

**Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar and Indian
Independence: An Evaluation of his
Contribution**

**A Thesis submitted to The University of Dhaka for
the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Islamic History and Culture**



by

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Registration No: 121
Session: 2020-2021(Re-registration)

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February 2024

Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled **Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar and Indian Independence: An Evaluation of his Contribution** is the result of my own research and is now being submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic History and Culture by the Dhaka University. I further assert that neither the thesis nor any part thereof was submitted to any other university or institution for any other degree.

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SUPERVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

It is hereby certified that this thesis entitled 'Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar and Indian Independence: An Evaluation of his Contribution' has been prepared by Mr. Imtiaz Ahmed under my supervision by a judicious and critical analysis of the huge extant materials particularly the scholarly treatises of the prominent modern scholars of this specific field. Pertinently it is also certified that Mr. Ahmed has successfully completed the two presentations – a pre-requisite of the Ph. D. Programme.

I gladly recommend this thesis for submission and necessary formalities that may follow.

Mohammad Ibrahim
08.02.2024 A.C.

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Acknowledgement

At the very beginning, I convey my heartfelt gratitude to Almighty Allah and His Prophet (sm.) for granting me the requisite capacity and competence to accomplish the present research work.

In composing the thesis the first person to whom I wish to express my profound gratitude is my revered teacher and supervisor Professor Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim of the Department of Islamic History And Culture, Dhaka University for his constant guidance, proper encouragement and learned advice throughout the entire course of my research work which helped me to shape the thesis in its present form.

I am also indebted to my esteemed preceptor and M.Phil. supervisor National Professor, Dr.Sufia Ahmed who besides encouraging my initiative paved the way by allowing me to use her personal library as well as for providing me with relevant materials nicely preserved in her collection.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to professor Aatur Rahman Biswas, Chairperson, Department of Islamic History And Culture and all other faculty members who encouraged me in the quest for research.

I also deeply owe a debt of gratitude to all those authors, scholars and experts in this domain from whose works I have abundantly gleaned materials for my research work.

I am also grateful to the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh for granting me a research fellowship. I also acknowledge the cooperation of the officers and staffs of the Dhaka University library, Bangladesh National Library and Archives, The Bangladesh National Museum Library, The Bangla Academy Library and The Asiatic Society

of Bangladesh Library for their assistance and co-operation they have extended to me in the execution of my pursuit.

I convey my heartiest reverence to my eldest brother Iqbal Ahmed who sent me several important books from USA, which proved instrumental in executing my research but did not live to see the accomplishment of the work. May the Almighty Allah bless his departed soul.

I also thank Dr. Ayesha Siddiqua my friend, colleague and former Assistant Professor, Jagannath University, Dhaka for providing me some important articles from London, UK.

My thanks are also due to my age-old mother Nurun Nahar whose passion for learning encouraged me in my quest. Among others my elder brother Iftekhar Ahmed and my younger sister, Samsun Nahar Rahman Chishti also deserve mention in this regard for en-kindling interest in my pursuit. I would also like to thank my wife Nasrin Ahmed who bore the responsibility of domestic affairs that enabled to prosecute my research work smoothly.

I owe special gratitude to Professor Dr. A.A. Sheikh Md. Asrarul Hoque Chishti whose thoughtful advice, suggestions and comments eased this daunting task.

Finally, I convey my humble gratitude to my spiritual mentor reverend Abul Ula Sheikh Md. Farid Uddin Chishti who has been my temporal and spiritual source of inspiration.

Imtiaz Ahmed
February 2024

Abstract

The present research work examines Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar's role in the Indian independence movement and his contribution to it. Contextually it covers different aspects of his life and career. Mohamed Ali's interest in politics blossomed while he was in the civil service with the desire to serve his community and country. With this object in view he switched to journalism and published two newspapers *The Comrade* in English and *The Humdard* in Urdu. He formally began his political career by joining the All India Muslim League in 1906. As a member of the League he participated in its different sessions and gave his considered view vis-a-vis the interest of the Indian Muslims. Simultaneously he also advocated for reconciliation of mutual differences between the Hindus and the Muslims for national coherence. At the outset, Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the British government was appeasing for he considered their connection beneficial to the interest of the Indian Muslims. However, his stance changed when the British government pursued policies inimical to the interest of the Muslims at home and abroad. This was manifested when he began to express concern on those issues through his journalism. The British government considered his action injurious to the interest of the authority and arrested him amid the First World War. During imprisonment, Mohamed Ali became more devoted to Islam and an exponent of the Ottoman *Khilafat* which Britain and her allies decided to amputate at the end of the First World War. Soon after release from prison Mohamed Ali joined the Indian National Congress and participated in the movement for the preservation of the *Khilafat*. The movement gained momentum when M.K.Gandhi corroborated the

Khilafat cause for the attainment of *Swaraj* (self-rule). Realising the significance of the co-operation with the Hindus and their support for the *Khilafat* issue and achieving India's freedom Mohamed Ali followed M.K.Gandhi's lead. The combination of these two movements generated unprecedented unity and solidarity between the Hindus and the Muslims. Nevertheless, this communal honeymoon did not last long. When Mohamed Ali and M.K.Gandhi were arrested, the movement crumbled affecting the communal harmony. The relation between Mohamed Ali and M.K.Gandhi also became strained because of Gandhi's reluctance to diffuse communal tension. Moreover, at this time M.K.Gandhi's temporary withdrawal from politics paved the way for the Hindu Mahasabha an extremist Hindu organisation to extend its influence in politics. This was evident in the landslide victory of the Hindu Mahasabha over the Indian National Congress in the general elections of 1926. Henceforth, Indian National Congress became subservient to the policies of the Hindu Mahasabha. The transformation of the Indian National Congress was manifested in 1928, when as against the Simon Commission a Conference of the All Indian Parties appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft a new constitution for India. The draft published known as Nehru Report ignored the Muslim demands. Mohamed Ali opposed the Report vehemently, but it was approved as desired by the Hindu Mahasabha. He blamed Pandit Motilal Nehru and M.K. Gandhi for not using their influence, and finally left the Indian National Congress Party. In 1931, Mohamed Ali joined the Round Table Conference in London where he revealed his concept of independent India. He held that, India would be a composite nation with federal type of government, where all nationalities would be treated justly and equally and the protection of their interest would be guaranteed, dispelling the fear of domination of

any community. This was the last bid for Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar in the struggle for Indian independence, because very soon later he died in London on 4 January 1931 and was buried in Jerusalem. This remarkable pioneer of the Indian independence struggle held high his spirit of independence by expressly making it a point to be buried in the holy land of Palestine in preference to his motherland i.e. India then under British subjugation.

Introduction

Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar was a leading Muslim journalist and political figure in the early twentieth century British India. He was a visionary who had passionately devoted his life to the ideal of Indian independence. His leadership, conviction, courage and unflinching commitment to the freedom struggle gave him a distinct position among the champions of the long-drawn Indian independence movement.

The present study is a humble attempt to explore Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar's role in and contribution to the Indian struggle for independence by reviewing his life and career.

Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar had a chequered career. He was born in an aristocratic Muslim family in the princely state of Rampur in the region of present day Uttar Pradesh, India on 10 December 1878. After completion of his study from Aligarh and Oxford, he started his professional life as a civil servant in the princely states of Rampur and Baroda. But his stint in that vocation was brief for he desired to serve his community and country. With this aim in view, he chose an enterprising career of journalism and published two newspapers namely *The Comrade* an English weekly, and *The Hamdard* an Urdu daily. As a journalist, Mohamed Ali was truly devoted to his professional duties and never used his profession for personal gain or compromised his professional integrity even in the face of grave dangers. His emergence as a journalist brought him in direct touch with contemporary affairs, which exacerbated his interest in politics.

Mohamed Ali's political career began with his involvement at the inaugural session of the All India Muslim League in 1906. As a member of the League, he toiled hard to popularise the organisation among the

Muslims and took part in its various sessions. In these sessions alongside advocating the legitimate rights and privileges of his own community Mohamed Ali laid great stress through his journalistic acumen on promoting goodwill and peaceful adjustment of mutual differences between Hindus and Muslims for the sake of national integrity and progress, which climaxed in the Congress-League concordat at Lucknow in 1916.

Since the inception of his political career, Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the British government was conciliatory, because he deemed their attachment as beneficial to the interest of the Indian Muslims. This was reflected in his actions when he was seen as a member of the Muslim League promoting loyalty to the government and expressing satisfaction when it incorporated the clause of separate representation for protecting the rights of the Muslims as against the overwhelming Hindu majority in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909. The British government also reciprocated his actions by enabling him to enjoy the grace of the official circle.

At the initial phase of his political career Mohamed Ali's affection for his community was not motivated by religious feeling. But his attitude towards the British government gradually began to change when it adopted policies detrimental to the interest of the Muslims at home and abroad. In this circumstance, Mohamed Ali started to speak up for justice on those affairs through the voice of *The Comrade*. The British Indian authorities having felt disconcerted incarcerated him in 1915 amid the First World War.

Mohamed Ali's internment was a turning point from two aspects. Firstly, he recognised the politics of mendicancy and realised the necessity of agitational methods for redressal of grievances and

secondly, it impelled him to devote himself to the study of Islam, and the essence of this religion that he grasped during this time influenced his future actions. His earlier activities, which had been directed by communal loyalty now after his new religious transformation were motivated as an Islamic duty¹. He now began to express sympathy for the Ottoman *Khalifah* of Turkey who was the warden of the Holy places of Islam. When the *Khalifah's* position was threaten by Britain and her allies in the First World War, he considered it as a religious duty for Indian Muslims to defend the *Khilafat*. As a result, soon after his release from internment he participated in the ongoing *Khilafat* movement giving it a new thrust. Just at this juncture M.K.Gandhi with the aim of gaining adherence for his Non-cooperation movement validated the *Khilafat* cause. The fusion of these two movements thus assumed an all India form with anti-British content. Thus the co-relation between Mohamed Ali's religio-centric political ideal with Indian nationalist cause made him an enthusiast in the struggle for Indian independence.

During Mohamed Ali's political struggle his relation with his calleagues and co-workers were not always smooth. At the beginning of his political career he had good terms with veteran Muslim leaders who in recognition of his dazzling intellect chose him to assist them in the interest of the community. They also helped him in his journalistic venture. But although Mohamed Ali's association with senior leaders were very cordial, yet in matters of policy and decision-making he sometimes differed with them. When the Aga Khan acclaimed the annulment of Bengal partition as beneficial to Muslims Mohamed Ali dissented gently with the opinion of the senior leader. In another incident he encountered Syed Ameer Ali another senior Muslim leader who was the president of the London brunch of the Muslim League on

leading a delegation representing Indian Muslim opinion in London. The discord was however, settled at the mediation of the Aga Khan. During this time Mohamed Ali was also to be credited for bringing M.A.Jinnah to the fold of the Muslim League while on his visit to London. This was a matter of great significance in the succeeding course of events. During the Balkan war and the seizure of Tripoli Mohamed Ali forged a psychological alliance with Abul Kalam Azad and Zafar Ali Khan the editors of the *Al-Hilal* and the *Zamindar* respectively against European aggression toward the Muslim world, which galvanised the Indian Muslims. Mohamed Ali's emotional disposition towards Turkey was the outcome of his concern for the protection of the Holy places of Islam. For this reason he became the disciple of Maulana Abdul Bari of the *Firingi Mahal*, Lucknow and formed the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Ka'aba* society. The society enlisted eminent Muslim leaders like Dr.Ansari a reputed physician who led a medical mission to Turkey during the Balkan war, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk formal secretary of Aligarh College and others. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also supported the enterprise. The establishment of the *Anjumam* thus forged a close connection with Mohamed Ali and these leaders who subsequently cooperated with him in his future initiative. Mohamed Ali's relation with M.K.Gandhi developed during the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movements. The collaboration of these two minds created a unique communal harmony giving the movement an all-pervading shape. But their alliance suffered a set-back when M.K.Gandhi called off the Non-cooperation movement and the *Khilafat* was also abolished by the Turks themselves reverting to communal acrimony and impairing relationship between M.K.Gandhi and Mohamed Ali. Mohamed Ali's attachment with his formal co-workers also declined on account of determining the future course of

action after the collapse of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement. Thus Mohamed Ali's relation with his colleagues and co-workers reveals that his attitude evolved overtime as it was based mainly on context and circumstances. He was true to himself and was not prepared to put his ideal in peril.

An analysis of the political events of the period covered by this study shows the transformation of Muslim sentiment in Indian politics. At the beginning of the twentieth century when the Hindus opposed the partition of Bengal in 1905, the Muslims felt the need to organise themselves for safeguarding their community interest. It was in this situation that Mohamed Ali was drawn into the politics of the Muslim League in 1906 which was primarily of loyal nature. In the midst of anti-partition agitation when the British government granted the Muslims separate representation in the legislature in the reform scheme of 1909 Mohamed Ali reacted to this concession with acceptance and co-operation. But when the government had yielded to the Congress agitation by revoking the partition of Bengal in 1911, it jolted the Muslims in general and the Bengali Muslims in particular. Later on events like the rejection of the Muslim University scheme, the Cawnpore mosque incident and Britain's anti-Turkish posture caused great uneasiness among Indian Muslims and compelled them to revise their policies towards the British government. Hence Mohamed Ali being perturbed by the situation began to express his sentiment through his writings which the British government considered inimical to the interest of their empire and imprisoned him amid the First World War in 1915.

When Mohamed Ali was released he felt that an enslaved India could not successfully resist the international intrigue of the British

Empire without the cooperation of majority community if India was to achieve independence. From this conviction he immediately joined the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement under the leadership of M.K.Gandhi in the hope of defending the *Khilafat* and liberating India from the foreign yoke. Their joint leadership set the whole country aflame. Hence the British government accused Mohamed Ali for his anti-government speech at the Karachi *Khilafat* Conference and interned him again in 1921. M.K.Gandhi was also arrested in 1922 soon after the withdrawal of the Non-cooperation movement.

With the fiasco of Non-cooperation and *Khilafat* movements the communal harmony that had prevailed during that period now disappeared and found expression in mutual strife. Mohamed Ali after M.K.Gandhi's release met him to use his influence in restraining the ever-mounting communal feuds. But M.K.Gandhi instead of showing any importance to the matter abstained himself from politics for sometime and switched his preference from communal amity to promotion of *Khadi* Campaign. This created a political vacuum which was replenished by the extremist Hindu organisation the Hindu Mahashabha and was instrumental in expanding its influence in the realm of politics. Its consequence was evident in the general elections of 1926 where the Congress was swept away by the Hindu Mahashabha candidates. This event had a far-reaching consequence in the politics of India, for it scared the Congress leadership and drove them into the vortex of the Hindu Mahashabha politics. Mohamed Ali held M.K.Gandhi responsible for his temporary abstention from politics which allowed the Hindu Mahashabha to gain strength and restrict the scope for communal reconciliation. In this circumstance Mohamed Ali

joined hands with M.A.Jinnah in securing the interest of the Muslims in the existing political condition.

The conversion of the Congress party's approach was evident when in 1928 a statutory commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon by the British government to enquire into the working of the Government of India Act of 1919 and of the future Indian constitution which was reciprocated by a conference convened by the all Indian parties to consider the drafting of a new constitution for India. In this regard the conference appointed a committee under Motilal Nehru. The Nehru Committee presented its report at the All Parties Convention in December 1928. The report was rejected by both Mohamed Ali and M.A.Jinnah for it repudiated the demands put forth by the Muslims for the protection of their interest. Mohamed Ali condemned Motilal Nehru for ignoring the Muslim demands, and also M.K.Gandhi for not exercising his influence for a settlement whereby he allowed a free rein to the communalism of the majority. Thus being disillusioned with Motilal Nehru and M.K.Gandhi Mohamed Ali defected from the Congress and accepted the invitation of the Viceroy to attend the Round Table Conference in London for framing a constitution for India where the interest of the Muslims would be represented justly.

At the Round Table Conference Mohamed Ali presented an outline of the future constitution of independent India based in the light of his stormy but mature political experience. He opined that India was a composite nation where people were intensely attached to religion and infinitely divided into communities, sects and denominations² and the only solution to this problem to repose on the federal type of government with residuary powers vested on the provinces. His prime

consideration was the conservation of the interests of the Muslims. So he proposed that Muslims should be allowed to exercise complete authority where they formed majority and equally offer the same privileges to the Hindus. For all practical purposes the core content of Mohamed Ali's design for independent India was that he wanted to establish a balance of power between the two major communities of India namely the Hindus and the Muslims which would disperse the fear of the majority rule and discard the possibility of transgressing the interests of each-other and thereby make India livable for all its citizens irrespective of castes and creeds.

There is a number of biographical accounts and writings by scholars and historians on Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar and they have discussed different aspects of his public career. Allah Bakhsh Yusufi's *Life of Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar* was published in English in 1970. It begins with Mohamed Ali's birth and education, highlights his journalistic career, his efforts towards the establishment of the Aligarh University, organising Indian Muslim's Medical Mission to Turkey during the Balkan war, the Cawnpure mosque disaster, his internment during the First World War and his release. The work ends with his joining in the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movements. Although these events form part of his political career this work is not a full sketch of his life and there is no discussion in it of his vision for the freedom of India.

Dr. Afzal Iqbal's *Life and Times of Mohamed Ali* (1978) is perhaps the first full length biographical account of Mohamed Ali in English. It provides much meaningful information about Maulana Mohamed Ali's role to promote the interest of his own community, his relation with the British government and his efforts to restore the status

of the *Khalifah* of Turkey who was the custodian of the Holy places of Islam by participating in the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement along with M.K.Gandhi and thereby forging the Hindu-Muslim alliance. But the collapse of the movement changed Mohamed Ali's attitude not only towards M.K.Gandhi but the Indian National Congress also when he found that their actions were betraying the cause of the Indian Muslims. For this reason he justified his attending the Round Table Conference in London in the hope of doing justice to the Indian Muslim cause. However, this work though an informative source is a chronological account of Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar's life and deed, it did not focus on his vision of future independent India and the position of the Muslims therein.

S. Moinul Haq's edited *Mohamed Ali: Life and Work* (1978) provides further information on Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar in the form of collected essays that cover different aspects of his political career like journalism, Hindu-Muslim relations, The All India Muslim League, the *Khilafat* movement and other issues like his poetical talents. The nature of interests and priorities of the contributors within a single structure, adds to the merit of these works, but their approaches were not focused on the subject of the present study.

Apart from these biographies there are some biographical anthologies where the life of Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar has been portrayed in a different manner. First among these was *Eminent Mussalmans* (not dated) which depicted Mohamed Ali's life and achievements as a Muslim patriot, the other work entitled *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan -1858-1951* (1965), by S.M.Ikram delineated him as one of the Architects of Pakistan. Yet another scholar Rajmohon Gandhi in his *Understanding the Muslim*

Mind (1986), describes Mohamed Ali as the initiator of Hindu-Muslim alliance.

Mushirul Hasan's *Mohamed Ali: Ideology and Politics* (1981), although not a conventional biography betrays Mohamed Ali's ideological nuances but does not discuss his strategy of the independence of India.

A History of the Freedom Movement Vol-III (1961), prepared by the Board of Editors also comprises a chapter (VI) on Mohamed Ali where he was depicted as a Muslim leader who advocated and fought the Hindu's and the British for the protection of the Muslims, but there was no discussion of his plan for India's freedom which the present study aims to explore.

