

THE PUNJAB MUSLIM LEAGUE (1940-1947)

So far as the creation of Pakistan was concerned the province of Punjab was considered to be a key province not only by the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah but also by the Congress, the Sikhs and the British Government in London and in India. This most prominent province was to determine the future of Indian Muslims and substantiate the Muslim League's claims such as that the Muslims were a nation (not a minority in India) and that the Muslim League was the sole representative of Muslim opinion in India. The private papers of Lord Wavell (1943-47) reveal the fact that the Government was anxiously waiting for the outcome of the 1946 elections to decide the issue of Pakistan. On the other hand, the Congress and its allies like the Sikhs, the Unionists and all other anti-Pakistan forces had pooled their resources and did all they could to defeat the Punjab Muslim League at the polls; but their efforts bore no fruits. The anti-Pakistan activities, however, were continued with full swing even after the Punjab League's glorious victory in the elections of 1946. The Punjab's last two anti-Pakistan Governors, Sir Bertrand Glancy (1941-46) and Sir Evan Jenkins (1946-47) supported the Congress Muslim president, Moulana Azad, the Sikhs and their anti-Pakistan allies to give a new lease of life to the Unionist leader Sir Khizer Hayat Tiwana first by reappointing him as Premier of the Punjab and later by assisting him in his anti-League policies. Despite the fact that PML was the single largest party in the Punjab Assembly it was not given a share of power in the Punjab. But the anti-democratic and anti-Pakistan policies of the Punjab Government could do little to harm the popularity of the Muslim League; the PML and its supports were not demoralized. And eventually the Punjab became ungovernable with the result

that Sir Khizer Hayat Tiwana had to resign, leaving the way to the creation of Pakistan.

The Punjab Muslim League struggled almost for four decades in order to become a vibrant and formidable political organization. Its first stage of existence is from 1906 to 1937. This was a period when the Unionist party founded by Sir Fazl-i-Husain ruled the Punjab with the support of landed gentry and their supporters in Hindu and Sikh communities of the Punjab. The Punjab Muslim League existed in name only at least for two decades. But there was some sort of cooperation between the PML and the Unionist party whereby Sir Fazl-i-Husain's ministry was fully supported by the All India Muslim League. However, the relations between these political organizations deteriorated due to the Delhi proposals of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah¹ and later on the question of Nehru Report of 1928. In 1937, the PML and the Unionist party once again needed each other's support and therefore were able to conclude an alliance called the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. This agreement later became very important for the PML's growth in the Punjab. It opened the doors wide for the popularity of Punjab Muslim League due to deeper understanding and cooperation between the well-entrenched Unionist party and the PML from 1937 to 40 the PML grew with a great deal of momentum. The Congress party in the Punjab did all it could to damage the Unionist party with the ultimate aim to through it out of office. The Unionists therefore, were obliged to take shelter more and more under the banner of the PML. Taking advantage of the situation, Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah was able to pass Pakistan resolution on Punjab's capital, Lahore. This resolution threatened the Hindu and Sikh political organizations in the Punjab and therefore they pooled their resources to do their utmost with the help of Muslim League's opponents like Congress party to oppose and criticized the Lahore resolution with tooth and nail.

However, the Punjab Muslim League took fullest advantage of the situation and did not bother about the strength of its opponents; the League had to answer the criticism against its scheme and also at the same time working for the growth of

Pakistan movement in the Punjab. By now the position and status of the League has been improved considerably due to the Congress rebellion and the role played by its leadership at the centre. However, Jinnah still preferred to play safe taking no risk whilst dealing with the Unionist leadership; he was perhaps waiting for a better time and probably felt satisfied with low profile of Punjab Muslim League for the moment. The Punjab League was therefore obliged for the time being to utilize the services of young blood, Punjab Muslim Student Federation (P.M.S.F.).² Malik Barkat Ali and other League leaders supervised and guided the activities of the P.M.S.F. celebrating Pakistan day, raising funds and organizing Pro-Pakistan activities in various cities in the Punjab. Needless to say, the P.M.S.F. was able to answer anti-Pakistan conference in a befitting manner; not only Jinnah but Muslim leaders from other provinces also participated in the activities of the P.M.S.F. The Pakistan conferences in the Punjab were able to revive a great deal of enthusiasm for the Pakistan movement and increased the popularity graph of the Punjab League; time and again resolutions, were passed expressing confidence in the leadership of Jinnah, and criticizing the role of the Muslims belonging to the Unionist party for not fully cooperating with the Punjab League, especially inside the Punjab Assembly.

The campaign for and against Pakistan continued; in the year 1941, a showdown took place between the Punjab premier and the Muslim League leadership; and the result was the Punjab premier surrendered, damaging the credibility of his ruling Unionist party and enhancing the image of the Punjab Muslim League. What happened was that the Viceroy," with a view to establishing closer contacts between the central and provincial war efforts formed a Defence Council,³ with a total of eight Muslim members; of these two belonged to the Punjab - Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Begum Jahanara Shahnawaz. The Muslim League was informed only when the arrangements were completed and therefore its leadership condemned the Viceroy for bypassing the League. Jinnah held the meeting of ML's working Committee on 24 August 1941 and it was decided that the Muslim members of the Defence Council must resign their

membership. Before leaving the Punjab to attend this meeting, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan had threatened to resign from the League along with his Unionist group, if he was pressured to resign. But when Jinnah proved that the Muslims on the Defence Council were appointed as Muslims and not in any other capacity, the Punjab premier was left with no choice but agreed to resign. Sir Nazim-uddin had also played a key role on this issue. Sir Sikandar's resignation had deep effects on the mind of his Muslim colleagues in the Unionist fold giving the impression that in the near future, the Punjab League was going to be a force to be reckoned with.

