanded separate electorates from the British.⁴⁰ Eventually, he saw no problem in cooperating with the Hindus, and indeed in putting up a united front. Presenting over the annual session of All-India Muslim League in March 1913 at Lucknow, in fact, he proposed, United India League open to all crises and creed, with provincial and district branches, and thus, organized the whole country for the great and glorious work connected with this chain of vital problems.⁴¹ Still, all said and done, he was convinced that the fulfilment of Muslim demands was through of the way of loyalty.⁴² His point of view was to cooperate rather than oppose the British to secure Muslim interests and demands.

Various changes in the aims of All-India Muslim League were adopted in the session which included among others the following objectives:

- 1) To promote and maintain among Indian feelings of loyalty towards the British Crown;
- 2) To protect advance the political and rights and interests of the Indian Musslmans.
- 3) To promote friendship and union between the Mussalmans and other communities of India; and
- 4) Without detriment to the foregoing objects, the attainment of a steady reform of the existing system of administration; by promoting national unity and fostering a public spirit among the people of India; and by cooperating with other communities for the said purpose.⁴³

Personally, Shafi did not accept all the given objects. He had strong reservations on some of them. To begin with, he was of the view that these objects were "the natural outcome not only of altered conditions but also of spontaneous evolution".⁴⁴ He insisted that the loyalty to the Crown was permanent; government may come and go. He had no problems at all with the second objectives of the League. In fact, he argued that this was the very basis of the birth of the organization. Particularly, he was very pleased with the efforts of the Muslim League to secure separate representation for the Muslims. In fact, he claimed that:

Recent experiences have, more than ever, placed it beyond all doubt that mix electorates, particularly in Northern India, are mixed 'only in name' and are productive of an amount of irritation in the highest degree detrimental to the cause of inter-communal co-operation. The removal of this periodically recurring cause of fraction will itself be a powerful agency for the evolution of the common Indian nationality. And when satisfied by their respective representation in the various stages of self government, communities will have to learnt to work together in complete harmony; other unifying forces coming into operation will hasten the advent to the happy period when, under altered conditions productive of mutual confidence separate electorates may no longer be necessary.⁴⁵

As the fourth objective of the League, that is, the attainment of self-government, Shafi was most reluctant. He discouraged what he called the proposal of 'colonial form of government in India'. He thought that it was unwise and unnecessary to adopt such an objective in a 'transitional period'.⁴⁶ In fact, he wanted the Indians to wait for the right time.

The League session also dealt with issue of Muslim share in public service, effective Muslims representation in municipal and district boards, imperial and provincial legislative councils and in all the public bodies.⁴⁷ Shafi could not be more pleased. He himself had worked for these issues for a number of years. In fact, he did not hesitate to quote a letter of Syed Ameer Ali eulogizing his services on this occasion. It said, "Let me congratulate your league upon the emphatic manner in which you have declared yourself. I have already

received from the English friend, who takes an interest in our cause, expression of warm appreciation of the League's independence, consistency and political insight."⁴⁸

There was little doubt that since the start of his political career, Shafi had promoted the interests of Muslims in every field of life. The trouble was that he also had a deep sense of his 'services' which pampered his ego and which in the end, contributed to his difference with other League leaders. Even in this session the progressive of the league leaders had different point of view from that of Shafi. They were not too enamoured of his services to the Muslim cause. In fact, they have adopted a resolution calling for cooperation with the Congress. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah the then Ambassador of Unity was the moving spirit behind this resolution.⁴⁹ In fact, it could be safely said that in this session of the League, there had emerged two distinct groups, one consisting of 'progressive' like Jinnah, Fazil Hussain and Maulana Mohammed Ali who were desirous of close cooperation with the Congress in the changed circumstances. The other group comprised conservatives like Shafi, Syed Raza Ali and Maulvi Rafi-ud-Din and the like who stood for promoting of Muslims interest by cooperating with the British government. However, the progressive group felt so strongly about its stance that it did not hesitate to criticize Shafi openly for his loyalty to the British Government at all cost. In fact, the group felt that his leadership has an obstacle in the way of progress.⁵⁰ However, it was clear that the League had drawn closer to the Congress.