There are other scholarly publications by different authors that have covered Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar's activities in various ways, such as representing the cult of Pan-Islamism, his activities as a nationalist, working for creating Muslim constituency, his struggle for power and influence so far as his community was concerned etc. These treatments had been made in the works of Moin Shakir's, *Khilafat to Partition: A survey of major political trends among Indian Muslims during 1919-1947* (1983), Mushirul Hasan's, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India 1916-1928* (1979), Gail Minault's *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (1982), and Francis Robinson's, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces Muslims 1860-1923* (1997). Yet none of these writers seem to project Maulana Mohamed Ali's vision of India's independence after the departure of the British quite convincingly.

The present research work aims to vindicate Maulana Mohamed Ali's devotion, dedication and his uncompromising struggle with the British government to the cause of India's freedom. His commitment to the freedom of his motherland can be assessed from his last public appearance at the Round Table Conference where he emphatically declared that, "I want to go back to my country if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise I will not go back to a slave country. I would even prefer to die in a foreign country so long as it is a free country, and if you do not give us freedom in India you will have to give me a grave here".³ The study also explores his tussle with the Indian National Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha on the question of safeguarding the legitimate rights and ensuring the proper share of the Indian Muslims in the future governance of the country and examines the outline of his scheme of independent India. These are the salient features of this research work, which either had escaped the sight of the modern scholars in this domain or did not receive their due attention.

In executing this research contemporary and near contemporary primary sources and modern works on the field have been exhaustively consulted, following descriptive and analytical approaches and historical narrative style. In the course of discussion Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar is simply mentioned as Mohamed Ali and the spelling of his name is the same as he chose it for himself.

The thesis has been divided into eight chapters besides the introduction and the conclusion.

The first chapter deals with Mohamed Ali's birth and upbringing with special reference to his mother's untiring efforts, his school education at Bareilly and Aligarh and eventful college life at Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College first and then in the Oxford

University. After completion of study his professional career started as a civil servant in the two princely states of Rampur, and Baroda and soon later his antipathy towards that service resulting in his switching over to the vocation of journalism have also been discussed in it.

The second chapter focuses on Mohamed Ali's activities as a journalist which began formally with the publication of *The Comrade* an English weekly in 1911 from Calcutta. It portrays his policy, purpose and ethics of journalism. The discussion also delineates the main aim of his enterprise which was to establish an amicable relation with the government for enabling his community to match with the prevalent political structure of the country and also to harness a friendly relation with the neighbouring communities. Alongside the purpose served by *The Comrade* his efforts to acquaint the Muslim masses on national issues by publishing an Urdu daily *The Hamdard* is also discussed here. The chapter unveils Mohamed Ali's view towards the British government through his journalistic venture and the policies it pursued both towards India and the Muslim World in general and Turkey in particular. The discussion also deals with his legal battle with the government against The Indian Press Act of 1910 to defend the freedom of the press. Finally it explains why and how Mohamed Ali's journalistic career came to an end.

The third chapter discusses why Mohamed Ali joined the All India Muslim League and how he assisted his community to benefit from the introduction of the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909. The discourse also reveals that despite preserving the interests of his own community why Mohamed Ali conceived it necessary to have the assistance of the Hindus that led him to support the inclusion of the resolution of self-government as the aim of the Muslim League in its

council session. The chapter further discusses Mohamed Ali's relationship with the old guard loyalist leaders and with the younger section of the party. It portrays his transformation of attitude to the ruling class which resulted in his internment in 1915.

The fourth chapter describes how Mohamed Ali shifted during his internment changed from a secular activist to an exponent of Islam, how he visualised the religion and what the basis of his socio-religious concept was. It also explains why he considered the *khilafat* as an important institution, and its preservation as a religious duty for Indian Muslims. As regards his religious ideology the chapter reveals how after his release Mohamed Ali joined hands with M.K.Gandhi to protect the *Khilafat* of Turkey by mingling the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movements. It also narrates how Mohamed Ali's religio-centric political ideal converged with the Indian nationalist cause and explained the success of the concerted efforts of M.K.Gandhi and Mohamed Ali moving the entire country in an unprecedented way by forging Hindu-Muslim unity. The movement however, lost its glamour and pace when both Mohamed Ali and M.K.Gandhi were interned and the cause of the movement was lost, straining the relationship between Mohamed Ali and M.K.Gandhi and impairing the communal harmony and increasing the influence of the communal forces. Mohamed Ali's efforts to improve the situation and its consequence is also discussed here.

The fifth chapter sheds light on Mohamed Ali's impression towards the British government. The discussion reveals why Mohamed Ali harboured positive outlook and solicited Muslim loyalty and attachment towards the British government through his press, and why the government also reciprocated accordingly. The chapter also examines Mohamed Ali's grievances against the government, the

transformation of his views which cropped up on account of the British government's national policies and its support for European powers convergence on the Muslim world and the Ottoman Empire, and Mohamed Ali's response to their actions. It uncovers the British official attitude towards Mohamed Ali and vice-versa. A discussion is also made here regarding Mohamed Ali's change of mind after the break up with M.K.Gandhi and the Congress in relation to safeguarding Muslim interest in the Nehru Report of 1928 which caused Mohamed Ali to assist the British government in its initiative to frame a constitution for independent India where the interest of the Muslims was to be protected.

The sixth chapter is a brief survey of political incidents of the period under study to show what influence it had on Mohamed Ali and how he reacted to it. The discussion begins with the transfiguration of Muslim sentiment in Indian politics at the beginning of the twentieth century and Mohamed Ali's return to India after completion of his study and joining in the Muslim League in 1906. It shows how he reacted to the concession of the British government granted to the Muslims in the legislature amid anti-partition agitation of the Congress party and subsequently his response to the decision of the government to annul the Bengal partition. The discussion also reveals his response and reaction to other issues that emerged on the heels of the undoing of the Bengal partition. Like the Turko-Italian war in 1911 and the Balkan war in 1912, the Muslim University affairs in 1912, and finally the Cawnpore Mosque incident in 1913. All these events gradually estranged Indian Muslims in general and Mohamed Ali in particular from the British government and necessitated revision of policies which resulted in the inclusion of the clause of self-government in the Muslim League aim to which Mohamed Ali played a dominant role. The discourse also sheds

light on Mohamed Ali's participation in the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement with M.K.Gandhi after the First World War and its impact on Indian politics. It also discusses Mohamed Ali's relation with M.K.Gandhi during the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation days and afterwards. The chapter also examines the emergence of the Hindu Mahasabha Politics after the failure of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement and Gandhi's part in it. It also shows how the Mahasabha grappled the Indian National Congress after its humiliating defeat in 1926 general election and dominated its policies ever since which was manifested in the Nehru Report of 1928 the subsequent result of which was Mohamed Ali's desertion of the Congress, alliance with M.A.Jinnah and his participation in the Round Table Conference in 1930 where he propounded his famous scheme for future independent India.

The seventh chapter focuses on Mohamed Ali's view on forming an ideal government by solving the inter-communal problem. It also discusses his efforts to resolve the communal standoff with the help of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru a leader of the Liberal party which appeared after the publication of the Nehru Report in 1928 and his failure to that end on account of M.K.Gandhi and Motilal Nehru's reluctance in apprehension of losing the sympathy and support of the Hindu Mahasabha a party that commanded considerable influence among the Hindus. This explains why Mohamed Ali joined the Round Table Conference in London. At this stage the chapter explains Mohamed Ali's constitutional scheme for an independent India which includes a federal type of government with a loose centre whereby it would ensure the Muslim community a fair share in the governance of the country maintaining the balance of power and would as well dispel the fear of

the domination of the rule of the majority community making India habitable for all its diverse communities, denominations and sects in peace.

The eighth chapter delineates Mohamed Ali's interaction with persons who were associated with him or with whom he was affiliated in his political struggle. The discussion shows his relation with the senior leaders of the Muslim League who drew him in active politics and helped him in his journalistic enterprise and with the Old Boys' of Aligarh. It discussed his reaction to some of the senior leaders like the Aga Khan on government policies affecting Muslim interest and with Syed Ameer Ali on leading the delegation to England. It also vindicates his role in bringing M.A.Jinnah to the Muslim League fold and his popularity in the Muslim League party. The discussion reveals how Mohamed Ali made common cause through the press with Abul Kalam Azad the editor of the *Al-Hilal* and Zafar Ali Khan the editor of the *Zamindar* against the European aggrandisement of the Muslim world. It discusses his rapport with Maulana Abdul Bari of *Firingi Mahal* Lucknow in relation to the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Ka'aba* Society and his relation with Dr. Ansari who led the medical mission to Turkey during the Balkan war and an aide of Mohamed Ali, Hakim Ajamli Khan, Viqur-ul-Mulk former secretary, Aligarh College and Abul Kalam Azad. The chapter sheds light on how Mohamed Ali's relationship with M.K.Gandhi developed after release from his first imprisonment in 1919 in connection with the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement as also why his relationship with Gandhi broke up after his release from second internment in 1923 after the fiasco of the movement. The discussion explains why M.K.Gandhi did not utilise his influence to restrict the deteriorating communal situation as well as

why Mohamed Ali defected from the Indian National Congress, joined hands with M.A.Jinnah and attended the Round Table Conference for achieving India's independence severing relation with M.K.Gandhi.

The conclusion provides a summary of the forgoing chapters emphasising the salient features of Mohamed Ali's life and career. Beginning from his educational background, journalistic career, his political resonance, advocacy of Muslim interests being an early Muslim Leaguer, leading the *Khilafat* movement, presiding over a Congress session for fostering strong bond with M.K.Gandhi and then defecting from the Congress, but still keeping the cause of India's freedom aloft.

Notes and References

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CHAPTER-I

The formative phase: Birth and Education

Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar was born on 10 December 1878 in a prosperous and enlightened Muslim family in the Indian State of Rampur.¹ His paternal ancestors were originally the residents of Moradabad.² His grandfather Ali Baksh Khan, who was a man of means succeeded in securing a position in the administration of Yusuf Ali Khan Bahadur, the Nawab of Rampur, and became the right hand man.³ During the great Indian Revolt of 1857, he saved the English in Rohilakhand and Kumaon and actively helped the British in quelling the disturbances at Bareilly and Moradabad. In recognition of his assistance, he was awarded in 1859 the grant of a large rent free land in the Morabad district with an annual income of Rs.13,000.⁴ Ali Baksh's family continued to reap the rewards of loyalty to the British even after his death in 1867. Mohamed Ali's father Abdul Ali Khan also retained honourable posts in the military and civil administration of the state and was held in esteem and respected by all the high officials of his time. But it is a pity that his father died of cholera at the age of 34 on August 20, 1880 and thus the responsibility of bringing up the six children now rested with his widow, Abadi Bano Begum who was then 27 years of age. Mohamed Ali was not yet two years old and Shaukat Ali was not more than seven.⁵ It was indeed a very difficult task, for Abdul Ali left a debt of some Rs.30,000 because of his extravagance,⁶ and yet the Begum was able to cope with the new situation in spite of the fact that her own family lost everything earned through the generosity of Mughal Badshahs' for its involvement in the Mutiny against the British in 1857.

Mohamed Ali thus inherited the mixed legacy of collaboration and confrontation with the British, which he continued throughout his eventful public life.⁷

Mohamed Ali's mother Abadi Bano Begum, Bee Amman as she was addressed by her children was a remarkable women, intensely religious, and was free from prejudice and superstition.⁸ She was illiterate but learnt Urdu on her own initiative and imparted her sons "moral and spiritual training".⁹ Although having being devoid of any education Abadi Bano Begum was farsighted, wise and could realise the importance of modern education to accept the new challenge. So in spite of her financial stringency caused by the extravagance of her husband, she decided to send her children to school ignoring prevalent widespread Muslim prejudice against western education. Accordingly Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Mohamed Ali's eldest brother, was sent to the school at Bareilly for English education. This was indeed a bold step and when Shaukat Ali, elder brother of Mohamed Ali was to follow Zulfiqar, the uncle who was managing the property refused to sanction an allowance for his school expenses 'remarking in all sincerity, but also with all the bitterness characteristic of the times and more specially of the place, that one "infidel" was bad enough in a family'. But the determined mother secretly pawned her personal Jewellery and having adequate amount of money in her own hands packed off Shaukat Ali to Bareilly. Thus outwitted by a resolute women he got her trinkets released from pawn and paid for the schooling of both his nephews from the proceeds of her property. And now when Mohamed Ali was to follow the two elders he accepted it as inevitable .¹⁰

Mohamed Ali learned to read the Quran, absorbed the routine of the religious rituals practiced in his home and received traditional

education in the *maktab* (Private school)¹¹ and then joined a school which had recently been set up in Rampur for English education by Azimuddin Khan (General of Rampur forces). Having stayed for a few months here, he joined his brothers at a school in Bareilly. His stay at Bareilly was also brief for as soon as Shaukat Ali matriculated Mohamed Ali along with his brother left Bareilly in the summer of 1890 at the age of eleven and went to a School at Aligarh where his elder brother Zulfiqar was already there a couple of years earlier.¹²

The school at Aligarh where Mohamed Ali enrolled in started on 24 May 1875 while The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College which was modeled after Oxford and Cambridge was founded on 8 January 1877.¹³ The genius behind the founding of the institution Sir Syed Ahmed Khan considered modern education as the sole means for the regeneration of the Muslim community and regarded Anglo-Muslim rapprochement as a necessary condition for the improvement of its position in Indian society. ‘The wellbeing, he wrote, of the people of India in general and Muslims in particular lies under the benign rule of the English government. The college therefore followed an ardent and sustained pro-British policy.¹⁴ Sir Syed desired that its alumnus would not merely be educated and cultured men, but educated and cultured Mussalmans’.¹⁵ The Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College thus occupied a pivotal role in shaping the Muslims worthy and useful subjects of the British Crown, nurturing the students to enter into British Universities and training them for government employment. These were the objectives for which Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College was established.¹⁶

When Mohamed Ali came to the new institution its Principal was Theodre Beck, a Cambridge graduate¹⁷, who succeeded Mr. Henry

Siddons in 1883 and by contrast to his overbearing predecessor would mix freely with the students and took keen personal interest in their welfare.¹⁸ Syed Ahmed Khan the founder of the college, was hardly available to the students for his preoccupations with the Imperial Council in Simla and Calcutta and remained mostly away from Aligarh.¹⁹ The aspirations and priorities that Sayyid Ahmed deemed appropriate to his educational efforts were materialised by Beck and his Cambridge Cohorts.²⁰ They successfully organised the college and brought a particular subculture of British intellectual life to Aligarh.²¹

Students cultivated English habits and tastes, showed loyalty to the Crown by decorating their rooms with portraits of Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales and paid attention to the authorities repeated advice to shun political discussions. The matter was maintained carefully, even at the Siddons Union Club²² founded at the enthusiasm of principal Beck for the purpose of development of oratory and debating talents of the students organised mock political debates on tame affairs.²³

Since the British Muslim friendship and complete loyalty was the maxim of Aligarh College, the movement of the Indian National Congress faced in tense opposition from its founder Syed Ahmed Khan. His sentiment was skillfully capitalised by Principal Beck to draw response in its favour.²⁴ The Siddons Union Club also expressed its solidarity with the founder of the college and barred pro-Congress newspapers from its reading room,²⁵ the political motto of the college specially in rapport with the British was revealed in the following written rules of the Union Club.

“ No matter shall be discussed which raises the question of the permanence or stability of the British rule, nor any subject which

involves the necessity of the speakers ...taking up a disloyal or seditious attitude towards the British Government in its internal policy or external relations...”.²⁶

Such was the ambience of Aligarh College when Mohamed Ali stepped in and he adapted himself with the new environment comfortably. He spent eight years at Aligarh, four in the school and the remaining in the college.²⁷ The most memorable experience of Mohamed Ali's school days at Aligarh was his encounter with Maulana Shibli Numani, Professor of Arabic and Persian at Aligarh College.²⁸ Though never formally learnt at his feet Mohamed Ali used to accompany his two elder brothers after breakfast to attend Shibli's lectures on the exegesis of the Quran held in the principal Hall. He was the most eager and punctual school boy who out of his zeal would attend these classes from behind the door for it was meant for the college students. Once in absence of Shaukat Ali in his room he read Shibli's life of the Abbasid *Khalifah* Al-Mamun and surprised his brother by translating with astonishing accuracy some Arabic verses that he was reciting. When Shaukat Ali intimate this to Maulana Shibli, he called Mohamed Ali to his presence and asked few questions about the contents of his book Al-Mamun to which he answered correctly. He was then given an Urdu verse for composing a ghazal in that metre with that rhyme which he also did. Being impressed with his performance Maulana Shibli gave him permission to sit inside the Principal hall and listen to his lectures with the dignity of an undergrad.²⁹ This was undoubtedly a prestigious attainment for Mohamed Ali which left a lasting effect on his mind.

The above incident shows that Mohamed Ali possessed a sensitive sharp mind and prodigious memory. When he was in Rampur

school he made his mark as a writer, speaker and poet.³⁰ Now at Aligarh under the supervision and patronage of his elder brother Shaukat Ali, Mohamed Ali's zeal for extracurricular activities further accentuated.³¹ He was not very much interested in his text books and attached to academic activities. Speaking about his wisdom his friend Sir Mohammad Yakub³² remarks that, 'Rarely text book had been seen in his hands but generous nature had blessed him with a brilliant brain and intelligence'.³³ Worked only for a couple of months before examinations he passed regularly with credit and earned scholarship every year as one of the best boys in the class.³⁴ Another school mate Syed Sajjad Haidar Yildirim who later became a well-known Urdu novelist and knew Mohamed Ali said that, 'he was intelligent in the class room, but outside became quarrelsome in a good natured manner and was reputed to be a regular all-rounder, in his limited world Mohamed Ali was a dominant figure among the students of his own age.'³⁵

Mohamed Ali's four years educational career at college brought his mental and intellectual faculties into full development. His intellectual capacities were a wonder to all those around him. 'In the class-room he was intelligent and brilliant. In the student Union, he was the best speaker and forceful debater using plain and very impressive language for a young man of his age, a promising writer and a poet of standing. He gave full expression to his radical views in the college debates much to the embarrassment of the European staff of his Alma Mater as well as the British Government, which made him familiar as a revolutionary. He used to write for the college magazine and hold mushairas (Political Symposium). He was also a well-known figure in the Cricket and football teams in the college'.³⁶

Having such an all-round performance Mohamed Ali appeared for the graduation at the age of 19, and obtained his B.A. degree in 1898 securing top position among successful candidates in the Allahabad University, to which the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College at that time was affiliated. Such a brilliant result he would naturally desired to have secure ‘a nomination for the post of Subordinate Magistrate or Land Revenue Collector in some district’³⁷ as most of the students of his background cherished. But the unexpected success of Mohamed Ali had now raised for higher aspiration for him in Shaukat Ali’s mind.³⁸ The overriding consideration was a secure career, the much coveted Indian Civil Service. So he decided to send his brother to England and started collecting funds in this pursuit. His pain was greatly relieved when Nawab Muhammad Ishaq Khan who was the Chief Minister at Rampur awarded him a state scholarship for advanced studies in England.³⁹

Mohamed Ali reached London in September 1898 and stayed at 82 Bendesbury Villas, Kilburn for about two months where students from India preparing for the ICS examination would stay. Here the family members of T.W. Arnold, Mohamed Ali’s teacher in Aligarh and Theodore Beck the Principal of the College would pay frequent visit. Thus he got the scope of association with the English middle class society. Fazl-i-Husain,⁴⁰ a contemporary of Mohamed Ali who arrived in England about the same time to appear the ICS examination described him, as a jolly good fellow, very quick in making friends.⁴¹ They both spent ‘exceedingly pleasant evenings’ conversing with the Arnolds and Becks on literature, philosophy and political affairs.⁴²

On 11 October 1898 Mohamed Ali reached Oxford and joined Licoln’s College. He matriculated the next year. But his energies at Oxford were diffused on many interests rather than focused exclusively

on his academic activities. The consequence is that he obtained a second class in the Honours School of modern history.⁴³ He was later told by his tutor that he missed a first by a very narrow margin. They were very impressed with his exceptional potency, prudence and innovativeness and considered him eligible to execute the responsibility in an educational post in India. In his testimonial of 14 October, 1901, James Williams, Fellow and Law Lecturer of Lincoln College, who instructed Mohamed Ali in Roman and English Law observed that he possessed “great capacity for acquiring and remembering information and in addition has a considerable sense of style. He is very industrious and has made great progress since his admission to this college. It appears to me that he has just the qualifications necessary for a position in the educational service of India”.⁴⁴

The eulogistic appraisal of Mohamed Ali’s talent by his Oxford Professors gives the impression that he could be able to secure a place in the much-coveted Indian Civil Service. But “thanks to an English spring and a young man’s more or less foolish fancy”.⁴⁵ Divinity have assigned him for a nobler task than to be merely a member of the ICS. The result was that he failed in the Indian Civil Service examination. It was indeed a rude shock to Mohamed Ali. He was bitterly disappointed and so was his brother Shaukat Ali. For it was an end to all the expectation he had built around him. A degree in Modern History was the only premium for his investment. But despite all the frustrations Shaukat Ali accepted the reality and welcomed the return of his brother from England after four years in 1902.⁴⁶

On return to India Mohamed Ali’s choice of a career fell first on his Alma Mater, Aligarh, his first love and offered his services as a professor to his college in this regard. His application was also endorsed

by Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, the Secretary of the College. But the Principal, Sir, Theodre Morrison, with whom Mohamed Ali never got along as a student did not approve it. Though he recognised Mohamed Ali's abilities and qualifications but did not consider it safe to have a man of his independent character and radical thinking on the staff of the college.⁴⁷ This naturally hardened Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the European Principal.⁴⁸ He now turned to his native State where he became Chief Educational Officer. But he could not stay there long, because his effort to introduce educational reforms was opposed by jealous, intriguing and old fashioned officials. The ruler Nawab Hamid Ali Khan was also not in favour of initiating any reforms. Failing to accommodate himself with the environment Mohamed Ali resigned in disgust in 1902. He then took up a responsible but subordinate post in the Opium Department in Baroda, usually filled by men of his background.