Similarly on account of some other developments at All-India level the Punjab League's popularity greatly increased. In early 1942, the British Government, due to the pressure of the United States of America and the Labour Party was obliged to do something to break the political impasse in India. This resulted in Sir Stafford Cripps's mission to India.⁴ As mentioned earlier, the Punjab's position in the negotiations for constitutional advance had always been significant. Sikandar Hayat Khan was first to be shown the draft declaration Sir Stafford had brought from London; one of the clauses in it apparently gave an option to any province to opt out of the Indian Union, if it so desired. Moreover, all the non-acceding provinces could form a Union of their own. This "option Clause" was interpreted by the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab, as a virtual acceptance of the Muslim League's Pakistan Scheme; both the Hindu and Sikh political parties, therefore, held meetings and protested against the possibility of creation of Pakistan. They were, however, relieved for the moment when the Congress party and the Muslim League also rejected the Cripps offer. The Congress chiefly rejected on the same basis as the Sikhs saying that the unity of India had been threatened. The Muslim League welcomed the recognition of Pakistan in principle but demanded a definite declaration in favor of Pakistan demand. Although the Cripps Mission did not change the situation, it definitely enhanced that Muslim League's image giving the impression to its opponents that the British Government was seriously considering the Pakistan scheme of

the Muslim League. It may also be mentioned that the acceptance of the Pakistan Scheme by Rajagopal Acharia's group also increased the Muslim League's popularity among the Muslims; in the Punjab the Acharia's group in the same year was fully supported by Mian Iftikharuddin (the president of Punjab Congress party)⁵ who considered the Pakistan demand being a democratic right of the Muslims. Later Mian Iftikharuddin had to resign from the Congress on this issue joining the Punjab League and began to work actively for the creation of Pakistan. On the other hand the Sikhs were also in a defeatist state of mind saying openly that Pakistan was going to be imposed on their community⁶ in the future. The Hindu Mahasabha also expressed the same opinion arguing like Gandhi and his Congress stalwarts that the Muslims were converted from Hinduism and therefore the change of religion did not entitle to demand the creation of a separate homeland.

The Pakistan movement had therefore been growing rapidly in the Punjab due to the Punjab League and the P.M.S.F; in March 1942, the P.M.S.F. held its annual meeting in Rawalpindi⁷ to popularize the Pakistan Scheme. Jinnah sent his morale-boosting message to the Punjab Muslims that they were a power and they must play a great role; some eminent Muslims from other provinces also attended the session and made speeches in favor of Pakistan Scheme. It may be noted that due to the increasing popularity of the Punjab League some Muslim opponents of the Pakistan Scheme openly declared that they no longer opposed to the Pakistan movement. The Punjab League also held various meetings with the same objectives, especially to counter the non-Muslims propaganda against the Muslim League; in June 1942 with the collaboration of Central Muslim League, a campaign to enlist more support and recruit workers began in the predominantly Muslim areas of Lahore, Amritsar, Jhelum, Multan and Lyallpur. In the meantime, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan also met Jinnah and assured him that he would be glad to work for the Muslim League. But soon he published his "Punjab formula"; Sir Sikandar did not wish to see the division of his province and he was confident that the Punjab would not want to secede from the Indian Union. However, with a view to working

the Punjab's secession more difficult, he had publicized his formula⁸ which whilst accepting the principle of secession, laid down conditions so cumbersome that it would be almost impossible to translate them into a reality.

The Punjab premier's new scheme was an invitation for the Punjab Muslim League to do something to counter the anti-Pakistan propaganda. Jinnah felt it necessary to pay a visit to the Punjab; the news of his proposed visit greatly upset the anti-Pakistan elements; and before Jinnah's visit, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan in a statement to the Punjab League, denied the authorship of the "Punjab formula". Soon the Punjab League's plans materialized; on November 14, Jinnah delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of Islamia College, Jallundar.⁹ The Quaid, appreciated the role played by the P.M.S.F. in popularizing the Pakistan Scheme; he declared confidently that 99% of Punjab Muslims were supporters of the Pakistan Scheme and therefore the key to the creation of Pakistan lay in the hands of Punjab Muslims and if they planned to use this key properly they would be able to achieve their goal of Pakistan. On the next day, the Quaid addressed the annual session of the P.M.S.F. in the same city; he advised the Muslim students to fully prepare themselves for the coming struggle for the achievement of Pakistan movement. The Quaid also took this opportunity to assure the Sikhs that there could be a negotiated settlement with them, in case they wished and came forward with good spirits. Jinnah appreciated the Acharia group for accepting the Pakistan Scheme but also reminded his followers that the Congress did not approve of Rajagopal Acharia's stance on the Pakistan demand. But Sir Sikander's Punjab formula came under severe criticism; Jinnah declared that if was an attempt to relegate the Pakistan scheme to the background and also to puzzle and confuse the Punjab Muslims.¹⁰ At the end of the day, several resolutions were passed, demanding the acceptance of Pakistan scheme and the formation of an interim government taking the Muslim League's representatives.