In its annual session held at Karachi in December 1913 the Congress appreciated self-government resolution of the Muslim League as a happy sign of advancing times.⁵¹ This appreciation and the uncertainties caused by the outbreak of the World War-I further radicalised Muslim opinion in India. The Muslim members of the Congress and the younger and progressive groups in the Muslim League then demanded that both parties the League and the Congress should jointly make efforts to self-government for India at the end of the War.⁵² Indeed, helped by Jinnah, by the League and Congress held their party sessions in December 1915 at Bombay. In the League session not only a resolution for Muslim representation in all the self-government public bodies was adopted,⁵³ but it was also suggested that a committee be found to formulate 'a scheme for reforms' which must be as much in conformity with the Congress view point on the subject as possible. Jinnah was the force behind this suggestion.⁵⁴ Although Shafi was nominated as member of this committee,⁵⁵ he was not in favour of any anti-government action during the war years. He had already promised British support and loyalty both as a member of the Punjab Legislative Council and on behalf of Punjab Provincial Muslim League.⁵⁶ Still, the committee decided to approach the Congress for a joint stand on reforms. The Congress, too on its part appointed its own committee to confer with the Muslim League leaders.⁵⁷ As the British authorities were also considering the question of further reforms, nineteen Muslim and Hindu members of the Imperial Legislative Council drew up and agreed reforms scheme, which was discussed, amended and accepted by both the organisations at the end of 1916, and the 'Pact' was formally ratified at Lucknow.⁵⁸

In December 1916, both the Congress and the League, held their annual session in Lucknow. Jinnah presided over the League session and moved the league to announce that it was stood side by side with the Congress and was, indeed, ready to participate in any common effort for the advance of the country as a whole.⁵⁹ The Congress was already on board and thus the two organisations amicably arrived at an agreement on the future constitution of India, which was then probably referred as Lucknow Pact. The Congress accepted the principle of separate electorate not only where had already existed but also in the Punjab and central provinces. Both the Congress and League also agreed to have a system of 'weightage' in provinces where the Muslims or Hindus formed a minority. The Muslims agreed to surrender a quarter of the seats to which they would have been entitled on the basis their population in Bengal. In the Punjab, they also agreed to surrender one tenth of their seats. On the other hand, the Congress agreed to allot one third of the seats to the Muslims in the central legislature. It also agreed that no bill or resolution affecting a community was to be proceeded within any council, if three fourth of the representatives of that community were opposed to it.⁶⁰ The Muslims had only two full-fledged majority provinces, i.e. Punjab and Bengal at that time and they lost their majority through the weightage scheme. Shafi was therefore, strongly opposed to the fact both in the League session and subsequently. He had already opposed the idea as a Council Member in 1915, when Jinnah had made his first attempt to bring the League and Congress together. More recently, while presiding over the annual session of Mohammdan Educational Conference in 1916 at Aligarh, he tried to draw Muslim support away from the concurrent League and Congress session at Lucknow.⁶¹ Shafi was not in favour of denying the Muslims of the Punjab their majority right in the council for any large cause whatsoever.⁶² In addition, he apprehended that by coming together, the League and Congress were planning to launch a major Home Rule campaign against the British.⁶³

The progressive group, which had form parallel Punjab Muslim League in January 1916, strongly resented the conservative attitude of the old Punjab Provincial Muslim League. In particular, it was most critical of Shafi and his policies. Its most demanding charge was his loyalty to the British government at all cost. Not

only Shafi was condemned in public meetings, several articles published in newspapers against his policies and political creed.⁶⁴ Soon the All-India Muslim League was constrained to charge-sheet him. An explanation was also called from the old Punjab Provincial Muslim League for not representing the true aspirations of Muslims of the Punjab.⁶⁵ In the end, this League then referred to as Shafi Leagues was disaffiliated in favour of the League represented by Fazli Husain.⁶⁶ Shafi himself was dismissed from the vice president ship of the Muslim League.⁶⁷

Although visibly shaken, Shafi was not prepared to withdraw from active politics. He helped create a new organisation by the name of All-India Muslim Association, with Prince of Arcot as its President. He himself became its first General Secretary. Going on the offensive, Shafi also encouraged the publication of several articles in *Paisa Akhbar* against the League-Congress Pact, expressing a total lack of confidence in the All-India Muslim League. In fact, in the end, was so much disappointed and disillusioned with the policies of All-India Muslim League that he resigned from its membership in August 1917.