The Gaekwad of Baroda Sayaji Rao (1875-1936) was a forward looking Prince and was favourably disposed towards Mohamed Ali's ideas which increased the revenue earnings of the department in the first four and half years of his service by more than seventeen lakhs of rupees which was also an increase by 20/5% on the previous receipts.⁴⁹ The land reform he introduced in the Nausari district was also remarkable. A system of land oppression was in vogue in the area for a long time, which was detrimental to the interest of the general masses and the poor aborigines in particular. Mohamed Ali submitted a report containing a detailed scheme in this regard. But interestingly while, he was advancing in this direction a deputation of the Parsi monopolists waited on Mohamed Ali and requested him not to proceed with his reforms. In reply to their request Mohamed Ali told them that he could not conceal tyranny by placing a cover over it once he came to know of it.⁵⁰ For his

dedication, diligence and devotion to work the Gaekwad considered Mohamed Ali as one on whom he can rely on the discharge of administrative responsibility efficiently. But his proximity to the Gaekwad and his enterprising reforms bred jealousy among officials which disgusted him very much. Despite all adversities and official engagements he contributed articles to newspapers and journals on topics of public interests and delivered speeches at conferences.⁵¹

Mohamed Ali served in Baroda until 1910. During this time his mind was never in a tranquil state. For person like him who was lively and fond of companionship through mushairas (poetical symposium) and mehfilis to disseminate intellectual excitement to others found no charm in the cheerless routine work at the Opium department coupled with unfamiliar cultural environment and hostility of colleagues and he lost interest in service.⁵² The expression of his feeling was best manifested in the complaint to the Gaekwad of Baroda where he says ‘I found that I differ from them in almost everything it was difficult if not impossible for me to be received by them as one of their own number.’⁵³

While this was the situation when Mohamed Ali was in Baroda, there appeared at one stage the prospect of a government job of Assistant Private Secretary to the Governor of Bombay and Assistant Directorship of Criminal intelligence. Mohamed Ali in a letter to his school friend Syed Mahfuz Ali in January 1910 wrote that, Sir Dunlop Smith and Sir Harold Stuart are trying their best to secure an appointment for him.⁵⁴ But the light of hope soon became feint when he was informed that ‘the expanses of an Indian Private Secretary would (not) be justified at present and that his ‘lack of experience of detective work was a bar for a post in Home Department’.⁵⁵ H.A. Stuart regretted for such a depressing reply but assured that if any opportunity turns up

he will not forget him. The fact was that although senior officials enjoyed Mohamed Ali's company and admired his talents they were cautious to push him forward for a government employment. The reason might be that they did not consider it safe to have a person in the administration of his independent character and radical views or that they did not want to appoint an Indian to such important government posts.⁵⁶

However, after this debacle Mohamed Ali made up his mind to quit Baroda and decided to serve his own community. The opportunity appeared when the controversy on Morley-Minto Reforms which dealt with Muslims in the Legislatures and the local bodies emerged. Mahomed Ali took keen interest in it and to advocate the cause of his community contemplated to embrace the profession of a journalist. But it was a serious task for a successful officer like him to relinquish the job ignoring the bright service prospects and entered the thorny field of journalism. He disguised his departure as two years leave without pay.⁵⁷ While still in Baroda he received tempting offers of higher administrative posts than he was serving from two other States.⁵⁸ But he was firm to carry out his resolve and hurriedly left for Calcutta the Capital of British India. On his arrival to Calcutta he received a bulky telegram containing the offer of ministerial responsibility of Jawra State forcibly backed by no less a person than Sir Michael O'Dwyer.⁵⁹ But he wished to avoid all temptation at the last moment and kept the telegram unopened until the first issue of his newspaper *The Comrade* was on sale in the streets of Calcutta.⁶⁰

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Chapter-II

Mohamed Ali's Career as a Journalist

Maulana Mohamed Ali was a writer of exceptional brilliance and was a firebrand orator of the first magnitude. He made his mark as a writer since his college days.¹ while Mohamed Ali was serving in Baroda State Civil Service his literary talents flourished into full play at the generosity of the Maharaj of Baroda who gave him full freedom to pursue his interest in journalism and politics.² It was during this time that Mohamed Ali despite his busy engagement in service started contributing articles frequently on topics of public interest in newspapers and journals. In 1904 he wrote an excellent address explaining the aims and objectives of the Muslim University which was read by him in the Bombay Presidency Mohammadan Educational Conference to which he was invited to preside.³ Two years later he was chosen by the old seasoned politicians of the community in laying the foundations of the All India Muslim League in 1906. His articles on Morely-Minto reforms which recognised the claims of the Muslims as a separate political entity created a very interesting discussion between him and the top-ranking Congress leader Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale.⁴ Subsequently he also wrote a series of articles. His reputation as a writer was soon established and he was approached by the editors of some leading newspapers and journals to write for them. Thus he started contributing articles to the columns of the *Times of India*. He wrote so well that I think, says his anonymous biographer, “no other Indian has ever been asked to write leading articles for the *Indian Spectator*” during the life time of its founder”.⁵ He also wrote for the *Hindustan Review*. His article “India Past and Present” published in that journal

bore his keen insight and sober judgment.⁶ The series of his articles published in the *Times of India* and the *Indian Spectator* was later published in the form of a brochure entitled *Thoughts on the Present Discontent*. The book was widely read and applauded both by thoughtful Indians and Englishmen, even it won the appreciation of Lord Minto the then Viceroy of India.⁷ Thus the writings and contributions to newspapers and journals and Mohamed Ali's keen interest gradually drifted him towards journalism. He now continued to think over the idea of starting an English weekly that would advocate Muslim view point in the context of prevalent Indian politics.⁸ After long consideration he resigned from Baroda State Civil Service and made his way to Calcutta the then Capital of British India, with the avowed object of starting an English weekly. But to start a newspaper was by no means an easy task. It required finances which Mohamed Ali did not had. According to Butler Ali Imam and the Aga Khan came forward to finance Mohamed Ali's initiative.⁹ His venture again face impediments by the press Act of 1910 which demanded hard cash security from every new-comer in the field of journalism. On this occasion Mohamed Ali was fortunate enough to have secured the services of an English printing press which was exempted from a security deposit because of its British ownership. Thus within two weeks of his arrival in Calcutta all the formalities and preliminary arrangements were accomplished, and the first issue of his English weekly *The Comrade* as he named it appeared in the Streets of Calcutta on 14 January 1911.¹⁰ Modeled on the *Spectator* of London, the distinct feature of the weekly was its thoughtful writing and pungent expression. It introduced a fine specimen of journalism with thorough editorials, good background articles, light literature and excellent summary of news. Extolling its appearance Mr. Sachchinanda Sinha wrote in *Hindustan Review* that "*The Comrade* has one of the best get-

up of weekly journals in India and its mechanical execution reflects credit on its enterprising conducts”.¹¹

The present study portrays Mohamed Ali’s aims, objectives and ethics of journalism, his art of writing, and contribution towards serving the interest of his community and country.

Mohamed Ali’s predisposition towards journalism emerged while he was a civilian in Baroda. The course of events that was going around him in the political atmosphere of India coupled with his irrepressible desire to play a part in the new prospect opening before his countrymen, aggravated his enthusiasm for journalism which prompted him to leave a secured job with a bright future. Besides he also forego several better opportunities and chose the thorny path of journalism. To him journalism was a means it was not a profession or career, but a mission. When the time came he was found willing and prepared to pay the price for working in a missionary zeal.¹²

In justification of his choice for journalism Mohamed Ali explained that, “The reason so irresistibly impelled me to take up journalism was that the affairs of my community just at that juncture made it the only avenue through which I could prove of any appreciable use to it while still earning a livelihood...It was more the secular affairs of my community that seemed to require this alteration in my plans. A great controversy which had gone on throughout the Morley-Minto Regime with regard to the claims of the Indian Musalmans to be represented as a community in the Legislatures and the local bodies of the country had just then culminated in the Reforms which recognised and to a great extent satisfied this claim. In this controversy I had taken my full share, and I felt that I should now assist my community in taking its proper share in the political life of the country...and prepare the

Musalmans to make their proper contribution to territorial patriotism without abating a jot of the fervour of their extra-territorial sympathies which is the quintessence of Islam”.¹³

His journalistic policy as he himself declared was that, “We are partisans of none, Comrades of all. We deeply feel the many dangers of increasing controversy between races and races, creeds and creeds, and earnestly desire a better understanding between the contending elements of the body politic of India”.¹⁴ Explaining his objectives Mohamed Ali observes in his autobiography that the people of India are deeply attached to religion and infinitely divided into communities, sects and denominations and the only way to transform this diversity into a unity is to create an inter communal federation as a political System for India. And to spell out the need for this sentiment he had bring out *The Comrade*.¹⁵

Thus through the publication of *The Comrade* Maulana Mohamed Ali emerged as a journalist as well as a nationalist leader. The ideal he chose for ‘*The Comrade*’ was taken from the famous lines of William Morris¹⁶ which appeared at the top of its title page in every issue: “Stand upright, speak thy thought, declare The truth thou hast, that all may share. Be bold, proclaim it everywhere. They only live who dare!”.¹⁷ Mohamed Ali lined up to this motto till the last day of his life.

The concept of his aim and purpose of journalism which he harbored in his mind and tried to execute can be comprehended from his own following extract:

“All that the journalist is expected to do is to see that his chronicle is accurate, and that the material he provides for the historian can be relied upon for the construction of the latter’s fabric.

A journalist has to appear not only as the spokesman but also as the leader of public opinion, not only to advocate the claims of the people but also to preach from the journalistic pulpit to his flock.

Our opinions, have been offered more as friendly suggestions to our readers than as sermons delivered from a great height. They have not been lectures administered as a superior person but tete-a-tete confidence exchanged between Comrades”.¹⁸

As editor of *The Comrade* Mohamed Ali laid great emphasis on journalistic ethics. In a reply to a letter from a person intending to start a newspaper he suggested the following code of ethics to which he himself used to pursue:

1. A newspaper should remain above personal interests. It should exercise moderation in both opposition and support and the opposition be confined to principles.
2. Cheap writing be avoided. It should demonstrate seriousness and sobriety.
3. The newspaper should aim at the betterment of its own nation but should see to it that it does not harm the other nations.
4. The newspaper should be free from all sectarian Controversy.
5. A newspaper as the word implies should devote bulk of the space to news and the news should be accurate and authentic.
6. The editorial ought to be based on deep research and study.¹⁹

Mohamed Ali’s aim of journalism was to serve as the spokesman of his people and to address the views, sentiments and aspirations of the masses to the British nation and the government both in India and Great Britain. Consequently he selected the alien tongue of the British as the

medium for communication of his ideas.²⁰ There was of course another reason for this choice. The English as a language alone could bring a certain degree of cohesiveness and served as a link among leaders of different communities having common western educational background and hailed from various regions represented diverse cultures and spoke different languages.²¹

The paper therefore, had to contain some features to make it as attractive as possible. So he used good printing, paid outside contributors on a lavish scale and included verse as well as short stories and humor which were unusual in Indian journalism.²² The steps he took to improve the standard of the paper compelled him to fix the rate of subscription rather higher for a weekly review in India. But this required additional financial assistance which Mohamed Ali lacked. For he did not have advertisements from any quarter.²³ Because advertisements were held by big business firms generally owned by European or pro-government capitalists who were not interested to support a forthright critic. Besides, he was also not prepared to accept help from any party or organisation at the cost of his journalistic policy.²⁴ In this circumstance the generous financial assistance he received from ‘a few of the most distinguished public men’²⁵ eased his management cost . He utilised this opportunity for the needs of advocacy and supplied the paper free of cost to vast numbers of men in authority in India and men wielding power or influence in Great Britain and reduced the rate of subscription for young Muslim students so that they can afford it.²⁶ Although Calcutta was at that time abound with papers of high caliber and stature commanding huge circulations, *The Comrade* in juxtaposition to such well-founded and successful newspapers and journals created its own sphere of phenomenal circulation. It became so influential and

prominent that English officials contrary to their traditional policy of paying less importance to Indian press were inclined to subscribe it either for its marked qualities or to intimate themselves of the Muslim mind and aspiration in particular and of the Indian outlook in general. Both the British and the Indians were keen to read the paper. Prominent among them were the then Viceroy Lord Hardinge and Lady Hardinge. Lord Hardinge would not spare his complimentary copy of *The Comrade* for the whole week. So lady Hardinge had to have another copy issued to her by paying subscription. Among other dignitaries noteworthy were Sir James Meston, Sir Charles Cleveland, Sir G.F.Wilson, Sir Lovat Fraser and other high-ups of British society anxiously waited to receive the paper as soon as it was published.²⁷ It is worthwhile to mention an interesting incident regarding the popularity of *The Comrade*. Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, a former finance member of the Viceroy's Executive Council while leaving India showed Mohamed Ali a volume of *The Comrade* and said that, that was the best present he could carry from India for his friend the Editor of the '*London Punch*' a paper of great literary repute in England whose style of writing bore such remarkable resemblance to Mohamed Ali's that it was difficult to distinguish between the two.²⁸ This event certainly portrays and proves the literary value of *The Comrade* in the official circle and Mohamed Ali's stature as a journalist. The popularity of *The Comrade* can well be assessed from the pen of Mohamed Ali, himself who writes, "... ... We have hitherto on our subscribers' list practically every member of the Government of India and Head of Local Government, and in most cases these eminent personages subscribe for *The Comrade* privately in addition to receiving Copies for use in their offices. We hope we are not snobbish in saying all this, but we would be

something less than a human if we did not feel grateful at this token of appreciation of a journal in its infancy”.²⁹

As *The Comrade* expanded its influence and name, Mohamed Ali’s reputation spread over Turkey, Egypt, Syria and almost every part of the Muslim world.³⁰ *The Comrade* gain such prominence that its forceful articles and editorials are reproduced extensively in the leading newspapers of Turkey and Egypt. *The al-Muyyid*, *al-Ilm* and *al-Liwa* of Egypt Published Arabic versions of *The Comrades* articles.³¹ The *Servet-e-Fanun* a highly respected illustrated weekly journal of Constantinople eulogising Mohamed Ali’s journalistic talents published a letter of appreciation in *The Comrade*. Which says, “*The Comrade* is published in English exclusively for the Islamic community. The contents of the paper, specially its printing and get-up, point to the progress of the Mohammadans of Calcutta have made in science and arts. We might say that even in our *Fay-Takht* (Capital) there does not exist a weekly containing such extensive and varied information. *The Comrade* is not an illustrated paper; it is purely a paper for study. The *Servet-e-Fanun* prays for the continuance of the success and prosperity of its Indian Moslem contemporary, and conveys from here its sentiments of cordiality”.³² Mohamed Ali’s advent in the field of journalism created a large following of him. *The Comrade* contributed considerably to the growth of political consciousness among the university educated Muslims and mould their outlook of domestic and world politics. So powerful was its appeal that the UP government reported, “No paper has so much influence with the students as *The Comrade* and no individual has the authority over them which is exercised by Mohamed Ali”.³³

Mohamed Ali was a gifted writer. He wrote just as he spoke. His keen analysis of the most important problems facing the country attracted nation-wide attention and created a broad readership.³⁴ The writing style of *The Comrade* was a fine and mellowed product of Mohamed Ali's years of study in both Oriental and Occidental Classics. So *The Comrade* was an excellent admixture imbued with the finest elements of Western literature and Islamic ideas. As a journalist Mohamed Ali was cautious about the sentiments of the country as well as of its rulers. He possessed a vast storage of knowledge and wielded the language so skillfully that it became an effective tool to shape his thoughts and feelings. He could transform any subject with amazing ability of approach and sureness of touch and write it with such an ease and freshness that never escaped to captivate the readers. He coined phrases, used allusions and anecdotes, related stories to illustrate points, quoted from Scriptures, history and poetry.³⁵

Mohamed Ali cared little for the prevalent journalistic traditions, rather he set his own style of writing. His articles were lengthy which were not in conformation with the existing fashion. Besides his engagement with extra-journalistic political activities he had so many things in his mind that he could not concise his writing. As a leader with a mission he wanted to inject his ideas deep into the hearts of his readers. So he used to elaborate his ideas to reveal the truth and did not leave the pen till he himself was satisfied with the exposition of the theme. He could see things dispassionately and never fear or hesitated to criticise the government as well as prominent Hindu or Muslim leaders. But his manner of criticism was sober and he used wordy discourse which made it convincing thought provoking and interesting.³⁶

Although Mohamed Ali did not attain any journalistic training prior to 1911 or claimed to have never made journalism his aim,³⁷ yet he was closely associated with his journal and his objective of serving his country and community. His ceaseless efforts and devotion to his ideal brought success to his venture. *The Comrade* thus appeared as a blazing star on the journalistic and literary firmament of India³⁸ and Mohamed Ali who made his debut in the domain of journalism now came right in the forefront as a journalist and a leader of the Muslim community.