Similarly, November 17 was a lucky day for the Punjab League's growth and a great day for the exhibition of its

strength. The Punjab Muslim League's annual session was held at Lyallpur; before this session some kind of rapprochement had been made between the Punjab Premier and the Muslim League with the result that not only did Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan attend the League's session but some leading Muslim Unionists also attended¹¹ and delivered speeches from the Muslim point of view. The Punjab premier also appreciated the Quaid's political skills and his leadership qualities and above all Sir Sikandar Hayat declared that he fully supported the Lahore (Pakistan) resolution of the Muslim League. Some eminent Muslim leaders also spoke on this occasion; Sir Nazim-uddin requested the non-Muslim critics of the Pakistan Scheme to look at the League's Scheme in details. Referring to the Sikh fears, Sir Nazim-uddin implied that the Sikhs would be given a due weightage in the Punjab by the Muslim League. The Quaid forcefully appealed for unity among the Punjab Muslims so that they could become a force to be reckoned with; that the Punjab ministry could be toppled at any moment, in case of a showdown with the Punjab League; Jinnah conveyed this message in an appropriate way. The Quaid also made a forecast that the Punjab Muslim League would be a great force in the near future. This session unanimously expressed confidence in the leadership of Jinnah¹² paying him tributes for his services for the Muslim cause and at the same time condemned all the alternative formulas and schemes of partition, prepared and ventilated with a view to deflecting the attention of the Muslim from their clear-cut goal of Pakistan.

On the next day, Jinnah performed the flag-hoisting ceremony at Lyallpur;¹³ during his speech the Quaid anticipated that the Muslims knew that their flag stood for the achievement of Pakistan; that they would leave no stone unturned for the growth of Pakistan movement; and predicted that the project of Pakistan, he had undertaken was nearing its completion. Two days later, at Lahore, the Quaid addressed public gatherings; he reminded the critics of Pakistan that it was not long ago that he was called a 'lunatic', and now even the Hindus were prepared to talk on the basis of the Two-Nation Theory; the League Leader appealed to the non-Muslims to examine the Pakistan scheme, hoping that they would also realize that it was

the best solution and it was in every body's interests. Amidst a great applause, Jinnah declared that the Hindu dreams of ruling over the Muslims would never be fulfilled, and that if the Muslim share was not given, they had the force to take it. He also ruled out the possibility of postponing the Pakistan scheme even for the time being;¹⁴ Sir Sikandar's formula was also criticized. However, Jinnah left Pakistan undefined, not discussing its areas specifically until the League's Scheme was accepted in principle saying that details could be worked out at a later stage. On 22 November, Jinnah addressed a meeting at Islamia College for Girls¹⁵ at Lahore; here too he repeated his arguments for the creation of a separate homeland for Indian Muslims; and Jinnah very much hoped that he had been able to put across his message saying that even Muslim women and Muslim children understood it very well.

The closing days of the year 1942 proved to be a great success for the Punjab League's pro-Pakistan propaganda; even neutral observers and the League's critics were prepared to acknowledge this fact that the League was now in touch with the Muslim masses of the Punjab.¹⁶ The Punjab premier's unconditional support for the League's cause also gave the impression that the future was full of hope for the League; the Unionist Muslim group also knew it too well that they could not get away safely if they did not co-operate with the Muslim League. In the meantime, the Sikh leaders issued statements against Jinnah, Muslim League and Pakistan and Sir Sikandar Hayat but surprisingly the Sikh were prepared to accept the creation of Pakistan in case their East Punjab was not allocated to Pakistan. This situation further strengthened the Muslim League; the anti-Pakistan and pro-Pakistan moment had taken the form of a challenge and response game between the Muslim and the non-Muslims; now the lines of division had been clearly demarcated.

Sadly, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan died of a heart attack on 26 December 1942. There had been a great deal of political wrangling for the post of Chief Minister but eventually the Governor of the Punjab appointed Sir Khizer Hayat Khan Tiwana

as the new Punjab premier. As a formality all ministers in Punjab Cabinet resigned and then were re-appointed by the new premier; one vacant ministry was filled in little later by taking Sir Sikandar's eldest son, Sadar Shaukat Hayat Khan.¹⁷ This act was an acknowledgement and an appreciation of Sir Sikandar's services for the Punjab. As soon as the new arrangements were completed, the Punjab Muslim League leader, Nawab Iftikhar Husain Khan Mamdot complained that the Governor did not take him into confidence¹⁸ at the time the new ministry was formed; that he had violated the constitutional procedure. The Governor of the Punjab did not bother about this protest. However, this matter was once again taken up when in March 1943 the Muslim League's Council held its meeting in Delhi; Sir Khizer Hayat Khan, his Muslim ministers and the Punjab League leader, Nawab Iftikhar Mamdot also attended. Sir Khizer Hayat had to give an explanation as to why the Muslim League had not been taken into confidence at the time of the formation of new ministry. Similarly questions were put to him as to why the Punjab Muslim League party in the Punjab Assembly had not been functioning properly. The new premier gave an assurance that on his return to the Punjab he would do his utmost for the growth of the Punjab League in his province.

Sir Khizer Hayat, however, had been paying only lip service and did little practically to put a new life in the Punjab League probably thinking that such assurances has been given by his predecessor (Sir Sikandar) in the past; but Sikandar had little to translate them into reality, and the Muslim League took no action against him and therefore he was allowed to get away each time. But now the situation was different; by 1943, slowly but surely, the Punjab Muslim League had been able to establish itself on a strong footing; and the new premier had little political skills or little following among the Muslim of the Punjab. Realizing that Khizer Hayat was not in a mood to fulfill his promises, the Muslim League renewed its pressure on him. In March 1943, the Punjab League celebrated the third anniversary of the Pakistan Resolution; some distinguished leaders from other provinces also participated with a view to reviving enthusiasm in the Pakistan Scheme. Inevitably, therefore, Sir

Khizer Hayat attended the Muslim League's session in Delhi,¹⁹ the Muslim League leader expressed his loyalties to his community. The League leader expressed his regrets that the Punjab had not played the role it was expected to play; Jinnah once again appealed to the Punjab's delegates to do all they could for the growth of Punjab League.²⁰ The Punjab premier and his associates once again assured to work hard to popularizing the Muslim League, its program and its message.