While Jinnah and other progressive leaders of Muslim League took radical steps in the changed circumstances of India and joined hands with the Congress, Shafi remained wedded to his earlier and indeed lifelong belief that the best way to protect Muslim interests was to cooperate with the British, no matter what the circumstances were. This fierce concept of loyalty had, in fact, made him very unpopular with a vast majority of Muslims in the Punjab and in the country as a whole. This was ironical in the case of Punjab for he always defended the interests of the Punjabi Muslim over and above the interests of the Muslims as a whole in the country. He lost his importance in provincial politics. He did not have much of a role at the centre either. The result was that he was not able to serve as community for quite a while. It was only after becoming the member of Viceroy's Executive Council in 1919, an obvious reward for his loyalty to the British government, that he was able to bounce back and serve his own Muslim community once again, though in a different manner. However, it was after the expiry of his term on the Executive Council in 1924 that he returned to play a role, a major role on the national scene, but not without quite a few ups and downs.

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³⁴ Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed., *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents, 1906-1947*. Vol. I, 1906-1924 (Karachi: National Publishing House Ltd. 1969), p.253.

³⁵ *Proceedings, All India Muslim League*, Annual Session 1912, Freedom Movement Archives, Vol. 68(Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan),p.57.

³⁶ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol I, p.254. Shafi was member of Imperial Legislative Council at that time, whereas he was given the title of CIE in June 1916 and KSCI in January 1922. Agha Husian Hamdani, *Tehrik-i-Pakistan* (Urdu) (Rawalpindi: Book Centre, 1997),p.202

³⁷ Rakkar, *Muslim Politics in the Punjab*, p.221.

³⁸ Weheed Ahmad, (ed), *Letters of Mian Fazli Husain*, (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, 1976), p.XXXII.

³⁹ *Proceedings, All India Muslim League*, Annual Session 1913, Freedom Movement Archives, Vol. 68(Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan),pp. 114.115.

⁴⁰ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. I, p.256.

⁴¹ Ibid. pp.270-27.

⁴² Ibid. p.264-265.

⁴³ Ibid. p.258.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p.261.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.268.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p.272.

⁴⁷ *Proceedings, All India Muslim League*, Annual Session 1913, Freedom Movement Archives, Vol. 68(Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan), pp. 84.

⁴⁸ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. I, p.261.

⁴⁹ Jinnah was not yet a member of the League and he attended the session as a guest. Latif Ahmad Sherwani, ed. *Pakistan in the Making: Documents and Readings* (Karachi: Quaid-i-Azam Academy, 1987), p.265.

⁵⁰ Azim Hussain, *Fazli Hussain: A Political Biography* (Bombay: Longmans, 1946), p.99.

⁵¹ Parasad, *Pathway to India's Partition*, Vol. II p.146.

⁵² Regional Coupland, *The Indian Problems, 1833-1935* (London: Oxford university Press, 1968), p.46.

⁵³ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol I, p.349.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p.354

⁵⁵ Ibid. p.355.

⁵⁶ Nayyar Abbas 'Muslims of the Punjab and the World War I,' unpublished M. Phil Thesis (Islamabad: Quaid-i-Azam University 2003) p.25.

⁵⁷ Sherwani, *Pakistan in the Making*, p.268

⁵⁸ Reginald Coupland, "1919 Act-Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms" Sikandar Hayat, Shandana Zahid, eds. *Genesis of Pakistan Movement*, Reading 20, Vol I. (Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University, 1988), p.50.

⁵⁹ Wolpert, Stanley. *Jinnah of Pakistan*. (Karachi: Oxford University Press,1993), p.47.

⁶⁰ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol I, pp. 392-397.

⁶¹ Sherwani, *Pakistan in the Making*, p.282.

⁶² *Paisa-Akhbar*, 24 January 1917.

⁶³ Ibid. 13 January 1917.

⁶⁴ Rakkar, *Muslim Politics in the Punjab*, p.256.

⁶⁵ Jahan Ara Shahnawaz, *Father and Daughter*. Lahore: Nigarshat, 1971, p.46.

⁶⁶ S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan 1858-1951* (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1970), p. 226.

⁶⁷ Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol I, p. 391.