Mohamed Ali's journalistic tenure in Calcutta lasted for twenty months. Within this time *The Comrade* had become the most significant and influential mouth piece of Muslim India. When the partition of Bengal was annulled the seat of Government of India was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. Mohamed Ali lost no time in shifting his office to the new Capital, and the last issue of *The Comrade* was published from Calcutta in September 14, 1912. For resumption of publication of *The Comrade* Mohamed Ali decided to establish a Printing press of his own, But since the Press Act was then in force³⁹ and the views expressed in his paper during the first year were generally moderate and conciliatory though frequently critical of Government measures he was not regarded as a political agitator, but then it disturbed the minds of the British officials.⁴⁰ Consequently the question of depositing a cash security as requires by the Act was raised again by determined authorities. But Mohamed Ali was not a person to give way so easily, making multifarious approaches with convincing argument with several high officials he was granted exemption and was allowed to continue his paper without depositing any security. *The Comrade* thus entered into its second phase appearing from Delhi on October, 12, 1912.⁴¹

As a journalist Mohamed Ali possessed impersonal view. Although *The Comrade* professed to ventilate the grievances, aims and aspirations of the Indian Muslims, yet the collective interests of all inhabiting India did not escaped his thought and attention and dwelt on those issues along with the news of contemporary affairs in different numbers of his paper.

On matters like Indianisation of services which was a national question, he wrote persistently in its support arguing that, “The service of the Sircar has always been the ambition of educated India, expecting certain Castes, and in spite of the stimulus given by British rule to the professions. India is still a land of services. To one Indian who understands the true significance of democracy and would like to see it prevail, there are lakhs whose hereditary leads them to desire that an indigenous bureaucracy should exist along with the foreign. It was this instinct which made India as a whole welcome the inclusion of an Indian in the Executive Government far more than the reform of Indian Legislatures...because without any power of moving resolutions on questions of general administration the councils performed only one of the functions of parliament, namely, legislation and in a country the problems of which are mostly administrative, the arrangement was like giving to the Indians the shadow when they had asked for substance”.⁴² He further remarks that, “The best remedy for bringing district administration nearer to the people is to through open the close preserves of the English men to educated Indians and admit them more freely into the Civil Service of the country...The educated classes are articulate and thinking portion of the community, who formulate the needs of the people as a whole. If the masses were to be educated they, too would think as the educated classes; and after all the hopes and

aspirations of educated Indians about the future of their people and their country indicate the only true and certain lines along which the social, moral and political advance of the teeming millions of India will be effected”.⁴³ Along with the advocacy to the cause of extensive admission of Indians in the Civil Service Mohamed Ali also discussed about due allotment of appointments among various communities in India. He suggested that a number of posts should be reserved for the Mussalmans and other communities such as the Rajputs, Sikh and Maharattas who were “the last to turn to the education which threw open the doors of offices to them and, are, therefore, in most provinces of India still behind the Brahmins. These should be reduced periodically in autocratic manner, so that the backward communities would have an incentive to improvement and yet not despair of getting a reasonable share of offices at present”.⁴⁴ He, therefore, appealed for a greater measure of constitutional reforms to bring about these changes.

Mohamed Ali was very blunt about the treatment meted out to Indians in South Africa. The South African authority passed the Gold Law in 1908 and Townships Amendment Act in 1909 the enforcement of which would ultimately resulted in the expulsion of Indians from South Africa. Hence Mohamed Ali raised question to the English authority that, “Are these the privileges of belonging to an Empire of freedom and justice for which the Indians are expected to feel a living kinship with those who are bearing a great imperial trust”.⁴⁵ For safeguarding the rights of Indians in South Africa he explicitly stated that, “If the Empire is at all a thing worth preserving, mutual tolerance and comprehension must find a place in all schemes of Imperialism. Surely it will not be preserved through the glorification of the little Africanism that loves to skulk behind racial ditches and embankments

raised by colour”.⁴⁶ He therefore, appealed to the sovereign for human treatment of Indians in South Africa since they are “fellow-subjects of ours and citizens of the British Empire”.⁴⁷

Expansion of education among Indians were another important issue that received due coverage in the pages of *The Comrade*. For the furtherance of learning Mohamed Ali laid great stress on the inclusion of more Indians in the Educational service. He observes in this regard that, “An Indian who had received an early training in an Indian college and school can realise the difficulties of his pupils far better than an English graduate of the same Universities. He is the necessary link between the ideal college in England and the actual college in India. It is, therefore, sad to reflect that he should have been neglected altogether when graduates of Scotch Universities were being pushed into the Indian Educational service and the failures of the teaching staffs of Private Colleges in India were being admitted into a Service which is supposed to be open only to “distinguished graduates” of the best British Universities”.⁴⁸

The Comrade was a great advocate of Hindu-Muslim Amity. Mohamed Ali realised that the growing estrangement between the Hindus and Muslims were not merely one of creed antagonism, it was a problem of political rivalry.⁴⁹ This originated with the recognition of the Muslims position as a separate entity in the legislature and the local bodies by the British government in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, for which Mohamed Ali had also worked along with other Muslim leaders. But Mohamed Ali’s advocacy of the legitimate rights and interests of his community did not engender from any narrowness or aggressiveness of mind. He sincerely wanted to maintain a harmonious rapport with the Hindus to create a united nationality. So he tried

through his writings to help his community realise that, “While endeavouring to satisfy the pressing needs of the present, which would inevitably bring it now and then into conflict with other elements in the body-politic, it should never lose sight of the prospect of the future when ultimately all communal interests had to be adjusted so as to harmonise with the paramount interests of India”.⁵⁰ He feelingly wrote on the need of Hindu Muslim unity in the columns of *The Comrade*, “But while providing for today, we must not forget tomorrow, It is our firm belief that if the Muslims or Hindus attempt to achieve success in opposition to or even without the co-operation of one another, they will not only fail, but fail ignominiously”. He further alluded that, “We may not create today the patriotic fervour and fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordat like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love marriage de convenance, honourably contracted and honourably maintained”.⁵¹ In this regard he further argued in another article ‘The Communal Patriot’ that, Hindus and Muslims honestly and explicitly must admit that the problem of many-sided aspects exists between them which should not intervene with the advancement of mutual respect. He wrote that, “None, however, need despair, as the influences of education, and the leveling, liberalising tendencies of the times are bound to succeed in creating political individuality out of the diversity of creed and race”.⁵² But he insists that communal sentiment and temper of the Hindus and Muslims has to be changed and interests of the two communities must be safeguarded identically before they can be welded into a united nationality.⁵³ Thus Mohamed Ali took a nationalist stand in the hope that the two major communities of the subcontinent both retaining their distinct identity could be united into a single people

working for a common political ideal that is the cause of winning freedom.⁵⁴

When Mohamed Ali launched *The Comrade* he had no animosity against the government. In fact he was motivated by the desire to promote good will and co-operation and remove misunderstandings with the ruling class. In his correspondence with Lord Meston, the Lieutenant Governor of UP, he assured of his 'anxious desire' to co-operate with him and other well-wishers of his country and community in working for their progress.⁵⁵ He wrote that, "I have every confidence that, I can satisfy Your Honour that my humble contribution to the work before us is in no way detrimental to the best interests of government, the country and the Muslim community".⁵⁶ Mohamed Ali was not oblivious of the good that was to accrue from the 'beneficent contact' with English administration, its rule of law and Western education.⁵⁷ His main object was to prepare the Indians with the assistance of the British to attain their due place as a self-governing unit in the British Commonwealth.⁵⁸

From the beginning the approach of *The Comrade* was therefore, mild, temperate and sober. But this stance was short lived and things did not happen as Mohamed Ali anticipated.⁵⁹ As time progressed certain developments occurred both in India and abroad to which a sensitive spirited man like Mohamed Ali could not turn a blind eye and was obliged to change his view which was reflected in the pages of *The Comrade* that cost him the grace of the official circle which he once enjoyed.⁶⁰

The change in the political atmosphere that initially caused uneasiness among Indian Muslims was the concession of the British government to the terrorist agitation of the Hindus of Bengal unsettling the 'Settled fact' of the partition of Bengal which for the first time had

given to the East Bengal Muslims the advantage of majority rights. Muslims were shocked at the government decision of the annulment of Bengal partition. They felt betrayed and abandoned. Mohamed Ali took moderate stance on the issue for he wanted to avoid any undesirable conflict with the authorities which might impede his mission.⁶¹ But no doubt his faith was shaken over undoing of the partition. His feeling on the matter can be assessed from his remark made in *The Comrade* on the 3 February issue of 1912, ‘agitation is acknowledged by the government to be the only effective method of converting them’.⁶² In his reaction to revocation of the partition he later said that, “The Muslims of Eastern Bengal had been made to fight the battle of their rulers, against their neighbours, and now that it was no longer convenient for the rulers to continue the fight, they had made their own peace with all convenient speed, and had left the Muslims to the mercy of those against whom they had been used as auxiliaries. It would be hard to discover in history a more ignoble instance of betrayed in which “loyalty” has been rewarded with deprivation of recently recovered rights, and “Contentment” has been punished as the worst of crimes”.⁶³

Despite being disappointed Mohamed Ali advised the Muslims of India to accept the decision of the government. To pacify the grievances *The Comrade* suggested various concessions and ‘Some Security’ for the Muslims of Bengal in the Provincial and Imperial Legislatures and for all government posts in the ‘gift’ of the Bengal government. “All these concessions should be announced immediately...The government must have learnt from the agitation against the partition that the longer the wrong, real or supposed, remains unredressed the more difficult becomes the redress...He who gives at once gives twice, and we trust the government will give at once’.⁶⁴

In 1911 when Mohamed Ali made his first bow in the domain of journalism he mentioned in his autobiography that, “I did not expect that any but a small fraction of my attention and energies would be attracted by Muslim politics outside the confines of mine own country”.⁶⁵ But the situation of the Muslim world proved fateful at that time. The new government of Turkey, Persia and Morocco were experiencing tumultuous situations.⁶⁶ The expansion of French protectorates over Morocco conspiring with Britain, the Anglo-Russian secret deal to divide Persia and Turkey, the Italian seizure of Tripoli in 1911 and still sadder experience in the autumn of 1912 the Balkan war.⁶⁷ Muslims of India were greatly perturbed by the cumulative effect of rapid losses of Turkey’s authority.⁶⁸ They expressed indignation and surprised at the determined silence of the European powers.⁶⁹ They began to consider these as the outcome of animosity of Christianity towards Islam.⁷⁰ All these events disillusioned Mohamed Ali and greatly influenced his outlook with regard to international morality.⁷¹ As a result he could not remain reluctant in the political affairs of the Muslim world. His conscience was so moved by these developments that he now began to take keen interest in the treatment perpetrated to the Muslim states by the European powers in general and Britain in particular, and began to feel akin to and express sympathy towards his co-religionist of Turkey which symbolised the temporal and spiritual glory of Islam.⁷² He wrote persistently in the editorials of *The Comrade* and published war special, war supplements, exposing the hostile attitude of Britain and its European Allies. His uneasy state of mind was revealed in one of the editorial of 8 July, 1911 concerning the annexation of Morocco he wrote, “The last claim of France is the ‘approval of the civilised world’ and the ‘cordial sympathies’ of Russia and Great Britain. So far as the sympathies of Great Britain are concerned it is well known that a blank

cheque was given to France fully seven years ago, and no matter what she may do, great Britain, in consideration of a free hand in Egypt, would have nothing but ‘cordial sympathy’ with France”.⁷³ In another one he wrote, “it is surprising that Powers known as civilised should attempt to stay the hand of the Turk when all that he is doing is to reform his Empire on the lines of Europe itself”.⁷⁴ Despite England’s unfavourable attitude towards Turkey Mohamed Ali longed for desirable arrangement between Britain and the Muslim countries. Assuring confidently the spirit and devotion of the Indian Muslims towards the British administration and unambiguously asserted what many Muslims expected the government to do he wrote in *The Comrade* that, “One of the ideals which the Indian Mohammadans have cherished for long is that the British Government, which rules over the largest number of Mussalman subjects, should be bound in an alliance with Mohammadan powers and Kingdoms so that their own territorial loyalty and extra territorial patriotism should work in the same direction”.⁷⁵ But the appeal fall on deaf ears and Britain did nothing to change its policy. Mohamed Ali was disappointed and wrote in utter despair in *The Comrade* that, “it was futile to rely on anything else but their own God and the strength that He may chose to grant them”.⁷⁶

The indolence of Britain towards the aggression of other European Powers in the Muslim world thus widened the estrangement between the British authorities and the Indian Muslims. Moreover, the candour and courage with which Mohamed Ali being a spokesman of a ‘subject race’ was giving vent to his feelings was also not received favourably by the British officials.⁷⁷ In this hour of frustration Mohamed Ali engaged himself in drawing sympathy and forming consensus of Indian Muslim opinion projecting the critical plight of the Turks in the

Balkan war. *The Comrade* issued an appeal for funds to the public to which response was spontaneous, contributions came pouring in from the readers into the office of *The Comrade*.⁷⁸ The amount of collection was also published in *The Comrade* to inspire the effort. Mohamed Ali's feeling for Turkey as the spearhead of the Muslim world was so deeply stirred that he organised a special Medical Mission headed by eminent physician Dr. M.A. Ansari and manned by some qualified doctors, male nurses and some prominent Aligarh students to go to Turkey and treat the wounded Turkish soldiers.⁷⁹ Although it was a gesture of fraternal good-will on the part of the Indian Muslims, it no doubt brought them closer to the Muslim world.

Muhammed Ali also popularised through his journalism the movement for a Muslim University. Mohamed Ali loved his Alma Mater the Aligarh College very dearly and earnestly wanted to uplift its position. The founder of the college Sir Syed Ahmed Khan also desired to establish a Muslim University.⁸⁰ Ever since the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan an effort to raise the Aligarh College to the status of a university was in progress. The government in this venture of the Muslims stipulated that a sum of Rs. 30 lakhs should be collected before the grant of the charter for the establishment of the university. A Muslim University Foundation Committee was formed to collect the required amount of money. But when the money was collected the Committee encountered serious difficulties with the government,⁸¹ because the Constitution Committee of the proposed University wanted to have the right to affiliate colleges all over India. But the Education Department grant permission to affiliate those Muslim institutions which falls within the confines of Aligarh. The University Foundation Committee did not

agree to this proposal and the scheme for a Muslim University at Aligarh was dropped in August, 1912.⁸²

Mohamed Ali was very disappointed at the decision of the Government. For he was closely associated with the activities of the establishment of the University and utilised his journalistic maneuver to motivate people and promote the cause of raising funds on which the fate of the whole undertaking ultimately depended.⁸³ His writings in *The Comrade* reveals his thoughts and feelings for establishing a Muslim University. Portraying the significance and necessity of a university for the Muslims he wrote in *The Comrade* that, “It need hardly be said that the university is the greatest need of the Mussalmans, at the present time. They want a centre for the unification and development of thought for the growth of ideals and social aim. They want a training ground for a character. Above all they want to evolve a type of Culture which would feed them for a full participation in the growing synthesis of mankind without losing their individuality”.⁸⁴

On the whole he wanted a centralised and autonomous system of Muslim education which would help uniting the Indian Muslims retaining their own identity and the right to affiliate institutions outside Aligarh would certainly give the University an all India character without which “the main object of the University movement falls to the ground”.⁸⁵ But the disapproval of the Muslim University scheme by the government shattered Mohamed Ali’s cherished dream. Criticising the government in anguish he wrote in *The Comrade*, “We do not know what had occupied the Secretary of State for so long because the change of Capital and modification of the partition were clearly such unimportant matter that so far as can be judge from Lord Crewe’s feeble echo of the Government of India’s Despatch it could have not taken the

Secretary of State long to have said “yes” to everything which the eight “Patriot Kings” of Simla had decided to do. The famous Despatch left India on the 25 August, and his Lordship said “Amen” to it officially on the 1st of November. The Conference between the Constitution Committee and the Department of Education took place towards the end of September, and the proceedings of that Conference must have been communicated to the Secretary of State early in October. The Marquis of Crewe, then had several weeks, before he came out to India, wherein to consider the Constitution drafted by the Committee, and had ample opportunity, while he was here, to discuss any details to which he took objection, But even after his departure from India it was not till the beginning of March that he communicated his objections to the Government of India”.⁸⁶

Thus when the rejection of the University scheme and events in Balkan caused much agony among the Muslims another incident which throbbled Mohamed Ali was the Cawnpore mosque affairs, which again entangled him in argument with the government. On 3 August 1913, a serious riot occurred following the demolition of a platform adjoin a mosque by the municipality. The police tried to control the angry mob and the situation was brought under control at the cost of lives of several rioters. This created much furor among the Muslims. Mohamed Ali visited the scene with other Muslim leaders, but was alleged by the authority that he used the incident to foment agitation against the government.⁸⁷ However, the accusation of incitement from outside appears ill founded. Because, the incident was a sentimental affair which attached the sanctity of a mosque where Muslims perform their public prayer. It is the focus of Muslim devotion and epitome of Muslim

life. So it was not surprising that many Muslims reacted violently to the news of the demolition of the portion of a mosque.⁸⁸ The incident, therefore, did not remain Cawnpore's local affair it became a Muslim affair.