As usual, reaching Lahore (his home-ground) and after meeting his Governor (Sir Bertrand Glancy who was against the Muslim League and its Pakistan Scheme) and consulting his Unionist colleagues partners, Sir Khizer once again found out that it was not easy for him to work actively for the growth of Pakistan Scheme. The premier was pressurized by Sir Chottu Ram insisting that under no circumstances should he accept Jinnah's orders; he very strongly opposed the idea of creating any Muslim League party in the Punjab Assembly or calling the existing coalition a League ministry. On the other hand, the Punjab League leader, Nawab Mamdot was also aware of the intentions of the anti-Pakistan elements. Nawab Mamdot assessed the situation and decided to challenge Khizer Hayat;²¹ the Nawab argued that under the terms of Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, Khizer's ministry was subject to the Muslim League's discipline. Mamdot also was subject to the Muslim League's discipline. Mamdot also got Jinnah's approval in this matter shortly afterwards. One of Khizer's ministers, Shaukat Hayat Khan also orchestrated the same argument and he was supported by the Muslim press; and Shaukat Hayat was able to make some progress; when twenty Members of the Punjab Assembly threatened the premier that they would quit the Unionist organization if Khizer did not accept the League's point of view. After this Sir Khizer Hayat met the Muslim League leader on September 13, the premier threatened that if the League continued with its policy against the Unionist party, Governor's rule (Section 93) might be enforced in the Punjab. This threat failed to change Jinnah's mind. In November, another meeting took place between the two; but both Khizer and Jinnah stuck to their guns. At this stage a committee had been appointed by the

League's working Committee to look into the Punjab matters especially Khizer Hayat Tiwana's defiance of Punjab Muslim League. In the meantime, the Muslim League held its session at Karachi; it was reported in the press that generally the delegates supported an action against Sir Khizer Hayat Khan Tiwana.²²

On March 1944, the League leader came to visit the Punjab; on 18 March he inaugurated the P.M.S.F's session at Lahore. Sir Khizer Hayat and his Muslim colleagues in the Government also attended. During his speech Jinnah underlined the need to work hard with dedication for the creation of Pakistan, especially appealing the young Muslims to prepare themselves for the coming struggle of life and death; Sir Khizer Hayat Khan was also asked to fulfill his promises. Later he had a meeting with Khizer and instead on much the same demand - the Unionists should clearly support the Punjab Muslim League within and without the Punjab Assembly. Sir Khizer Hayat Khan found himself in a dilemma; he did not know what to do under the circumstances. If one carefully analyses the character and personality of Sir Khizer Hayat Khan one would draw at least one conclusion that the Punjab premier could not think and decide independently beyond a point. Due to pressures from various directions, Sir Khizer Hayat Khan got into touch with his Governor;²³ after several meetings with Khizer the Governor concluded that his premier wished to accept Jinnah's demands due to the fact that otherwise the future was full of troubles for Sir Khizer; and that the Muslim League and the Pakistan Scheme was going to be more popular in the Punjab any way. However, Khizer now needed official advice to reject Jinnah's demands; the Governor, due to his anti-Pakistan bias, very much liked his premier to do his utmost to resist the Muslim League's pressures. The Governor also involved the Viceroy and was able to have his support for his anti-Muslim League program. It seems that the Punjab premier might have conveyed to his supporters that the Government was not in favour of his close alliance with the Punjab Muslim League.

On the other hand, in April the Muslim League once again renewed its pressures; Jinnah came to the Punjab for

that matter and during his meeting with the Punjab premier demanded that it was a time when the Unionist had to choose between the Muslim League and its opponents. In the meantime, armed with official advice Khizer Hayat Khan decided to show his power by striking at the League's heart; on 26 April Sardar Shoukat Hayat Khan was dismissed by Khizer Hayat Khan taking the plea that as a minister Shoukat Hayat had misused his powers. This action was interpreted in the Muslim League's circles that now there were little possibility of a compromise between the League and Sir Khizer. The next move from Sir Khizer was that he issued a long statement on the ML-Unionist relationship under the Sikandar-Jinnah pact, completely rejecting the Muslim League's pleas for co-operation. It may be mentioned that due to the growth of the League and the popularity of its Pakistan Scheme amongst the Muslims, Sir Khizer Hayat could not publicly oppose the Pakistan movement. Shortly afterwards, seventeen Muslim members of the Punjab Assembly parted their company with Sir Khizer Hayat which was followed by a declaration of war against the Unionists. The Punjab Muslim League had been in the middle of its annual session at Sialkot²⁴ with Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar as its president. Sir Khizer's rebellion also came under discussion; Jinnah and other speakers criticized the attitude of Sir Khizer Hayat and especially the sacking of Shoukat Hayat was greatly resented; the League suggested a detailed inquiry on this issue, underlining the fact that his dismissal was arranged because Sardar Shoukat was a great supporter of the Punjab League and its Pakistan movement in the Punjab. Sir Khizer was reminded the fate of Sir Fazlul Haq who like Sir Khizer had challenged the Muslim League's authority; it was declared that the League would take measures ensuring that Khizer Hayat Khan must lose his leadership and be relegated to the background. The Punjab Premier was also taking some steps to counter the effects of the League's propaganda; from this time on Sir Khizer Hayat depended heavily on the Governor's advice and support to save him from further embarrassments. In order to bribe some families of note in the Punjab, Khizer Hayat Khan expanded his Cabinet and also made other political appointments. But these actions failed to produce the desired results. The League branded all Muslims