Erstwhile when Mohamed Ali heard of the proposed road extension scheme by demolishing a portion of a mosque he tried to persuade the authority to look for a peaceful solution. Because he had personal and very amicable relations with Sir James Meston the Lieutenant Governor of the united Provinces.⁸⁹ So when the agitation was fomenting Mohamed Ali instead of using his powerful journalistic weapon entered into Private Correspondence with Lord Meston in the form of telegram and letter. The telegrams and letters were published in *The Comrade*. In one such telegram Mohamed Ali intimated Lord Meston that, "Large number of Cawnpore Moslem residents ask me to support their contention that portion of mosque in Machhli Bazar wanted by Municipal Chairman for extending new A.B.Road be not demolished. Learn that your Honour memorialised. If reply favourable I need not move in the matter. Could your honour inform me of decision? Great feeling prevails in Cawnpore. Am anxious to allay such excitement specially at present juncture".⁹⁰

It appears from above telegram that contrary to intelligence report Mohamed Ali was straining for a peaceful solution and was in touch with the authorities concerned.⁹¹

In his reply to Mohamed Ali Lord Meston maintained that, "Your telegram about Cawnpore mosque. Orders have already issued on Memorial objections. I have given matter my best personal consideration and believe grievance to be largely imaginary. Building to be demolished in bathing enclosure and not part of sacred building is

proved by the fact that Mohammadans have been seen to enter it wearing their shows. Every effort will be made to replace this convenience is suitable spot, but alignment of road cannot be diverted and mosque itself will be fully respected".⁹² To Lord Meston's unbending attitude Mohamed Ali retorted that, "No part of land endowed for any purpose of mosque may be transferred under Islamic law in any way. Part used for ablutions always considered integral portion of a mosque".⁹³ He also suggested to consult with Muslim ulema and lawyers on the question that whether any land or building dedicated to God could be sold or transferred in any other way, before further action is taken.⁹⁴ But Lord Meston remained adamant in his decision. Failing to persuade Lord Meston to reverse his decision Mohamed Ali now resorted to his journalistic skill and put up the issue on the pages of *The Comrade*. When the riot was quelled by police guns that cost lives of the rioters, *The Comrade* splashed in the Cawnpore mosque incident across its columns, reveling in every detail from the screams of the dying to the blood-bespattered pavement.⁹⁵ The Viceroy sensed trouble and to prevent further escalation of the problem arrived at a compromise and declare to rebuild the demolish portion of the mosque in the same position as before and the problem was thus subsided.⁹⁶

While *The Comrade* thus made its voyage successfully in the field of journalism dealing with all important issues of the time and intimating the government about the feelings of the Muslims as a mouthpiece of their opinion, Mohamed Ali contemplated to reach a wider audience by launching an Urdu daily. For *The Comrade* was an English weekly and its appeal was confined to the English learned section. Explaining the subject to bring out an Urdu newspaper from Delhi Mohamed Ali wrote in *The Comrade* on 14 September, 1912 that,

“We must educate the masses , make them useful citizens.....Our vanguard must not be cut off from the main body. It is a sad plight if the sheep remain without a shepherd, but it is sadder still if the shepherd be without sheep. To teach the masses we must use their own language.”⁹⁷ The reason behind such decision was that in self-governing countries, the two purposes of journalism namely, the education of public opinion and advocacy of people’s claims were identical. Because the people being the ruler and they use the same language. But in India the situation was different. The government of India was in the real sense a foreign government and it was by no means a people’s government. Under these circumstances it was not possible for a single paper to serve both the purposes of journalism. *The Comrade* though serve the purpose of the advocate of the people, its role as an educator of public opinion was limited.⁹⁸

It was indeed a bold step by Mohamed Ali. Because several other Urdu papers were also in circulation at that time among which *Al-Hilal* of Calcutta edited by Abul Kalam Azad and *Zamindar* of Lahore edited by Zafar Ali Khan were prominent. So it was not so an easy task to compete with these Well-established newspapers. But Mohamed Ali in his own inimitable way successfully carved out a place among them. He introduced a new Pattern of printing in Urdu journalism by replacing lithography to type,⁹⁹ which no Urdu daily had adopted till that time. Types were imported from Bairut,¹⁰⁰ and the first issue of the Urdu daily entitled *The Hamdard* (sympathiser) came out in new form on 13 June 1913.¹⁰¹

Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal applauded Mohamed Ali for his enterprise. He sent an encouraging message and used to contribute to the paper. The paper also contained leading articles from Mohamed Ali and

other interesting features like letters from Muslim countries which was captioned as “*Kashkol*” (container).¹⁰² Like *The Comrade*, *The Hamdard* had also brought new trend in the field of Urdu journalism. Until then Urdu journalism dealt primarily with political concerns and literary affairs gets secondary importance. But the appearance of *The Hamdard* challenged the pattern and suitably blend both producing an impressive synthesis. The writings in *The Hamdard* were political in character imbued with literary beauty.¹⁰³ Mohamed Ali introduced the method of editorial board meetings. He used to discuss almost all the points with his sub-editors every evening in the Chief Editors room, where animated discussions were held and everyone was free to express what he thought right. This is how the quality of writing in *The Hamdard* was maintained.¹⁰⁴ *The Hamdard* was intended to educate the people in public affairs whereas *The Comrade* had to be their spokesman as well and to act as a medium between them and their rulers.¹⁰⁵ Mohamed Ali decided to maintain the standard and dignity of the Urdu paper in line with *The Comrade*, but cautiously avoided discussions of higher political matters which appeared in *The Comrade*. He was determined that the readers of *The Hamdard* will not be allowed to overhear what passed between *The Comrade* and the government in power in England¹⁰⁶ to eschew the spread of undesirable excitement among the general people without any compensating effect on the government.¹⁰⁷

When at long last *The Hamdard* was issued, the Balkan war was all but over and the circulation of the daily despite its high standard did not increase even after a year of its publication as Mohamed Ali expected. So the experiment he made with typography proved a failure. Because on the one hand, required amount of type could not be imported as and when desired and the general Urdu readers were not familiar with

printing in type on the other. Besides the cost of printing also increased considerably in comparison to lithography. So the editorial staff of *The Hamdard* insisted Mohamed Ali to change the printing system.¹⁰⁸ Mohamed Ali therefore purchased three machines for lithographing *The Hamdard* and it appeared in the new form like the rest of the existing papers in Urdu language. The change proved fructuous. The circulation of *The Hamdard* increased by leaps and bounds leaving the other contemporary leading Urdu dailies far behind and this increases Mohamed Ali's popularity among the masses.¹⁰⁹

In his journalistic venture Mohamed Ali's received the assistance of some of the Old Boys'. Raja Ghulam Husain served as sub-editor of *The Comrade* from 1911 to 1914, Ziauddin Ahmed Barni, sub-editor of *The Hamdard* for twenty five months, Syed Jalib Dehlavi and Qazi Abdul Ghaffar also served in the same capacity. The diligence and sincerity of these men enabled Mohamed Ali to become a successful editor.¹¹⁰

Mohamed Ali's journalistic activities was however, not treated favourably by the British authorities for his extra-territorial sympathies and pro-Turkish proclivities. In 1913 he first came into open confrontation with the official world for publishing a pamphlet in *The Comrade* entitled 'Come Over into Macedonia and Help Us' which he received along with several other Indian Muslims from Turkey. The pamphlet depicted the atrocities executed by the Balkan Allies in Macidonia and appealed to Britain for help.¹¹¹ Though *The Comrade* advocated the cause of Indian Muslims and fought for the rights and legitimate demands of the Indians as a whole and was able to reach successfully in the hand of almost every responsible member of the ruling class, yet the British officials were not pleased with its tone and

was looking for a plea to gag its voice. The recent publication gave them that opportunity. The government declared the forfeiture of the pamphlet. Mohamed Ali, who during his sojourn in England imbibed the idea of expression of free thought could not meekly submit to this immoral Act. And to keep the freedom of the press aloft he decided to face the government by taking up the issue for the first time to the High Court of Calcutta. The grievances of the Indian journalist's against the hateful and hasty piece of Legislation, the Indian Press Act of 1910 were heard by a judicial body in the Apex court of the country.¹¹²

The unanimous judgement of the special Bench of the High Court of Bengal condemn the Legislation as quite unworthy of a civilised government. Sir Lawrence Jenkins the Chief Justice in course of his judgement commented on the Act in the following words, "The language of the section is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. It is difficult to see what lengths the operation of this section might not be plainly extended by an ingenious mind".¹¹³

In the concluding remark of the judgement the Chief Justice wrote: '...One word and that is to the motive of the Present application. The applicant, Mr. Mohamed Ali is by no means unknown in India; he is a journalist of position and repute. Though he is not an accused, he tells us that he regards himself as under the Stigma which (he declares) must attach to any journalist who has come under the operation of an Act directed, primarily at any rate, against a criminal movement marked by outrages which so shocked the public sentiments as to call for this drastic legislation. But even if he has not succeeded in proving the negative that fate and the law have thrown in his way, at list his application has not been wholly in vain. The Advocate General representing the government, has publicly announced that Mr.

Mohamed Ali's forfeited pamphlet is not, in his opinion, a seditious libel, and, indeed, that he attributes no criminal offences to Mr. Mohamed Ali; he was even willing to concede and believe he was acting in the highest interests of humanity and civilisation. In this, I think, the Advocate General made no admission which it was not proper for him to make. Mr. Mohamed Ali then lost his book, but he has retained his character: and he is free from the stigma that he apprehended. And this doubtless will be some consolation to him when we dismiss, as we must, his Present application".¹¹⁴

The judgment caused great discomfiture in the official circle. The Viceroy felt so constrained about the verdict that in a letter to the Secretary of State he wrote:

"I could hardly believe that the Chief Justice would dare to assume the responsibility of the High Court deciding that the dissemination of such a pamphlet could do no harm in the Country. The Chief Justice admitted in his judgement that he had no power to interfere and that the Government of India was the best judge as to what was good for the country, but nevertheless he went into a long disquisition on the merits of the case, of course in a sense hostile to the Government, and finally gave Mohamrd Ali a pat on the back. This judgement has caused great indignation amongst all sensible people".¹¹⁵

This judgement was certainly a victory for Mohamed Ali and the Indian Press as well. It was significant because it proved that the law was flawed and its authors and Sponsors were also pilloried for the first time in a Court of Law in India.¹¹⁶

However, the sequel of this case was that an immediate deposit of the maximum amount of security was demanded by the government.

Mohamed Ali was then absent in Calcutta and the entire amount was deposited by his lawyers on their own responsibility who wanted the press moving and keep up his journalistic venture.¹¹⁷

The Comrade resumes its publication again but its journey was impeded by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, on account of publishing an article entitled 'The Choice of the Turks'. The article was a response to an editorial published in the *Times of London* under the same caption. The editorial of *The Times* in a provocative manner writes:

“Let the Turks under be no delusion. They stand at the parting of ways. If they elect for war at the bidding of Germany, they will be staking their existence as a State. The powers of triple Entente have no quarrel with them”. It further added, “The three powers which can hurt her must, will not spare, if she compels them to treat her as enemy. It is for her to bear in mind before she commits herself what prospect she would have of resisting them in Asia Minor, in Arabia and in Europe. In all these regions she lies opens to their attacks; in none of them can she hope for effective aid from Germany or from her hereditary foes in Austria-Hungary. If she deliberately provokes the Entents Powers they will take up the challenge, and their victory will mean the wiping out of the Ottoman Empire from the States of the world”.¹¹⁸

The approach of the editorial of *The Times* suggests that its aim was to force Turkey by way of intimidation and threatening to make her choice out of two alternations, either support the Allies or be considered as enemy. Mohamed Ali whose heart now beat in unison with the Turks regarding it humiliating and contemptuous wrote forceful and befitting reply to the Times editorial, which was published in *The Comrade* on September 26, 1914. It was written under unusual situation. Mohamed

Ali was then bed-ridden owing to diabetic trouble. Sitting up for forty hours foregoing sleep and rest and almost all food, except some cups of very strong coffee, Mohamed Ali contributed the most splendid features of his journalistic pursuit in twenty fateful columns.¹¹⁹

In writing the article Mohamed Ali mentioned in his autobiography that, he had surveyed the whole situation and had rapidly sketched the history of Turkey's relations with various European Powers, and particularly with England with a view to contrast the old friendly attitude, and its undoubted advantages to the two Powers one of whom had at its head a ruler who was the chief of the Faithful, and the Successor of their Prophet, while the other numbered far the largest Muslim population as members of its far-flung Empire.¹²⁰

After reviewing the whole situation Mohamed Ali realised that Turkey was in dire need of peace. For she has just get over the Balkan wounds and now in her own interest she should maintain strictest neutrality in the present struggle. He had also given this advice in private to Turkish statesman, Talaat Bey, diplomat prince Said Halim and Enver Pasha the Turkish war minister.¹²¹

In this article Mohamed Ali cautioned Turkey that before making her choice she should carefully examine all the implications and ensure that before entering into a quarrel "They must not come out of it till the claims of honour and self-interest are satisfied".¹²² They should fight their own battles only and not those of another. Mohamed Ali observed that if Turkey could not maintain her neutrality and must enter this terrible business of warfare, then let her make sure, that 'the quarrel is her own'.¹²³ With regard to determining its own stance Mohamed Ali emphasised that Turkey "must exercise her own judgement and surrender it to none. If she chooses badly the sufferings will be entirely

hers, though the sorrow will be ours also".¹²⁴ For Indian Muslims are the sympathisers of Turkey.

While *The Times* condemned Turkey for damaging its good will in England, Mohamed Ali instead hold British foreign policy responsible for the deplorable estrangement and also denounce the stance of the European Powers in the Balkan war. Reprimanding *The Times* he wrote, "From every source available to us we have ascertained that, as every sane person would do, the Turk desires nothing better than peace for at least a decade. If ever war was sudden, it was the Balkan war. If ever was found a nation wholly unprepared it was the Turks in October 1910. If ever war was absolutely unrighteous it was the one waged by the Balkan Allies. If ever the sword was thrust into a people's hands it was thrust into the hands of the Osmanlis on that occasion. If ever war was waged brutally it was waged by the robber hands of the Balkans whether they were the Komitadjis or formed part of the regular troops of the Allies. If ever a treaty was treated as a mere 'Scrap of paper' it was the treaty of Berlin. And if ever a judge was guilty of gross partiality it was the Powers to whom Turkey appealed repeatedly in her need and appealed invariably in vain".¹²⁵

Mohamed Ali bluntly presented his views in his article concerning the position of the European Powers. He wrote that, 'During the Balkan war French President's attitude as premier was entirely hostile to Turkey. France besides bartering away Turkey's suzerainty in Egypt for a free hand in Morocco and herself usurping Tunis, has been attaching fresh claims every day in Syria. ... Her occupation of Tunisia and declaration of French protectorate over it have followed the most approved European models of 'peaceful penetration'.¹²⁶ And against Russia the Turks have innumerable grievances. "Every revolt against

Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor has been instigated by Russia, and the object has not been the protection of small nationalities as in case of Belgium today, but to detach them from Turkey as her own destined prey".¹²⁷

As regards the British attitude towards Turkey Mohamed Ali observed that, "in the Crimean war and subsequently the Berlin Congress at the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish war, when Cyprus was leased to England, are only too well known. Equally well known are the facts about Egypt and the British occupation, its original purpose and the after-thoughts that grew out of England's duty as the bailiff of Europe".¹²⁸ He goes on to say that, "England should in all conscience be satisfied with a Permanent right of way through Egypt. But to come as friends of the owner of the land and to protect him from unruly tenants, and then not to be satisfied even with the right of way through his fields but to claim a practical ownership is neither friendly nor honourable. Let England have the *iter*, but the *dominium* must remain with Turkey and the usufruct with the Khedive. Will not England be satisfied with the easement?"¹²⁹

Although Mohamed Ali in his article showed sympathy with the sufferings of Turkey he did not also forget to caution that, the Turks must not be tempted by the blandishments of those opposed to England and her Allies.¹³⁰ He scrupulously maintained that, whatever the present state of Anglo-Turkish relations, "We desire that instead of there being no trace of a possibility of Turkey throwing in her lot with the English there should at least be no trace of the possibility of her throwing in her lot with the enemies of England".¹³¹

In this crux of situation the attitude of the Indian Muslims as mentioned by Mohamed Ali in his article was that, "Sir Syed Ahmed's

clean-cut logic must come to the rescue of everyone who finds his situation distressing. He said in his own inimitable way: ‘Our attitude towards the Government established in this country must be governed only by one consideration-the attitude of that Government towards ourselves’. Every other consideration is foreign to the subject and whether we fight the Turks or the Russians, our services we must place at the disposal of our Government”.¹³²

In spite of the provocation offered by *The Times* of London Mohamed Ali after careful analysis draw the conclusion of his article that, ‘All truly loyal people have closed the chapter of civic controversy’ and should wait for a more reasonable occasion for redress of their grievances, ‘for concessions are asked for and accepted in peace’.¹³³

The British authorities were in no mood to listen patiently such advocacy. They became very annoyed and considered the approach of *The Comrade* offensive. Viceroy Lord Hardinge in a letter to the Secretary of State wrote on 21 October 1914 that the tone of *The Comrade* continues to be extremely bad and he was enquiring into the possibilities of the confiscation of its securities. And a week later the Viceroy reported referring to his legal advisers that there is sufficient ground for forfeiture of the security of Mohamed Ali’s press. The government promptly came down with a heavy hand, banned the article and the security of *The Comrade* was declared forfeited in November 1914, the very day England declared war on Turkey. The security of *The Hamdard* was also forfeited although it was not to blame in any way. An enhanced security as heavy as five times was demanded which would be declared lost in the event of second offence along with additional monetary security.¹³⁴ However, the last issue of *The Comrade*

appeared on 7th November 1914 reiterated Mohamed Ali's journalistic ethics with a classic farewell message:

“We began our career with the words of hope and courage... Whatever truth we had, we have declared freely and shared it with all. Everywhere that we could, we have proclaimed it, and even if truth has not always been proclaimed from house-tops, untruth has not been even whispered. No; we shall not die in in the real sense of life and death. We have lived because we have dared and we shall still dare and we shall still live”.¹³⁵

It is interesting to note that while Mohamed Ali's article was opposed by the Government of India, it received favourable reviews by several prominent English newspaper, like *The Morning Post* and *The Daily Telegraph* and was highly appreciated by *The New Statesman* which also write an article denouncing the forfeiture.¹³⁶ The article was also applauded by Mohamed Ali's friends and readers. One of his friend C.F. Andrews remarked that, the article contained nothing but truth, for which he should not have been punished. And whatever may be the case with bureaucrats, ordinary people with some common-sense would not see the article in that light, which had no tendency by way of inference or suggestion to excite disaffection towards His Majesty and the government established by law in British India.¹³⁷

In this state of affairs Mohamed Ali once again brought the matter to the High Court of Calcutta to secure justice. But this time Sir Lawrence Jenkins and other judges dismiss the case on the ground that they had no jurisdiction.¹³⁸ He then took the case to the High Court of Lahore at the advise of Lord Sinha a former member of the Viceroy's executive Council. But it was of no avail. After losing the cases in Calcutta and Lahore Mohamed Ali decided to lodge an appeal with the

Privy Council. But before that he was interned on 15 May 1915 under the Defense of India Act.

The Comrade and *The Hamdard* did not reappear before 1923 when Mohamed Ali was finally released after serving his second imprisonment for his alleged role in the movement led against the dismemberment of the Turkish *Khilafat* by the Allies in general and Britain in particular. By now Mohamed Ali became a full-fledged recognised leader not only of the Muslims but of the whole of India also. He was unanimously elected to preside over the annual session of the Indian National Congress and became the most popular leader of the time.

The Comrade reappeared on 31 October 1924 and *The Hamdard* on 8 November of the same year.¹³⁹ But Mohamed Ali was then so preoccupied with politics that he could not spare sufficient time for his journalistic pursuit and it became difficult for him to contribute to his journals, regularly. As a result *The Comrade* could not maintain its periodic appearance, and its life ended with its last issue bearing the date, January 22, 1926. *The Hamdard* however continued its publication for some time but lost its tempo to move the feeling of the masses on account of polluted atmosphere created by the Hindu organisations and unfavourable attitude of the government.¹⁴⁰ Its circulation decreased with accumulating losses. Mohamed Ali with his losing health could not bear the burden and finally on 20 May 1927 closed down *The Hamdard* for good.¹⁴¹ Thus ended the illuminating enterprise of an illustrious journalistic career.

The conclusion that emerges from the above discussion delineates that Maulana Mohamed Ali was a prolific writer. He chose journalism as a mission to advocate for legitimate rights and privileges of his

country and his community. With this end in view he launched *The Comrade*, a weekly newspaper.

The object of his venture was to create a harmonious relationship with the ruler, intimate them about the grievances, aims and aspirations of the Muslim community and to prepare them to attain their due share in the future political destiny of India. Besides as a spokesman of the Muslims, Mohamed Ali steered his journalistic skills to foster confidence between the Muslims and the Hindus and brought them towards mutual understanding and peaceful adjustment of mutual differences.¹⁴² As a leader of the public opinion he also addressed in *The Comrade* on issues of collective interests of all denominations for the betterment of the country. But since the appeal of *The Comrade* as an educator of public opinion was limited for its alien language, Mohamed Ali launched *The Hamdard* an Urdu daily to create wide range of readers and to educate them in public affairs. Nonetheless *The Comrade* more than *The Hamdard* served to voice some of Mohamed Ali's main concerns.

At the beginning, Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the British government was cooperative. But the reliance on the government was impugned when the policy pursued by the authorities proved unfavourable to the interests of Indian Muslims and internationally the covert support that Britain lend to the imperialistic designs of the European powers against Turkey. Mohamed Ali was so moved by these developments that he became a critic of the government's foreign policy and expressed his views in favour of Turkey in *The Comrade*, which gained popular response among the younger section of the Indian Muslims causing great concern for the government. His writings during the Balkan and The First World War condemning Britain and its Allies

create an awkward situation for the government. Being considered him dangerous and unable to stop his pen the government was compelled to forfeit the security of both his newspapers and interned him during the war time period. After his release Mohamed restarted his journalistic venture but could not make much headway on account of his active involvement in politics and was destined to play the role of a politician in the years to come. In the end it can be said that Maulana Mohamed Ali was an ideal journalist he was true to his professional duties with devotion, honesty and objectivity. He never used his profession for personal gain rather he preferred to face dangers and was not prepared to compromise his professional integrity. It was he who first protest against the despotic press laws and raised the voice against the exploitation and oppression of the British government. Indeed he was an icon of independent journalism and an exponent of the freedom of the press which influenced the opinion of the masses in the struggle for India's independence.

Notes and References

1. Jafri (ed.), *Selections, op.cit.*, p.183.
2. *Iqbal, Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.46.
3. Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial, op.cit.*, p.11; Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali, op.cit.*, p.97.
4. *Ibid*, p.12.
5. *Ibid*.
6. *Ibid*.
7. *Ibid*, p.11.
8. Afzal Iqbal (ed.) *Select Writings and Speeches of Maulana Mohamed Ali*, Lahore, 1944, p.xx.
9. Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1985, p.127
10. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali, op.cit.*, pp.102-103.
11. Haq (ed.), *Life and Work, op.cit.*, p. 44; *The Comrade*, May, 20, 1911.
12. Jafri (ed.), *Selections, op.cit.*, p.185.
13. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment, op.cit.*, pp.45-46.
14. Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial, op.cit.*, p.15.
15. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment, op.cit.*, p.46.
16. William Morris (1834-1896) was a famous poet of Victorian Britain.
17. Jafri (ed.), *Selections, op.cit.*, p.188 ; Haq (ed.), *Life and Work, op.cit.*, p.48.
18. *The Comrade*, January, 6, 1912 ; Haq (ed.), *Life and Work, op.cit.*, pp.48-49 ; Jafri, *Selections, op.cit.*, p.188.
19. Haq (ed.), *Life and Work, op.cit.*, p. 49.
20. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.64.
21. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.85.

22. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.77 ; Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.187 ; Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, pp.64-65.
23. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.77.
24. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.142.
25. According to Butler Ali Imam and The Aga Khan financed Mohamed Ali in his endeavor. Hasan, *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends*, p.127; Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The politics of The united Provinces' Muslims 1860-1923*, Delhi, 1997, p.201.
26. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, pp.65.
27. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, pp.110-111.
28. Jafri, *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.187.
29. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.112.
30. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.xxi.
31. *Freedom Movement*, *op.cit.*, p.149.
32. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.114.
33. Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.16 ; Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.103 ; Robinson, *Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.202.
34. The Pakistan Review, February, 1967, vol.xv, No.2, p.21 ; Mushirul Hasan, *Islam Communities and the Nation: Muslim Identities in South Asia and Beyond*, The University press Limited, Dhaka, 1998, p.63.
35. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.186.
36. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, pp.106-107.
37. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.44.
38. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.186.
39. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.71 ;

The Newspapers Act of 1908 having proved ineffective, a Bill was brought before the legislature in order to exercise control over presses and means of publication, over publishers, and over the importation into India and the transmission by post of

sedition and objectionable matter, as well as to secure the suppression of newspapers considered undesirable or seditious. It provided for the deposit of security by the proprietors of presses and publishers. Offences against the Act made the person concerned liable to forfeiture of security. The law came into force on February 9, 1910. Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India* Vol.3, p.356.

40. Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, pp.86.
41. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.121; Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.71.
42. *The Comrade*, March, 11, 1911.
43. *The Comrade*, March, 2, 1912.
44. *The Comrade*, April, 15, 1911.
45. *The Comrade*, July, 29, 1911.
46. *The Comrade*, February, 24, 1912.
47. *The Comrade*, July, 29, 1911.
48. *The Comrade*, March, 18, 1911.
49. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.295.
50. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, pp.45-46 ; Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.256.
51. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.257.
52. *Ibid*, p.70.
53. *Ibid*.
54. Haq (ed.), *Life and Work*, *op.cit.*, pp.11-12.
55. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.55; "Islam in the Subcontinent: Muslims in a Plural Society", in *The Mushirul Hasan Omnibus*, Delhi, 2006, p.125.
56. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, *op.cit.*, vol.I.p.55.
57. William John Watson, *Muhammad Ali and the Khilafat Movement*, p.14 (Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1955).
58. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.187.

59. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.48
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61. Hasan, (ed.), *Islam Communities and the Nation*, p.68; *Omnibus, Islam in the subcontinent*, *op.cit.*, p125.
62. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends*, p.130; Robinson, *Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.203.
63. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.262
64. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.40, fn.5; *The Comrade*, 30th December 1911.
65. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.46
66. *Ibid*, p.51.
67. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.67.
68. Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India: A Brief Survey: 1858-1947*, Lahore 1967, p.98.
69. *The Comrade*, October, 21, 1911.
70. *Ibid*.
71. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.49.
72. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.107
73. Jafri, *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.229.
74. *Ibid*, p.232.
75. *Ibid*, p.251.
76. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends*, *op.cit.*, 130; Robinson, *Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.204.
77. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.51.
78. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.69; Jafri (ed.) *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.189.
79. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.189
80. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.26
81. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.190.

82. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends*, *op.cit.*, pp.130-131.
83. *The Comrade*, July, 29, 1911.
84. *The Comrade*, July, 1, 1911.
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86. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, pp.161-162.
87. P.C. Bamford, *Histories of the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements*, Delhi, 1925, p.114.
88. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.61.
89. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.208.
90. *Ibid*, *op.cit.*, p.209 ; Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.151.
91. *Ibid*.
92. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.209.
93. *Ibid*, p.210.
94. *Ibid.*; Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, pp.151-152.
95. Robinson, *Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.213.
96. Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.16.
97. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.133 ; *The Comrade*, April, 27, 1912.
98. *The Comrade*, April, 27, 1912.
99. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.78;

Lithography is a process of printing from a flat surface such as metal plate treated so that ink adheres only to the design to be printed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Hornby, A.S. Fifth impression, 19191, London, p.728 ; Type is a Small block, especially of metal with a raised letter, *Ibid*, p.1384.

Mohamed Ali decided to use type because *The Comrade* used type and its machines remained idle for four days or more in

a week, besides he wanted to get rid of the vagaries of the Calligraphists employed for lithography in Indian printing press. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op. cit., pp.78-79.

100. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.79.
101. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, op.cit., p. 93.
102. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, op.cit., p.134.
103. *Ibid*, p.137.
104. Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial*, op.cit., pp, 30-31.
105. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.83.
106. *Ibid*.
107. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, op.cit., p.212.
108. The script used in Lithography for Urdu is the *Nastaliq* or Persianised form. The script used for typography is Arabic *Naskh* form, Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.78.
109. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., pp.80-81; Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial*, op.cit., pp.29-30.
110. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends*, op.cit., p.128.
111. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.51.
112. *Ibid*, pp.51, 72.
113. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents: 1906-1947*, Karachi, 1969, vol.I. pp. 283-284.
114. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, op.cit., pp.90-91.
115. *Ibid*, p.89.
116. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.73.
117. *Ibid*, p.74.
118. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, op.cit., pp.123-124.
119. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, op.cit., p.82.
120. *Ibid*, pp.82-83.
121. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, op.cit., p.520.

122. *Ibid*, p.518.
123. *Ibid*, p.519.
124. *Ibid*, p.520.
125. *Ibid*, p.502.
126. *Ibid*, p.513.
127. *Ibid*, p.512.
128. *Ibid*, p.513.
129. *Ibid*, p.523.
130. *Ibid*, p.518.
131. *Ibid*, p.502.
132. *Ibid*, p.521.
133. *Ibid*, p.524.
134. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.74.
135. Haq (ed.), *Life and Work*, *op.cit.*, p.48.
136. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, pp.75-76 ; *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.110.
137. Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial*, *op.cit.*, pp.85-86.
138. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.75.
139. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, pp.316, 421.
140. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali*, *op.cit.*, p.142.
141. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, pp.316, 421.
142. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.295.

CHAPTER-III

Mohamed Ali's Career as a Politician: Initiation to Politics

The British Government introduced a series of administrative reforms from 1900 onwards. These reforms caused widespread discontent amongst the Muslims and endangered the Anglo-Muslim relationship. It also contributed to the growth of radicalism in politics within a section of young educated Muslims. They were convinced that radical self-help was a better solution than mendicancy. So they favoured agitational politics for claiming concessions. This policy was completely opposed to that of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the old guard Aligarh leaders who advocated loyalist politics.¹ It was in this situation that Mohamed Ali embarked on Indian political domain, to which now the discussion turns.

Mohamed Ali returned to India in 1902 after completion of his study in London, and joined in the education department in his own State in Rampur. After a brief stint in Rampur, he took a post in Baroda State Service. Baroda seemed to offer him a broader prospect, for its ruler allowed him opportunities to pursue freely his interest in journalism and politics. Mohamed Ali's passion for politics dates back since his student days and his political ideas developed during his sojourn at Aligarh College.² In the college debates he expressed his views freely on various national and international issues which caused great embarrassment to the European professors.³ While serving in Baroda he took keen interests in developments around and kept himself in public eye by contributing articles in the press and delivering speeches at conferences outside the State.

At the beginning of his public career Mohamed Ali associated himself with the 'Imperial Organisation' of the Muslims of India, the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference.⁴ the only platform Sir Syed Ahmed would commend to his community.⁵ In 1904 Mohamed Ali made his debut in public by delivering an address at one of the sessions of that Conference held in Bombay on the "Proposed Mohammadan University".

In his address Mohamed Ali put forward the thesis about a federation of faiths to synthesise differences among diverse religious communities and denominations in India. He observed that the people of this country are deeply attached to religions and at the same time divided into communities, sects and denominations. He said that, "Unless some new force other than the misleading unity of opposition unites this vast continent of India, it will either remain a geographical misnomer or become a Federation of Religions".⁶ According to him the lines cleavage that existed was not territorial or racial but religious, and it was too deep to permit a unity other than a federation of communities. He contended that it should never lose sight of the prospects of the future when eventually all communal interests had to be harmonised for the paramount interests of India.⁷

In that year he also attended the All India Educational Conference held at Lucknow and criticised the education given in the Indian universities for increasing communal tension. He argued that, "the greater portion of bigotry agitates not the bosoms of the ignorant and the illiterate but excites to fury and to madness the little learned of the land"⁸ and explained that it is not as the love of our religion that makes us quarrel with our fellow countrymen of other faiths, but self-love and petty personal ambition.⁹ Around this time he published a brochure

entitled 'Thoughts on the Present Discontent'. The book created almost a sensation and Mohamed Ali gained eminence as "perhaps the foremost exponent of India and Muslim political thought".¹⁰

Thus while Mohamed Ali was embarking on his public career just at that juncture Bengal was partitioned in 1905 for administrative purposes. The measure caused much excitement and violent campaign against the scheme was launched by the political leaders of Calcutta, which received the approval of the Indian National Congress.¹¹ In the midst of this upheaval the British government announced its decision to reconstitute the existing legislature on a more representative basis.¹² This decision prompted the Muslims into action who apprehended that Hindus would not elect adequate number of Muslims and that the representatives of the Muslims should be chosen through a separate electorate.¹³ To protect their interests in the new reform system, a deputation of Muslims led by the Aga Khan for the purpose to meet Viceroy Lord Minto on 1 October, 1906 at Simla and put forward among other things two clear points of policy. First in all election whether for the legislative councils or for local bodies, the Muslims must be separately represented and their representatives separately elected by purely Muslim electors. And secondly, the position of Muslim representation should not be estimated on its numerical strength alone, but in terms of its political importance and the services it had rendered to the Empire.¹⁴ But this recession seemed all the more annoying to Hindu leaders of the Congress and they expressed their strong disapproval of the creation of separate electorates on the basis of religion, saying that it will create widespread dissatisfaction throughout the country.¹⁵ The Viceroy's response to the demands of the Muslims were positive and sympathetic.¹⁶ Nevertheless the success of the Simla

deputation and the reaction of the Hindus on Muslim demand and the agitation that followed the partition of Bengal deeply affected the Muslims of India, their feelings were aroused and they seriously thought of establishing a real and effective political organisation representative in character and stable and strong in its composition.¹⁷ Accordingly it was decided that a public meeting of Muslim leaders will be held in Dacca on 30 December 1906, after the conclusion of the All India Muslim Educational Conference. Mohamed Ali who was not included in the Simla Deputation by now made his presence felt by his exceptionally brilliant and bold writings attracted the attention of the veteran leaders of Aligarh and was invited to attend the Educational Conference, as a delegate from Gujarat.¹⁸

In the founding session Mohamed Ali cooperated to give the Muslim League a shape by supporting forcefully the proposition brought forth by the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca. When some amendments to the first resolution sponsored by Nawab Salimullah regarding the aims of the Muslim League were made Mohamed Ali provided the necessary clarifications, consequently the amendments were withdrawn and the original resolution was passed unanimously.¹⁹

Mohamed Ali was also included as one of the members of the Provisional Committee set up by the Conference to frame the constitution for the League.²⁰ At the suggestion of Mohsin-ul- Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk he compiled the proceedings of this historic Convention in a pamphlet entitled the 'Green Book'.²¹

After participating, the inaugural session of the Muslim League Mohamed Ali devoted himself campaigning for the expansion of the new organisation. He took three months leave from January to March 1907 from his office and made a brief tour in the united provinces.²² As

part of his mission he delivered two lectures at Allahabad on 15 and 16 February, 1907 under the titles, 'The present political situation' and 'The Muhammadan Programme'. The purpose was to arouse interest in the newly formed Muslim League. In his address Mohamed Ali appealed the Muslims to work for unity and come forward and help the formation of efficient provincial and central Leagues, he said that he would not espouse the cause of any association likely to disintegrate people and Muslim League was not an effort at disintegration but at integration.²³ And the only alternative in politics which the Muslims could at present adopt he said, was that of organising themselves into a separate political body. On the question of Muslim aloofness from the Congress Mohamed Ali said that the ultimate interests of the Hindus and the Muslims could never be different; but that could not be said of immediate interests.²⁴ "He compared the Congress and the Muslim League as two trees growing on other side of a road. Their trunk stood apart, but their roots were fixed in the same soil, drawing nourishment from the same source. The branches were bound to meet when the stems had reached their full stature and shaded the passersby. The soil was British, the nourishment was a common patriotism, the trunks were the two political bodies, and the road was the highway of peaceful progress".²⁵

While Mohamed Ali was touring United Provinces to mobilise Muslim Public opinion in favour of Muslim League and its programme, Gokhale the prominent Congress leader on his lecturing tour to popularise the Congress arrived at Aligarh in February 1907. He delivered three lectures in the Lyall Library Hall. The Aligarh College authorities prohibited the students to hear him, but it was of no avail. Mohamed Ali who was also promoting the Muslim cause persuaded the

secretary of the college to invite Gokhale to deliver a speech on education so that it would create an opportunity for the students to hear him along with Gokhale. The Principal did not like it and he was also displeased with Mohamed Ali's presence in Aligarh at this moment.²⁶

During this time a significant event occurred in Aligarh College. A strike was called on by the students at the decision of the college authority to expel some prominent student leaders on account of a minor incident happened in Aligarh College exhibition ground. But this was not the real cause. It was actually the culmination of long-standing grievances.²⁷ Since the death of Syed Ahmed Khan founder of Aligarh College the Principal became virtually a despot ignoring the instructions of the Managing body or its Secretary.²⁸ The influence of the English staff of the college also increased, they neglect their duties and did not pull well with the students and the Indian staff, which naturally created an anti-British sentiment. They also intervene in college affairs.²⁹ Under government pressure and more so on account of the weakness of the Managing Committee, the college affairs were gradually drifting in such a way as to turn it into a handmaiden of the British rulers.³⁰ Mohamed Ali who did not like British domination in his dear Alma Mater kept watching the situation with pain and anxiety and visited Aligarh whenever he got an opportunity to do so. He was also in close touch with the student community and the Old Boy's Association even long after leaving college.³¹ The situation of the college perturbed him so much that he started contributing articles to English journals and newspapers about what was wrong with Aligarh and what direction the movement started by its founder should take.³² In 1904 he wrote articles for a Lahore newspaper entitled "Aligarh of To-day" where he attacked the older generation of trustees for surrendering power to the British.³³

This made him detestable to the English staff and the administration on the one hand and raised his popularity among the students on the other.³⁴

An enquiry commission was set up on 23 February, 1907 to probe the incident with Mr. Justice Rafique as its chairman.³⁵ On recommendation of the commission one of the English staff was relieved of his responsibility. The commission before which Mohamed Ali was asked to appear as a witness, held that his articles published in various newspapers were a contributory cause of the discontent that was manifested in the defiance of the students at Aligarh.³⁶ Though Mohamed Ali himself denied having had any connection with the strike, his writings made him unpopular in the official circles.³⁷ He was black listed by the government and John Hewett the Lieutenant –governor of the Up requested the Nawab of Rampur to keep Mohamed Ali quiet as he has given them a lot of trouble.³⁸ A circular asking State officials to refrain from expressing opinions which may create revolutionary tendencies among the people was also issued in this regard.³⁹ The incident was significant because it perturbed the British Bureaucracy for the first time and Mohamed Ali's activities were closely watched by the official's henceforth.⁴⁰

After the end of Aligarh debate Mohamed Ali devoted himself to the Muslim League affairs and participated actively in its proceedings. The first session of the Muslim League was held at Karachi in December 1907. In that session he played the role of an arbitrator taking part in discussion on the question of affiliation of the provincial Branch in the Punjab, where Mian Fazl-i-Hussain in February 1906 and Mian Mohammad Shafi in December 1907 formed their own organisations and both sought affiliation. After persuasion by Mohamed Ali and

others Mian Fazl-i-Hussain withdrew his claim and the two bodies were merged into one.⁴¹

The second session of the All India Muslim League was held at Amritsar in 1908. The session was important because the proposed reforms of the Government of India and the despatch of the Secretary of State forms the main theme of discussion. Since its inception the Muslim League launched a vigorous campaign for attaining the system of separate electorate. But the Secretary of States despatch of 27 November, 1908 to the Government of India made no provision for separate Muslim representation. Instead Morley suggested joint electoral colleges with reservation of certain seats.⁴² The President of the session Syed Ali Imam observed that the despatch underestimated the proportion of Muslim representation in complete disregard of the 'social, traditional and religious considerations attaching to the Indian Mohammedans' and that mere counting of heads of the two communities would bring 'dangerous and misleading 'consequences.'⁴³ He then presented a set of three resolutions. The first was a vote of thanks to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for the Reform scheme and the second and third deals with Muslim representation and the unworkability of the method.⁴⁴ As regards the first resolution there were strong differences of opinion since the Reform scheme did not fulfil Muslim demand and a section of the delegates had even objected to passing a general vote of thanks, to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.⁴⁵ Mohamed Ali expressed his view firmly on the subject in a conciliatory manner. He asked the delegates not to make an artificial unanimity but to try to create an impression on the representative character, with the carefulness of deliberations and the soundness of views. He contended that, despite all its defects the framer of the

schemes of Reforms deserves sincere thanks and congratulations.⁴⁶ He rather emphasised that Muslims should continue to press their views on points where they felt aggrieved.⁴⁷ After a good deal of discussions the draft resolution was presented at the open meeting and was passed unanimously. In a letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy Colonel Dunlop Smith Mohamed Ali put the incident in the following:

“We wished to be more generous and emphatic in the resolution of thanks to His Excellency and to Lord Morley, but our Punjab friends could not curb their antipathies in their relations with their Hindu fellow-countrymen to approve of a more generous recognition of the wise and great reforms and the politic provisos which save them from being abused. There was even some churlishness... on some of us who could not look on the concession to Indians with favour, because Lord Morley had failed signally to provide proper and effective safeguards against the majority nominating its own ticket holders for the minority. But we succeeded in the end of convincing our friends”.⁴⁸ While expressing the attitude of some members of the League Mohamed Ali emphatically protested about the fallacy which “provided for the election of ‘members’ of our community when we asked for provision for the election of our ‘representatives’”.⁴⁹

At the Amritsar session Mohamed Ali delivered the most forceful and articulated exposition for separate electorates. He argued that in country like India it was wrong “to base representation on territorial division where religious or racial distinctions were greater or more significant than territorial demarcation”.⁵⁰ According to him Hindus and Muslims stood for ‘a different outlook on life, different mood of living, different temperament and necessarily different politics’.⁵¹ He considered it unwise to leave Muslims in their political evolution at the

mercy of an angelic majority that invariably thinks of the unity of India's ultimate interest. He said that, Muslims did not ask for special treatment, they are fighting against political monopolists. He held that numerically weak cannot and must not be allowed to ruin.⁵² Mohamed Ali contended that under Electoral College scheme as proposed by Lord Morley the lips and tongue would be Muslims, but, the voice would be that of the Brahmins.⁵³ He, therefore, earnestly appealed to the Secretary of State to protect the interest of the Muslims of India by providing them with separate electorates.⁵⁴ Mohamed Ali realised that the Muslim point of view had not been understood properly which ultimately caused the deterioration of relations between the two major communities, His view on separate representation can be best understood from his letter to Gokhale the prominent Congress leader, he wrote that, "I am sorry that my Hindu friends have opposed hitherto the desire of the Muslims to secure independent representation. To talk on unity in this connection is absurd. Each community if it feels that it is an 'interest' by itself and cannot trust another to choose its representative must be allowed to choose its own and if that community is based on a racial , religious, or caste difference, its desire should be considered quite as legitimate as if the difference was occupational. Unity will not come if the Muslims are refused permission to select their own advocates in litigation-as unfortunately much of our politics is at present. Men in your position should, I believe, express their opinions clearly and forcibly on such a point..."⁵⁵

Alongside, denominational reservation in the councils Chambers Mohamed Ali also wanted its extension in local bodies and thereby supported the resolution brought by Mian Mohammad Shafi in this regard.⁵⁶ And he himself moved a resolution asking the Government to

appoint “a commission to enquire into the number, general purposes and manner of administration of Musalman endowments designed merely for public benefit”.⁵⁷ A propitious move indeed to increase the efficiency of these institutions.