who had accepted Sir Khizer's offers as traitors; it also expanded the sphere of its activities, especially towards rural areas; PML was also able to mobilize its 'Guards'; and a relentless campaign was started against Sir Khizer Hayat Khan and his supports in the Punjab. The PML also made strenuous efforts to improve its financial position. In the meantime, the Muslim League began its activities to take action against Sir Khizer; his case was referred to the League's Action Committee. The Premier explained his point of view but failed to stop an action against him; on 27 May 1944 he was expelled from the League.²⁵ The PML expressed jubilation on this decision; its Council fully approved of the action taken against Sir Khizer. The P.M.S.F. arranged meetings and conferences in the Punjab; Shoukat Hayat Khan's services were very much appreciated and at the same time Khizer's policies were criticized. The League's top leadership also issued statements implying that Sir Khizer Hayat had damaged the Muslim cause; Muslim leaders from other provinces were invited by the P.M.S.F. to convince the Punjab Muslims that their salvation laid in supporting the PML and its Pakistan movement. It may be mentioned that the Lahore Muslim League was extremely active against the Unionist Party's rump led by Sir Khizer Hayat Tiwana. Jinnah also made speeches saying that Sir Khizer Hayat had been following the advice of anti-Pakistan elements, especially Sir Chottu Ram and the Governor of the Punjab. The PML also published its manifesto explaining how it would protect Muslim interests; the PML also formed its assembly party consisting of twenty six members - Shoukat Hayat Khan was their leader and Mian Mumtaz Daultana as the Deputy leader.²⁶

In the meantime, some political developments at all-India level also gave a timely boost to the Muslim League. Rajaji-Gandhi formula and later the Gandhi-Jinnah negotiations in 1944 which accepted the Pakistan Scheme in principle discouraged the anti-Pakistan elements and greatly increased the PML's popularity amongst Muslim.²⁷ But the acceptance of the Pakistan Scheme by Gandhi and Sir Chottu Ram once again revived the anti-Pakistan controversy. The Punjab's Hindu

Mahasabha leaders described the Gandhi-Rajaji formula as betrayal of the Hindu interests; the All Parties Hindu Conference held meetings and conferences for the same purpose; memorandums and joint statements were also issued against the Acharia formula for the partition of India; and Hindu students also arranged conferences with much the same objectives. The Sikh community supported these anti-League activities; their political parties such as the Akali Dal and the All-Parties Sikh Conference also arranged conferences to criticize the Acharia formula and Gandhi's acceptance of the Pakistan scheme.²⁸ The Sikhs were very much violent, threatening to use force to prevent the creation of Pakistan. It may, however, be mentioned that the Communist Sikh were ready to compromise on "the question of Pakistan" with the Muslim League. But the Communists Sikhs did not have any substantial following and therefore did not have any impact on the anti-Pakistan elements. It may also be noted that all anti-Pakistan forces were opposed to all such initiatives, which could enhance the Muslim League's popularity, especially in the Punjab. The Punjab Premier and his Governor also opposed all moves to settle the Congress-League differences; Liaquat Ali Khan and Bholla Bhai Desai discussed a formula to share power at the Centre. Sir Khizer Hayat Tiwana was very much worried; he thought if the League took office at the Centre, it would make his survival extremely difficult in the Punjab. He was much relieved when this idea did not materialize; the Quaid did not give his blessings.

In May 1945, another development worried the opponents of the Punjab League; the Viceroy, Lord Wavell got in touch with the British Cabinet to form his new executive Council with the idea to get Congress and the League's co-operation. Hearing about this new initiative Sir Khizer Hayat sent a request to the Viceroy in London²⁹ that there must be a Unionist representative in the new Council when it was formed. The Viceroy in his reply assured Khizer Hayat that he would consult him on all important matters. When the Viceroy returned to Delhi, Sir Khizer Hayat Khan and his Governor met Lord Wavell and expressed their concern in great details. The Governor went so far as to threaten the Viceroy that it would be

difficult for him and Khizer Hayat Khan to continue their policies if the Muslim League was given a representative from the Punjab which in their opinion should go to the Unionist and not to the Muslim League. On 25 June 1945, after a great deal of hard work, Lord Wavell was able to arrange a Conference at Simla. The Muslim League³⁰ leader was perhaps aware of Sir Khizer's designs; when the Conference opened at Simla, Jinnah claimed to nominate all Muslim members of the new Council, branding the Unionists as traitors. The Congress and the Unionists pooled their resources against the League's claims. At one stage, some moderate leaders of the Muslim League got in touch with Sir Khizer Hayat and tried to have his support, promising that he would be consulted on the nomination of a Punjab Muslim in the Viceroy's Council; Sir Khizer however remained adamant refusing to support Jinnah on this issue.

The Governor of the Punjab was also of the view that they Muslim League's claims should not be accepted even if the Conference had to be suspended; and if that were the situation Governor opined that Jinnah should be blamed for the failure of the Conference. The Governor might have thought that the failure of this Conference would be better for his Unionist supporters who needed *status quo* as long as possible. It so happened that the Viceroy wished to form his new Council, rejecting the Muslim League's demands, but the British Cabinet did not give its approval.³¹ The Conference, therefore, failed; Sir Khizer and his Governor were much relieved, at least for the time being.

Although, there were no immediate problems for the Unionists leader and for other anti-Muslim elements, the failure of the Simla Conference once again gave impetus to the Punjab League's activities and revived the Pakistan movement and anti-Khizer movement in the Punjab. The PML's supporters openly criticized Sir Khizer's anti-Pakistan role during the Simla Conference and thereafter Sir Khizer and his top aides were constantly branded as traitors.³² The Punjab League time and again expressed its determination to defeat the Unionists Party in the upcoming elections; several meetings were held in

various parts of the Punjab for that matter. Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Sardar Shoukat Hayat and Nawab Mamdot and Raja Ghazanfer Ali Khan were given the task to defeat the Unionists Party. The PML's manifesto was distributed in various cities and also in rural areas [104]; huge amounts were placed at the League's disposal for its election campaign; Shoukat Hayat Khan was also given the task of re-organization of PML's National Guards. The PML openly challenged the Unionists Party, issuing statements that it would be able to win all Muslim seats in the Punjab. It may be mentioned that by this time the Unionists had been greatly discouraged by its supporters who had been switching their loyalties to the PML. This fact was admitted by the pro-Unionists dailies and its former coalition partners also testified the fact that the PML was going to enhance its prestige in the near future. The Unionist Party and its anti-Pakistan supporters were therefore reluctant to go to the polls; they knew too well that the magic word "Pakistan" was going to tip the scales in favor of the Punjab Muslim League. The Punjab Governor also wished to have an escape, advising the Viceroy that the Government should issue statements in order to minimize the Muslim League's following, confusing the Muslims on the Pakistan issue.³³ But the Government was not in a position to do so; the secret reports had been indicating the facts that the PML's Muslim supporters were deeply committed to the idea of Pakistan and the predictions were that the League was in a position to win a good number of seats in the Punjab. Most surprisingly, some veteran Unionists were of much the same opinion.³⁴

The PML was thus described as a rising star in future politics; its main competitor, the Unionist Party, had all the Government machinery at its disposal and huge amounts to spend on electioneering but was quickly running out of influential and eminent candidates³⁵ due to the fact that the number of dissidents in the Unionist camps increased rapidly. The nervousness was noted when the Punjab Governor reported to the Viceroy that at least 80% Muslims supported the PML. The League's religious appeal was so great that it had even confused the Unionist Party; it did not know what to do and what to say;

one of its Hindu minister issued statements implying that there was little difference between the Congress and the Unionists party further damaging its credibility in the eyes of Punjab Muslims. The Congress party also made efforts to form a United front against the PML; its President, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad visited the Punjab and was in touch with the Ahrars, the Khaksars and the Unionists. The Congress with huge amounts at its disposal made plans to counter the "religious propaganda" of the PML by hiring Muslim preachers (*Mullahs*). In addition to that Nehru, S. Naidu, Sardar Patel, Azad and other top leaders of the Congress party came to the Punjab to support their candidates in election campaign. The Sikh political parties were also very active in their election campaign,³⁶ and were more violent in their propaganda against the PML, its candidates and the creation of Pakistan, giving inflammatory statements in most cases.

The PML however went ahead, undeterred, in its election campaign trying to frustrate the efforts of the opposition's (Unionist, the Ahrars, the Khaksars, the Congress and the Sikhs) propaganda against the Pakistan Scheme. It may also be mentioned that the ruling Unionists party used Government resources (in some cases) to defeat the Muslim League's candidates. But the top leadership of the League like Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Daultana, Shoukat Hayat, Nawab Mamdot and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan answered these challenges. The PML was also able to use the services of PMSF and the pro-League press and journalists in the Punjab. Soon the rewards were noticed: the Muslim League succeeded in the Central Assembly Elections, which was a good omen³⁷ and it increased its prestige; the League was able to win all the seats which were to be filled entirely by Muslim votes. This led to the historic announcement by Jinnah that it was a clear verdict in favor of Pakistan and that the League was the sole representative of Indian Muslims. The PML celebrated "Victory day" and twenty new branches were established in the Punjab. By February 1946 all the results of provincial elections were known; as anticipated the Unionists were defeated, winning only thirteen Muslim Seats and at the same time fifty-seven Unionists were unseated. The

PML had won a grand victory by winning seventy-three seats becoming single largest political party in the Punjab. The other noticeable event was the defeat of all Congress Muslim candidates, losing their deposits in most cases.

But it was not the end of the game for the PML's opposition; despite their mutual differences, there were commonalities among them such as (a) to oppose the creation of Pakistan, (b) to turn the Victory of PML into its defeat by forming an alliance to keep the PML out of power. It may be noted that the opposition had a secret agreement, during its election campaign, that it would do its utmost to prevent the formation of a PML ministry in the Punjab. It was calculated that with Governor's blessings and due to the distribution of seats under the Communal Award (1932) it was quite possible. Unaware of these arrangements, the PML and the League's top leaders like Liaquat Ali Khan tried to negotiate with the Sikhs to have a coalition ministry. Had there been no understanding between the League's opponents, the PML would have been able to form a ministry, for the League was the single largest party in the Punjab Assembly. But once again Khizer Hayat Tiwana was asked by the Governor to form a ministry.³⁸ It may be mentioned that by now Sir Khizer Tiwana had totally lost his credibility and following in the Punjab Assembly; his group was very much reduced in size (now only 6-7 Muslim supporters in the Assembly); and he was extremely unpopular. These were the reasons that it took five days to find ministers for Sir Khizer's Cabinet when his own political party had been virtually eliminated.

Sir Khizer nevertheless, was installed as premier on 7 March 1947, by the anti-Pakistan and anti-League forces with at least one clear objective - to keep the PML out of power as long as possible and to hinder the creation of Pakistan. In April 1946 Governor Glancy retired and Sir Evan Jenkins succeeded him as the last Governor of the British Punjab; in his first report the new Governor described the new ministry as a very weak team and that the coalition partners had little in common except the hatred of Punjab Muslim League. Sir Khizer Hayat did

not know what to do after becoming the Chief Minister; he knew that more than 90% of the Muslim employees of the Punjab Government supported the PML; even his life was in danger and for that matter he spent most of his time hiding from the public. Sir Khizer also went abroad,³⁹ vacationing during the summer and was reluctant to come to India at a time when India's most crucial issue-the transfer of power- was being decided. The PML leaders time and again warned the Government that Khizer's unpopular ministry would bring most dangerous consequences for the peace and tranquility of the Punjab; Nawab Mamdot (the PML leader) Shoukat Hayat, Mumtaz Daultana, Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Raja Ghazanfar Ali and the leaders of the P.M.S.F. attacked the Governors for depriving the PML of power. The PML also expressed feelings of resentment during the Budget Session of the Punjab Assembly; speeches were made and a heated discussion was noticed on the merits and demerits of the Pakistan Scheme, which took the form of a communal battle. The PML members of the Assembly tried to prove that the future of Muslims lay in the creation of Pakistan.