In the third session at Delhi in January 1910, Mohamed Ali exhibited a greater international outlook by moving a resolution on the treatment based on racial distinctions to Indians in South Africa and pleaded the government strongly on their behalf to redress their grievances.⁵⁸

In the fourth session held at Nagpur in December 1910 Mohamed Ali's role was conspicuous. It revealed a significant maturity in Mohamed Ali's thought and skillful oratory. In supporting the motion moved by Sheikh Jahur Ahmed for the preservation of Urdu language he delivered an eloquent speech. “He said that they were on the eve of a new era of peace and goodwill between Hindus and Musalmans, and they were going to Allahabad with open minds in the sincere hope that the relations of the two great communities of India's would be better hereafter than they had hitherto been”.⁵⁹ Although from practical point of view he realised that complete fusion of the two communities was not possible, yet, “both could and should insist on some positive indication of feelings of unity and concord”.⁶⁰ He observed that “in a land where everything was dissimilar, races and creeds, customs and institutions, modes of thought and action, the one thing common was the lingua franca of the country , Urdu”.⁶¹ But he was concerned about the assault on Urdu in the united provinces, and regarded the question as the touchstone of sincerity and hoped that one of the chief results of the conference at Allahabad ⁶² would be the development of Urdu, which was the common heritage of Hindu and Muslim. He also felt the

preservation of Urdu in other provinces necessary for the education of the Muslims.⁶³

Mohamed Ali was an enthusiast for the spread of education. In the session the proposal of Mr. Fazalbhoy Currimbhoy Ebrahim for initiating free and gradually compulsory primary education throughout was opposed by Mr. Shamsul Huda on the point that reforms should not be imposed, it should be preferred by systematic evolution. Besides, it requires huge financial involvement for which the 'Exchequer was not prepared'. Mohamed Ali refuted the argument by saying that hypothetical difficulties and conjecture evils should not affect the decision of the house. He concluded that the best form of freedom, is free education.⁶⁴ He also seconded a resolution moved by Syed Zahur Ahmed objecting new regulation imposed by the Council of Legal Education for the admission into the Inns of Court.⁶⁵

Thus the previous discussion reveals that from the inception of his public career Mohamed Ali's main objective was to work for the wellbeing of the community and to safeguard its interest in the existing political and administrative framework of the country. To attain this aim he associated himself with the Mohammadan Educational Conference and the Muslim League. As an exponent of the Leagues ideal Mohamed Ali presented his considered view in its forum on matters relating to the rights and interests of the Muslims as well as issues of other importance. Alongside using organisational platform Mohamed Ali found writing as an effective weapon to materialise his purpose. He, therefore, began to use his talent of skillful writing by contributing series of articles in English newspapers and journals to register the cause of his community forcefully. Until 1910 Mohamed Ali led his public career as a civil servant of Baroda which was of course not conforming with the code of

that service. Yet his sincerity in job and the liberal attitude of the ruler allowed him to pursue his interest in journalism and politics. Despite all the facilities Mohamed Ali was not comfortable with his service for he found it a very restricted field to satisfy his desire. Besides, after the strike at Aligarh College in 1907 government servants were prohibited by a general confidential circular from contributing articles likely to create animosity among people.⁶⁶ This thwarted Mohamed Ali's desired interest and he became more dejected to his service. It was becoming increasingly difficult for him to synthesise the role of a civil servant who functions from behind the scenes with the role of a journalist or a politician who works without concealing his identity.⁶⁷ So he made up his mind to leave the job and plunge into journalism and politics. Until this time politics was a part of his multifarious activities. But now he made it his prime object. On 14 January 1911 Mohamed Ali launched his weekly English newspaper *The Comrade* from Calcutta, the capital of British India. Although Calcutta at that time was replete with papers of high stature, yet Mohamed Ali's sincerity, his forthright and flawless writing skill won him a prominent position in the sphere of Indian journalism. Realising the dissatisfaction of the Hindus caused by separate electorate he contended that "mixed electorates would have the best battle ground for inter-communal strife's, and would have still further widened the gulf separating the two communities".⁶⁸ He said that Muslim support for the reform was by no means to create "separation between the Muslims and their more numerous Hindu brethren"⁶⁹ rather to hasten Hindu-Muslim unity and put a stop to the "inter-communal warfare".⁷⁰ In the first issue of *The Comrade* he feelingly wrote in the same vein that , "It is our firm belief that if the Muslims or the Hindus attempt to achieve success in opposition to or even without the co-operation of one another, they will not only fail, but fail

ignominiously”.⁷¹ Regarding the future polity of India he wrote in the same article that, “We may not create to-day the patriotic fervor and fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordat like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love-marriage, born of romance and poetry. But a marriage de convenience, honourably contracted and honourably maintained, is not to be despised”.⁷²

Mohamed Ali’s criticism of the government at the beginning was also temperate. The Muslims, he made it plain in his articles, were not completely satisfied with their position, but it was the social distinction between the races rather than the fact of British rule that distressed them.⁷³ Despite criticism Mohamed Ali reaffirmed his attachment to the British and commented on the good that was to accrue to India from beneficent contact. “The impulses for wholesome national life, which a contact with Western Culture, he called forth amongst the Indian mind want a home for a full, many-sided expression”.⁷⁴

But this moderate stance of Mohamed Ali did not remain for long on account of successive events prior to World War I in India and outside world, which brought the sincerity of the government to safeguard the interests of the Muslims to question. Hence the complacency that characterised Mohamed Ali’s outlook in the immediate past began to change.

The province of East Bengal and Assam was created in October 1905. In the new province the Muslims who were in a majority offered new opportunities in education, government service and the professions. Even though Muslims were numerically superior in a united Bengal, they were handicapped because of their educational and economic backwardness which prevented them from securing adequate

representation in the Council and in the local self-governing bodies. They did not do well in the public service also.⁷⁵

The partition however altered the situation and provided the Muslims of Eastern Bengal with the privileges and opportunities from which they had been deprived hitherto and was a boon to their depressed condition. In this situation the Hindus of Calcutta who felt threatened to their dominance in the public services and professions launched a fierce campaign against the new design of the government,⁷⁶ which received the endorsement of the Indian national Congress.⁷⁷ Viceroy Lord Hardinge though initially remained firm in his resolve changed his decision by June 1911. At the Delhi Durbar of December 1911 King George V, Emperor of India declared the annulment of the partition of Bengal. The decision of the government stunned the Muslims, who regarded the partition as a settled fact. They were bitterly disappointed and protested against the governments 'utter disregard of Muslim feelings'⁷⁸ bartering away their interest to the Hindu agitation and suitable administrative arrangement.

The younger section of the Muslim leaders were in favour of radical action in defence of their interest but the old guard leadership prevailed upon them and desisted them from being disloyal to the government. Nevertheless this incident drifted the younger section of the Muslim leaders from the course plotted by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the older loyalist leaders began to lose hold over their younger counterparts who were not ready to accept unqualified co-operation with the British government receded to the background.⁷⁹ Mohamed Ali who had just started his career as the spokesman of the Muslim community responded to the matter by giving vent to his misgivings in his newspaper. Lamenting the announcement in *The Comrade* he said that,

“in the case of the Hindus of Bengal it has been a matter of give and take, that for the Sturdy loyal Beharies it has been one of “take” only, while for the Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal it has been one of nothing but “give”, and as a reward of their loyalty and contentment they have been given a generous helping of the humble pie”.⁸⁰ He was also dissatisfied with the senior Muslim leaders for their endorsement of every act of the government and criticised the Aga Khan in a respectable manner for regarding the revocation of the partition of Bengal as beneficial to Muslims.⁸¹

Mohamed Ali was shocked at the complete change in government attitude, for while it healed the festering sore of the Hindus, it left the Muslims in the lurch when they were just beginning to make rapid strides. Expressing his profound regret he later said that, “The Muslims of Eastern Bengal had been made to fight the battle of their rulers, against their neighbours, and now that it was no longer convenient for the rulers to continue the fight, they had made their own peace with all convenient speed, and have left the Muslims to the mercy of those against whom they had been used as auxiliaries”. He deplored that, “It would be hard to discover in history a more ignoble instance of betrayal in which “loyalty” has been rewarded with deprivation of recently recovered rights, and “contentment” has been punished as the worst of crime”.⁸² Mohamed Ali considered the announcement a landmark in the political progress of the Muslims. Because, it taught the Muslims clearly that their dependence upon foreign government for support against neighbouring communities will always laid them open to such betrayals.⁸³ He concluded that government’s action had justified the use of force as “the only effective method of converting them”.⁸⁴ Mohamed Ali cautioned his coreligionists that, in view of recent developments

“the Musalman ought to know how to defend themselves and their rights and if they are not capable of standing on their own feet, certainly no government will ever care to save them from political annihilation”.⁸⁵

Alongside his journalistic approach Mohamed Ali much to the disagreement of the loyalist section of the Muslim leadership raised the issue in the Muslim political forum the All India Muslim League to intimate the government about the concerns of the Muslims and proposed the following resolution in its 5th session. “The All India Muslim League places on record its deep sense of regret and disappointment at the annulment of the partition of Bengal in utter disregard of Muslim feeling and expected that the Government will take early steps to safeguard Muslim interests in the presidency of Bengal”.⁸⁶ Explaining the purpose of moving the resolution he said that, although he was not a Bengali, he consider the whole Mohammedan community as one and that when the interest of a portion of the community suffered, the remaining portion shared the same feeling of trouble.⁸⁷ Thus he expressed his solidarity with the Bengali Muslims and thereby hinted that Muslims of India should acted in unison confronting any problem affecting the community. However, keeping the position and status of the Muslims in mind Mohamed Ali thought it inopportune to show an openly defiant attitude and so he advised the Muslims to accept the decision of the government.⁸⁸ But anticipated that the government would consider the balance of the losses of the Muslims and that whatever relief is to be given to the Muslims, it should be given immediately, which should be announced before the departure of His majesty. Because it is impossible to disguise the fact that Muslim feeling in India for obvious reasons is far from normal and the presence of His Majesty

in India at this juncture should be utilised fully to restore its equilibrium to that feeling.⁸⁹

Hardly the shocks of repartition were pacified, just at that time certain events occurred which added anxieties to the Indian Muslims in general and Mohamed Ali in particular. He discovered a clear connection between the miseries of the Muslims at home and abroad and blame the treachery of British diplomacy, which he thought was being used to subjugate the Muslims everywhere. In September 1911 war broke out between Italy and Turkey. This event had affected Mohamed Ali greatly.⁹⁰ At the initial phase of his political career he was more devoted to domestic affairs. But now he became keen on developments affecting the Muslims outside the confines of India. The policy of the British government towards Turkey and the Muslim countries aroused his fraternal feeling. In this situation Mohamed Ali made it clear what Muslims anticipated the government to do, 'One of the ideals', declared *The Comrade*, "which the Indian Mohammadans have cherished for long is that the British Government, which rules over the largest number of Mussalman subjects, should be bound in an alliance with Mohammadan powers and kingdoms so that their own territorial loyalty and extra-territorial patriotism should work in the same direction".⁹¹ But the British government did not take any step to refrain Italy from invading Tripoli, remained inactive when the Russians bombarded Meshad and sadder still when the Balkan states invaded Turkey. These events convinced him that Muslims were not only mistreated and that all this had been done by a preplanned conspiracy to wipe out the Turks from Europe,⁹² and Britain under the guise of neutrality was harbouring anti Turkish designs. A number of evidences confirmed his belief in this regard. For example refusal of Britain to allow Turkish garrison

passages through Egypt to reinforce the forces fighting against the Italians. The statement of the British statesmen also corroborated this belief. British Cabinet minister Sir Winston Churchill supported the Balkan states by saying that they were quite justified in waging war against Turkey to drive the Turks from Christian Europe. British Prime Minister's statements that 'The map of Eastern Europe has to be recast , andthe victors are not to be robbed of the fruits which has cost them so dear', was a clear indication of British policy towards Muslim states.⁹³ Thus sympathy towards the Muslim world captured the imagination of Mohamed Ali, and he became frustrated with the policy of the government.

The lesson of the Balkan wars wrote Mohamed Ali is that, 'it was futile to rely on anything else but their own God and the strength that He may choose to grant them'.⁹⁴ In a soul stirring speech at the Jami Masjid of Delhi Mohamed Ali characterised the Balkan war as the last fight of the Turks. He solemnly declared that the Turkish cause was theirs and it was a cause of righteousness.⁹⁵

Mohamed Ali's deep anguish found its expression in the columns of *The Comrade*. In 1912 *The Comrade* followed the central government from Calcutta to Delhi and soon it was joined by *The Hamdard* in Urdu. Both the papers defused sentiment and caught the tide of Muslim public opinion by publishing accounts of the sufferings of the Turks in Tripoli and Balkan war.⁹⁶ Apart from these two papers there were others newspapers too of considerable influence. Those were the Aligarh old boy, Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* of Lahore and Abul Kalam Azad's *Al Hilal* of Calcutta.⁹⁷ But the influence of *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard* was unrivalled. The two newspapers offered a framework for the uneasiness and dissatisfaction for important Muslim groups moulded

their attitude towards government and especially focused on news from the Balkan front.⁹⁸ *The Comrade* more than *The Hamdard* exercised considerable influence on the young educated Muslims and “No paper has so much influence with the students as *The Comrade*, and no individual has authority over them which is exercised by Mohamed Ali” reported the united province government.⁹⁹

A Turkish relief fund was created for sending medical aid to Turkey. *The Comrade* issued an appeal for funds. The response was spontaneous. The mass of the Indian Muslims were aroused by a feeling of emotion and excitement. Turkey and Islam became synonymous to them. They began to see the defeat and humiliation of Turkey as the defeat of Islam and the shame of every Muslim. Having bitter experience of enslavement in India they now eagerly desire that the freedom of Turkey the last vestige of Muslim power should be left unharmed. Contributions thus came pouring in to *The Comrade* Turkish relief fund.¹⁰⁰ Mohamed Ali even suggested that the money collected for the Muslim University whose charter was still being negotiated should be transferred to the Turkish Government.¹⁰¹ Though this was not done an amount of Rs.30, 000 was sent to the Red Crescent society, London to provide aid to the Turks.¹⁰² During this time Mohamed Ali maintained his close touch with Aligarh encouraging dissent against the British dominated administration and addressed the students on the misfortunes falling upon Islam in Tripoli and Morocco, Persia and Turkey. Consequently the college was becoming a ‘hot bed of sedition’.¹⁰³ Students held meetings every day after evening prayers in the mosque and condemning in violent language the atrocities committed by the Italians against the small Turkish force fighting in Tripoli.¹⁰⁴ Mohamed Ali’s influence thus increased on the Aligarh

campus. The English staff of the college complained that they were neither 'trusted to give the help they had hoped nor could they make some way with the students-not much owing to the influence of *The Comrade*' and Mohamed Ali.¹⁰⁵

Mohamed Ali thus succeeded in collecting the necessary money for the mission. The Red Crescent Mission was the first effective step taken by Mohamed Ali. The plan was to send a group of Muslim doctors and assistants to treat the wounded in the Turkish front. The Mission headed by Dr. M.A. Ansari including a number of senior Aligarh students, Abdur Rahman Siddiqui, Mohamed Shuaib Qureshi, Aziz Ansari, Khaliqzaman, Manzur Mahmud and Abdur Rahman Peshawari,¹⁰⁶ left Bombay on 15 December 1912.¹⁰⁷ The mission sought official cooperation from the British and Mohamed Ali had now emerged as a leader of the Muslim intelligentsia. Lord Hardinge the Viceroy of India watched this and kept in touch with him. He realised that to keep him calm at this moment was to help in humanitarian assistance to the sick and wounded which might give some satisfaction to the Muslim community. So he helped the mission by offering assistance to organise the relief work through British consulate officers in Turkey.¹⁰⁸

After the departure of the mission in December 1912 Mohamed Ali returned to Delhi and on 20 January 1913 addressed a mass meeting of Muslims at Lahore. Donned in the medical Mission uniform Mohamed Ali said that, the connection of Indian Muslims on religious grounds with other Islamic kingdoms had lasted for thirteen hundred years. The question of Turkey was therefore one of life and death to Islam. So they must press their claims. He advised the Muslims to persist in their efforts to achieve their goal.¹⁰⁹ On 31 January 1913

Mohamed Ali addressed another meeting organised by *Anjuman-i-Zia-ul-Islam*, Bombay. In this meeting he moved a resolution urging that the British foreign policy should be shaped with due regard to Muslim opinion. He hoped that the British Government would not take any step which would give rise to the feeling in India that His Majesty's Government was unfriendly to Turkey and was breaking its earlier pledge of neutrality.¹¹⁰