In the meantime, the PML leaders were also arguing their case before the Cabinet Mission plans sent by the British to decide the future of India. The Mission arrived in India on 23 March 1946 with the object of making arrangements under which power could be transferred to the Indians.⁴⁰ It was probably the most important period from the PML's point of view; after being denied power in the Punjab, there was little choice but to demand the creation of Pakistan with a great deal of force. The position was that the League claimed the whole of the Punjab to be included in Pakistan whereas the non-Muslims particularly the Sikh were opposed to the creation of Pakistan; Glancy had also opposed the creation of Pakistan. The PML leader, Nawab Mamdot met the Cabinet Mission and argued that there could be a settlement about the boundaries of Pakistan once the Pakistan Scheme was accepted in principle; he also promised to offer reasonable terms to the Sikh community in case they would like to have an agreement with the Muslim League. The Mission also had a meeting with Sir Khizer

Hayat; he was in favor, of giving safeguards to the Muslims and regretted that Jinnah was not pressured to define⁴¹ Pakistan's boundary specifically earlier; Khizer Hayat suggested that the Government should decide the Pakistan issue by announcing an Award; he did not favor the inclusion of Sikhs in Pakistan, if it was created. The Sikh leaders also met the Cabinet Delegation; as anticipated they were opposed to the creation of Pakistan, but favored the creation of an independent Sikh state in case India was divided.⁴²

The Cabinet Mission also interviewed a number of other Indian leaders; it was noticed that the two major parties, the Congress and the Muslim League were poles apart: the Mission proposed a tentative scheme which was discussed at Simla from 5 to 12 May 1946 but led to no agreement. The Mission, therefore, offered a constitutional Award on 16 May 1946; the Mission had taken into account the various viewpoints on the future of India. The Muslim League's Pakistan Scheme had been rejected; the Sikh point of view was a dominating factor in the attitude taken by the Cabinet Delegation on this issue. The 16 May Plan⁴³ suggested a three-tiered Indian Union - a Centre empowered to deal with subjects such as Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Communications; it would have the power to raise its own revenues.

After the Union constitution had been drafted and all the elections had been held it would be open to any province to elect to opt out of any group. There were three sections; section 'A' was to consist of all Hindu provinces; section 'B' of the Muslim provinces; and 'C' would be consisting of Bengal and Assam. A constituent Assembly was to be formed in order to draft a constitution; the Assembly would have 385 members, of whom 93* were to be from Indian States and the rest to be elected by the various provinces; and each province was allocated a number of representatives according to its population, and the seats would be divided amongst the communities according to their population strength. The Punjab Assembly was allocated a total number of 28 seats divided as 8 (General) 16 (Muslims) and 4 (Sikhs). In addition to this, the advisory committee on

Minorities would be created to advise the Union Assembly with regard to the rights of minorities.⁴⁴

It was anticipated that the Congress and the Sikhs would gladly accept the recommendations of the Cabinet Mission, for the Pakistan Scheme was rejected. But the Sikhs even resented the middle way suggested by the Mission; their main⁴⁵ objection was that they would still be dominated by the Muslim Community in the Punjab and that the 16 May Plan at least contained the germs to create Pakistan in the future; and the Sikh, were also not satisfied by the number of seats allocated to their community. The Cabinet Delegation made efforts to convince the Sikh representatives that it was the best possible arrangement that they could possibly hope for; but the Sikhs were adamant, demanding a 'veto' power in the section 'B' (Muslim provinces). On the other hand, the Muslim League accepted the 16 May Statement, and the Congress was still in the middle of examining, analyzing and misinterpreting the Cabinet-Mission Plan. Meanwhile, the Cabinet delegation had begun negotiations for the formation of an Interim Government. As anticipated, there was no agreeable solution; on 16 June, therefore, the Cabinet Delegation once again put forward its own plan. In the meantime, the Congress leaders had been interpreting the 16 May statement insisting that it would be optional for provinces to join the sections in which they had been placed meaning that the Congress would be free to get rid of the grouping system; it may be mentioned that the authors of the 16 May statement meant otherwise. On 22 June, the Congress party accepted the Plan but with its own interpretations, but rejecting the 16 June proposals. On 16 July, Jawaharlal Nehru, the newly elected President of the Congress, announced that his party would be free to demolish,⁴⁶ change or scrap the 16 May as well the June 16 statement. Now the Viceroy should have asked the Muslim League to form the new government but Lord Wavell was not ready to go ahead without the Congress Party.

As mentioned earlier, the Muslim League and especially the Punjab League had already been irritated by the

attitude of Congress party, its allies and the Government. A session of the Muslim League's Council was held to review the latest political situation; Jinnah expressed his anger and resentment against the Congress's misinterpretation of the 16 May statement of Cabinet Mission. The PML leaders made speeches insisting that the creation of Pakistan was the only solution. At the end of the day, the League decided to withdraw its previous acceptance of the 16 May statement and prepared a programme of "Direct Action" for the achievement of its goal; on 30 July, the high powered Working Committee of the League fixed August 16 as the "Direct Action Day". Most surprisingly, the Viceroy, without addressing the main problem (the tension between the League and the Congress) went ahead to form an Interim Government, sending his proposals to both the principal parties. Lord Wavell further alienated the Muslim League by rejecting Jinnah's claim to nominate all Muslim members of the Interim Government; the League, therefore rejected the Viceroy's offer on 31 July. After this, the anti-Pakistan forces geared up their efforts to form the Government, ignoring the Muslim League; the Sikhs who had earlier rejected the assurances given by the League and by the members of the Cabinet Mission were now ready to make a common cause with the Congress. Negotiations between the Congress and the Sikh representatives were therefore successful, leading to an accord between them; the Sikhs accepted the Congress's innocent-looking assurance that it would take care of their interests and would remove their grievances.

The PML on the other hand was deeply busy in its anti-Government campaign; some of its supporters were expressing their anger by renouncing their titles given by the British government. As planned, on 16 August, the PML leaders observed total strike (*Hartaal*) in the Punjab. The PMSF and various Muslim women organizations also took to the streets protesting against what they called the 'unholy alliance' between Khizer Hayat and the anti-Muslim forces in the Punjab. Speeches were made against the attempts to deny the Muslims their rightful share in the Punjab and at the Centre. But these protests bore no fruits; on 2 Sept. 1946, the Sikhs and the

Congress formed the Interim Government. The appointment of Baldev Singh as Defense Minister was like rubbing the salt on Muslim wounds. The PML now planned to start 'a holy war'.⁴⁷ A detailed -program was chalked out for the civil disobedience movement against Khizer; statement issued implying that the PML would not recognize the Interim Government. However, soon it was realized by the Viceroy and the Congress that governing India without the League was an extremely difficult business. The Direct Action Day had taught many lessons. The Viceroy put tremendous pressure on the Congress to take the League's representatives in the Cabinet. On this issue the Congress created many hurdles but eventually agreed.⁴⁸ On 5 October, five representative of the League were appointed members of the Interim Government.⁴⁹ Raja Ghazanfar Ali who was a member of the Interim Government and belonged to the Punjab gave statements to the effect that the League would never compromise on the creation of Pakistan.

On 24 January 1947, the Punjab ministry gave a challenge by declaring the PML guards as an unlawful organization; many top ranking PML leaders were arrested.⁵⁰ It turned out to be the greatest challenge for many Muslim eminent families of the Punjab. It may be mentioned that the ladies of eminent families also came out in the streets against the Khizer ministry.⁵¹ A few days later, the Punjab government had to release all the political prisoners due to the large-scale protests and demonstrations.⁵²

If one carefully analyses the situation in the Punjab after Khizer Tiwana was reinstalled as the Chief Minister the safest conclusion was that Khizer had miscalculated the strength of the PML. The governance of Punjab was now extremely difficult. The 90% employees of the Punjab government supported the PML; even the chief secretary, Punjab Government, Akhtar Husain was not trusted by the governor.⁵³ Raja Ghazanfar and Liaquat Ali had been giving statements against Khizer Hayat.⁵⁴ Jinnah also protested against 'the high-handed and unwarranted' policies of Khizer ministry.⁵⁵

Khizer's seventy years old uncle was also siding with the PML.⁵⁶ Some eminent Muslims from other provinces were also visiting the Punjab giving statements against Khizer.⁵⁷ These leaders very much appreciated the struggle to topple the Punjab ministry using peaceful protests as an effective method.⁵⁸ The Working Committee of the Muslim League held its session and demanded the removal of restrictions on political activities of the PML and condemned the attitude of all anti-Pakistan forces.⁵⁹ Soon Khizer had a meeting with his uncle, Allah Buksh Tiwana, for his advice and opinion.⁶⁰ It may be noted that Khizer's cabinet colleagues were so terrified that most of the time they were hiding and spending nights at government guest houses.⁶¹ Wireless sets were given to the top-ranking officers of the Punjab government for consultation and reporting on hourly basis.⁶² Maulana Daud Ghazanavi got in touch with Jinnah who demanded that the ban on political activities must be lifted.⁶³ Soon the Punjab government came under pressure and released 2000 political detainees including the top-ranking PML leaders.⁶⁴ The PML sent messages to all its branches to celebrate "victory day" on 2 March, 1947."⁶⁵

In the meantime, Khizer had a meeting with Sir Zafrullah Khan who was considered to be the most wise man in the top brass Unionist party leadership - and his uncle Nawab Allah Buksh Tiwana. Sir Zafrullah Khan mentioned in his memoirs⁶⁶ that being a good friend of Khizer he got in touch with the Punjab premier after hearing the statement of 20 February 1947⁶⁷ about the date of the British withdrawal from India and advised Sir Khizer to resign and thereafter cooperate with the Muslim League.⁶⁸ It may be mentioned that governor of the Punjab and the Unionist party wanted Khizer to linger on in his office as long as possible; but now Khizer had enough of trouble and therefore did not oblige his pro-British friends and instead preferred to resign. At this stage the PML made preparation to take office by re-electing Mamdot as its leader. Feroz Khan Noon was advised by Jinnah to support Mamdot; Raja Ghazanfar Ali also played a key role in this matter.⁶⁹ The Quaid-i-Azam did not wish to see any rivalry for the position of chief minister.⁷⁰ But no one knew that the Punjab governor, Sir

Evan Jenkins, who had the reputation of being the pro-Sikh Governor, was in no mood to give way to the PML. He was able to convince the Viceroy that the PML should not be allowed to form the new ministry. Mountbatten who himself was against the League was now making plans to hand over the power; eventually the Third June Plan was evolved.⁷¹ However, the cold war between Jenkins and the PML continued until the end; he did all he could to harm the Muslim interests in the Punjab by supporting the wrong demands put forward by the Sikh community. Mountbatten was also very angry because Jinnah had not accepted him as common governor-general⁷² for India and Pakistan; this explains the fact why the Boundary Commission Awards⁷³ were not based on justice and fair play. The PML, therefore, continued its criticism of Jenkins and Mountbatten until the creation of Pakistan.

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