At this time the most effective scheme initiated By Mohamed Ali in action, as well as the most significant in method was the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i- Kaaba*, a society for safeguarding Muslim Holy places. Abdul Bari head of the Firingi Mahal Lucknow proved instrumental in this regard. Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali was introduced to Abdul Bari by his student Mushir Husain Kidwai. In order to preserve the sanctity of the Holy places from European aggression, Abdul Bari expressed his willingness to co-operate with the Ali brothers and shortly after a meeting founded the organisation. Abdul Bari became its president and Mushir Husain Kidwai and Shaukat Ali as general secretaries.¹¹¹ The Ali brothers, Dr. Ansari and Hasrat Mohani another Aligarh alumnus later accepted the religious pupilage of Abdul Bari.¹¹² The *Anjuman* also included Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk former Secretary of Aligarh College as its members. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also supported the organisation.¹¹³ Although the *Anjuman* was a purely religious institution it selected for itself apart from all religious duties, only one great duty, namely, service of the sacred places. For the first time the *Anjuman* was able to draw the ulamas as well as men representing professional rank from different parts of the country. The fusion of these two groups subsequently formed the basis of mass mobilisation in future course of events.¹¹⁴

While the disenchantment of the revocation of the Bengal partition was yet to be healed and the anti-Turkish bias of the government was causing increasing discontent, just at that juncture in August 1912 the Muslim University scheme was rejected. Ever since the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, a movement was afoot to raise the Aligarh College to the status of a University. With the passage of time Aligarh developed into an important centre for modern secular education, drawing students from all parts of the country. Its increasing popularity as well as its contribution to the educational progress of the Muslims, encouraged many Muslim educationists and politicians to promote the argument for a university.¹¹⁵ On being approached by a deputation¹¹⁶ the Government of India informed the Muslim leaders on 31 July 1911 that the Secretary of State was ready to sanction the establishment of a University. Consequently a draft constitution of the proposed Muslim University was submitted in August, 1911. The Government of India was almost prepared to accept the proposals put forward by the Muslim university Constitution Committee.¹¹⁷ But the Secretary of State Lord Crew and his council refused to accept the scheme on several points. One of which was the term 'Muslim' in the nomenclature of the university and the other and most important was the right to affiliate college outside Aligarh district. Theodor Morrison, the former Principal of M.A.O. College, Aligarh and now a member of the Secretary of States, India Council, opposed granting Aligarh the power of affiliation, since it was inconsistent with the idea of a teaching and residential university.¹¹⁸ Perhaps the student strike of 1907 at Aligarh college and the growing radical sentiments among the students made the government of India apprehensive that if the trend continues and the university be established in accordance with the demand of the Muslims

it might become the centre for intellectual inspiration to anti British sentiment in the Muslim community.¹¹⁹

However, the Government of India in view of practical considerations and in anticipation of grave political embarrassment urge Lord Crewe to reconsider his decision. But the Secretary of State was firm in his resolve.¹²⁰ A press communiqué was issued by the Education Department in July, 1912, stated that, 'the Secretary of State had decided that the proposed university should be called the university of Aligarh and that it should have no power of affiliation'.¹²¹ Mohamed Ali was very disappointed at this decision. Since the declaration of the government to raise the status of Aligarh College to a university he actively promoted the cause through his newspaper *The Comrade*, publishing appeals for raising funds and proposals for the Muslim University. For Mahomed Ali the whole point of a Muslim university was the unification of Indian Muslims.¹²² He dreamt that Aligarh should become an all-Indian institution with the power of affiliation, which should be run by Muslims with minimum government interference and such a centralised and autonomous system of Muslim education was essential for the unification and mobilisation of Indian Muslims.¹²³ As to the significance of the creation of Aligarh College he wrote that Aligarh 'is not, has not been and was never intended to be a provincial institution. It has striven, through good fortune and evil, for the strengthening of the Communal bond that holds seventy millions together as no provincial bond has hitherto done'.¹²⁴ But by denying the power of affiliation the government 'Pulled the main object underlying the university movement from under its feet'¹²⁵ and Mohamed Ali's dream was shattered.

In the midst of such rebuffs from the government there came the news that the Cawnpore municipality had contemplated to dismantle a portion of the Macchli Bazar Mosque in order to straighten out a road as part of the town improvement scheme. To the Muslims this was another example of government's disregard for their interests. This feeling was intensified by the fact that a realignment had been made to avoid a temple situated about a distance of 150 feet from the mosque in the face of Hindu opposition, but the mosque was not spared.¹²⁶ On hearing the news Mohamed Ali took up the issue with Sir James Meston, the lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces with whom he had friendly relations. The Governor, however, maintained that, the building to be demolished was a bathing enclosure and does not consist part of the sacred portion of the mosque.¹²⁷ Seeing the sentiments of the Muslims ignored Mohamed Ali asked Sir James in a letter, that whether the aligned of a road is worth the price demanded from Muslims. He observed that the part used for ablutions was considered as an integral portion of a mosque and bears the same sacredness as the other portions and no part of the land endowed for any purpose of a mosque could be transferred, under Islamic law.¹²⁸ He suggested Sir James to consult the matter with Muslim ulama and lawyers in this regard.¹²⁹ Alongside this Mohamed Ali intimated Sir James Meston that, he did not write anything about the matter in his two newspapers *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard* to avoid raising controversy and hoped that the case would be settled in a peaceful manner.¹³⁰

Despite Mohamed Ali's conciliatory efforts Sir James Meston remained firm and the demolition was executed on 1 July, 1913. This stired the feeling of Cawnpore Muslims and they became agitated. A mammoth public meeting was organised on 3 August 1913 which

eventually turned into a riot and was quelled by police guns, leaving 23 persons dead and 30 wounded, and many were arrested. The agitation gradually spread and developed into an imperial rather than a provincial grievance. The entire Indian Muslim press fearlessly criticised the authorities. *The Comrade* splashed the incident across its columns, reveling in every detail from the screams of the dying to the blood bespattered pavement.¹³¹

Mohamed Ali addressed a public meeting in Delhi and expressed his concern over the handling of the situation brutally by the police force. A 'Cawnpore Mosque' fund was created.¹³² In this situation a representative deputation of leading Muslims waited on Sir James Meston. But the Lieutenant Governor remains unmoved. Surrender to the agitators Meston said to Viceroy Lord Hardinge 'would have meant... great and permanent embarrassment to Government'.¹³³

Having failed to gain positive response from the provincial authorities the Muslim leaders felt frustrated and on the suggestion of Shaukat Ali resolved to place their grievances before the Home Government in England.¹³⁴ Among the leading persons associated with the agitation no one was better qualified to represent the Muslim case before the British Parliament and leaders than Mohamed Ali. The name Syed Wazir Hasan Secretary of the Muslim League was wisely included to give the delegation a representative character.¹³⁵ The members knew that the governments of UP and India would not approve their move had they become aware of the intention of the delegation. So to avoid a possible obstruction the entire procedure of their departure was kept secret. The delegation left incognito and the Government only came to know when a statement issued by the delegation on board the ship appeared in the press.¹³⁶ When the Delegation reached London the

Parliament was in recess. Meanwhile, the Viceroy Lord Hardinge send message to Lord Crewe, Secretary of State for India stating that ‘Wazir Hasan was a man of no importance’, while Mohamed Ali was a mischievous agitator largely responsible’ for the excitement on the Cawnpore mosque ‘by provocative misrepresentations in his paper’.¹³⁷ He pleaded that they belonged to ‘extreme young Mohammadan party’ who were not acknowledged by the ‘respectable’ Mohammadan leaders like the Raja of Mahmudabad.¹³⁸ And their encouragement would amount to official recognition which might disappoint these respectable Mohammadan leaders and undermine their position.¹³⁹ The Secretary of State was convinced and when the Delegation sought his interview they were refused on the plea that a meeting with them would be misunderstood by ‘those of their coreligionists with whom they were not in accord, who claim equally with them to represent the political attitude and temper of the Mussalman Community’.¹⁴⁰ The Cabinet members also followed the Secretary of State and did not consent to listen to the Delegation.

During this time simmering disagreement between old moderate respectable leaders and the young extremist section came to the fore. Ameer Ali President of the London branch of the Muslim League wanted to lead the Delegation. This led to a dispute between Ameer Ali and Mohamed Ali and it became so intense that Agha Khan had to intervene to patch up the differences. Perhaps the young leaders did not accommodate Ameer Ali because of some misgivings that, old leaders were too cautious and loyal to be trusted.¹⁴¹ Another significant contribution of Mohamed Ali’s visit was that During this time one of the significant contributions of Mohamed Ali was that, he was able to persuade Mohamed Ali Jinnah who was then in London to join the

Muslim League, an event which was to change the course of history subsequently.¹⁴² However despite discouragement from official side the Delegation were not disheartened and Mohamed Ali now turned to the British public to present his point of view. He addressed a meeting at the Essex Hall London to enlighten the British Public and spoke on the problems facing Muslims in India. He also expressed resentment over the atrocities committed in Tripoli and in the Balkans and the indolence of the British Foreign office criticising Sir Edward Grey's foreign policy,¹⁴³ besides addressing the public Mohamed Ali gave interviews to papers and contributed articles. The efforts of the Delegation however, bore fruits. Sir James La Touche, an ex-lieutenant Governor of U.P., and a member of the Secretary of State's Council with whom Mohamed Ali had an interview, came forward to induce Lord Hardinge the Viceroy of India to intervene.¹⁴⁴ The Government also looking for a way out. On October 14, 1913 Lord Hardinge appeared on the scene and made an announcement that the demolished portion of the mosque should be rebuilt in the same position as before but upon an arcade above the pavement of the new road and that the cases of those charged with rioting would be withdrawn.¹⁴⁵

The Delegation left England on 5 December 1913. Before departure Mohamed Ali attended a dinner party given in honour of the Delegation by Edinburgh Islamic Society. In that occasion while paying tribute to Lord Hardinge, he said that "those of them who had been in India knew that there was a deity of prestige, which was really nothing more than personal vanity seeking refuge under the larger name of patriotism. And if by such means victories were gained against the people, than it was a victory which in the end was the worst defeat".¹⁴⁶

All the senior leaders were not opposed to the younger group. The efforts of the Delegation was also appreciated by no less a person than Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk. In his message sent at the seventh session of the Muslim League held at Agra he congratulated Syed Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali the two members of the Delegation for their self-sacrificing services to place their case before British statesman and also sent floral garlands for the two gentlemen which was put round their necks by the President amidst loud cheers of the assembly.¹⁴⁷

In that session of the League Mohamed Ali moved an amendment to postpone for a year the question of communal representation in self-governing bodies. Explaining his views Mohamed Ali said that it was impossible for Hindus and Musalmans to eliminate each other, and it would be to the ultimate interest of India for the two communities to merge together. He said that Hindus always opposed separate representation in the Congress and since they had not done it this year, it was now for the Musalmans to move forward in the matter. He mentioned that the procedure was in perfect keeping with the teachings of the Prophet (Peace Be upon Him). Both Communities were at fault, and both must excuse each other. Mohamed Ali Jinnah and Mazhar-ul-Haque supported the proposal, but it was lost when put to vote.¹⁴⁸ This was of course not the first time that Mohamed Ali showed a pro Congress bias. Erstwhile, at the Council meeting of the Muslim League held in December 1912 Mohamed Ali along with M.A. Jinnah and Wazir Hasan played a vital role in passing a resolution as the goal of the League which stated 'the attainment of a system of self-government suitable to India, through Constitutional means'.¹⁴⁹ This was a marked departure from the old policy of the League. Explaining his view for supporting such resolution Mohamed Ali later in his Presidential address

to the Indian National Congress said, “ that the bitter experience of ill-will against Muslim States and populations abroad hastened the conversion of the Muslims to the view that to rely on this foreign and Non-Muslim Government for support and sympathy, even after making every conceivable sacrifice for its sake, was futile, and that if they were in need of support and sympathy they must have a lasting, equitable settlement with the sister community of India”.¹⁵⁰ This change of policy of the Muslim League no doubt paved the way for a rapprochement between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League at Lucknow in 1916. Although Mohamed Ali was then in prison he lend his support to M.A. Jinnah’s efforts that lead up to the Lucknow Pact.¹⁵¹

Thus events that occurred in succession since the annulment of Bengal’s partition in 1911 and the unsympathetic and hostile attitude towards Muslims within India and the Muslim world gradually estranged Mohamed Ali from the government and intensified his anti-British feeling. His mission in Europe in 1913 was significant because it brought about a change in his view towards Britain in relation to the Muslims of India and of Turkey. During his visit he met a cross-section of people and realised that ‘British politicians, journalists, authors and even ministers have little’ knowledge about conditions in India.¹⁵² His unpleasant experience led him to believe that the British could no longer be trusted as the safe custodian of Muslim interests.

Mohamed Ali’s rift with the government came to the fore in 1913. The reason was that he published a pamphlet in *The Comrade* entitled “Come over into Macedonia and help us” which was forfeited under the Press Act, by the government. It was actually an appeal to England to help against the atrocities committed by the Balkan allies. Mohamed Ali could not submit to this decision tamely. He petitioned to the High

Court of Calcutta to set aside the order of the Bengal Government.¹⁵³ The Indian journalist's grievances against the hateful and hasty piece of Legislation, the Indian Press Act of 1910 was heard by a bench of judge headed by Sir Lawrence Jenkins in Apex Court of the country.¹⁵⁴ The bench criticised the language of the Act and pilloried its authors and sponsors for the first time in a Court of Law in India.¹⁵⁵ Viceroy Lord Hardinge was very displeased. In his reaction to the verdict he wrote to the Secretary of State for India that, "the Chief Justice, in a very needless manner, went out of his way to give that arch-agitator a pat on the back...Rather a strong statement for a Chief Justice, but his hostility to Government always exceeds his discretion."¹⁵⁶

When the First World War broke out in 1914 Mohamed Ali despite his pan-Islamic proclivities sided himself with the British and advised the people of India to remain loyal to the government. He also cautioned the British authority not to pursue any policy which might stir the sentiments of the Indian Muslims. In an article published in *The Comrade* on 12 August 1914 he enumerated acts of injustice for which the government was responsible. He wrote " Whether Great Britain has respected Muslim Indian feeling in her dealings with Turkey, Persia, Morocco, or not; whether the utterances of His Majesty's Ministers regarding the Turks in their life and death struggle during the last war have been just and consistent , or unjust and inconsistent; whether their action following two breaches of treaty obligations, by Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by Italy in the Tripoltaine, have tallied or not with the recent public proclamation of their sense of the sacredness of treaties; whether their conscience has revolted or not at the slaughter of babes and sucklings, unprotected womanhood and bed-ridden age in Tripoli and the Balkans; whether the White Colonials' treatment of their

coloured fellow- citizens of the same Empire has been fare or otherwise: Whether the Home Government has exerted its full pressure on the Colonials to right the wrong, or has only assumed an incredible importance; whether Indians' claims for an equitable adjustment of rights and duties and for a fair share in guiding the destinies of their own country have been met by the British Bureaucracy in the spirit of friendliness , or of jealousy and rancor; whether in the annulment of the Partition of Bengal the Muslims were treated with due consideration for their loyalty, or it was under-rated and their contentment taken too much for granted; whether the sanctity of their places of worship and the integrity of their graveyards have been uniformly respected, or sometimes lightly sacrificed to the Moloch of prestige – we say that, irrespective of any or all these considerations...we shall remain loyal to her as only freemen can remain loyal....” Mohamed Ali observed that this long narration was intended to show “to the world how different were the feelings of Indian Muslims towards this Government until quite recent times, and what patience we had shown in the face of injustice, indifference and continued callousness”.¹⁵⁷ The British press however at this time assumed a provocative tone by threatening and intimidating Turkey to join the row on the side of the Allies. *The Times of London* in an article entitled ‘The Choice of the Turks’ left little option for Turkey, either join the Allies or be considered an enemy. Neutrality would be considered as support of Germany.¹⁵⁸ Mohamed Ali whose heart beat in unison with the Turks cabled Talat Pasha minister of interior urging the Turks to think a thousand times before participating the War.¹⁵⁹ Because Turkey has just get over the Balkans wounds and she needs to maintain strictest neutrality in her own interest.¹⁶⁰ Mohamed Ali’s reply to this article bearing the same caption covered “twenty fateful columns” of *The Comrade*.¹⁶¹ Even in this “extensively

quoted and highly approved article” by the English Press he observed in the conclusion that “Whatever our grievances, whatever reforms we desire, everything must wait for a more seasonable occasion. Even if the Government were to concede to us all that we ever desired or dreamt...we would humbly tell Government that this is no time for it and we must for the present decline such concession with thanks. Concession are asked for and accepted in peace. We are not Russians Poles. We need no bribes”.¹⁶² Although Mohamed Ali’s article did not contain any elements of anti-British bias and even though the object of his writing was to encourage Muslim loyalty to the ruler, the government considered it otherwise. In fact, the Indian officials were not pleased with Mohamed Ali for his outspoken criticism of British policy, which caused their uneasiness. So they were looking for a plea to get rid of him. The present article gave them the desired opportunity. They charged him against stirring Muslim sentiments and forfeited the security of *The Comrade* even “the unoffending *Hamdard* had to close its doors as well”.¹⁶³ Mohamed Ali took the case to the court, but this time it was no avail. *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard* had to cease publication at least for the time being. This was soon followed by a notice of internment. On 15 May 1915 Mohamed and Shaukat Ali went to the *Jama Masjid* to say their Friday prayers from where they were arrested. ‘On that day many thousands of people had congregated in the said mosque to offer their prayers and to bid adieu to the two patriots who had done all they could, to promote their cause’.¹⁶⁴ The hasty and harsh decision of the government spread Mohamed Ali’s fame and increased his popularity. Since his arrest innumerable meetings of protest have been held in all parts of India and several thousands of telegrams dispatched to the Secretary of State for India urging the release of the Ali Brothers.¹⁶⁵ Mohamed Ali’s incarceration was

condemned by Mazhar-ul-Haque, President of the eighth session of the All India Muslim League at Bombay in December, 1915. He also deplored Mohamed Ali's absence in the meeting.¹⁶⁶ Organisations were also formed in different parts of the country campaigned for the release of a selfless crusader, while friends and political comrades recalled his noble services rendered at the most psychological moment in the history of the community.¹⁶⁷ The perception of the community on the role of the Ali Brothers especially of Mohamed Ali can well be assessed from an address in the following extract: "It would require a volume to enumerate in detail your services in regard to the M.A.O. College the Muslim University, the galvanising of the Muslim community through your brilliant newspapers, *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard*...the raising of funds for Muslim victims in the Balkan War, the organising of a competent and well-equipped medical mission for The Turkish wounded. Your restoration to liberty is a mark of profound rejoicing to us...Your presence in our midst will stimulate our community into the solidarity seriously imperiled during the five years of agonising ordeal".¹⁶⁸

Viceroy Lord Hardinge officially justifying the arrest informed the Secretary of State that, "Mohamed Ali leaves trouble behind him wherever he goes. Recently, he was in Lahore and addressed the students in the Medical College, the result being that a few days later, 14 or 15 medical students went off to Afghanistan nominally to raise the tribes against us. Mohamed Ali also went to Aligarh College and created trouble, the result being that the Lieutenant Governors of The Punjab and the United Provinces asked the Government of India to prevent these two agitators [Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali] from entering their Provinces. This was, in my opinion, sufficient reason for their internment".¹⁶⁹

Mohamed Ali's internment was condemned by Mazhar-ul-Haque President of the eighth session of the Muslim League in December, 1915.¹⁷⁰ Despite internment Mohamed Ali was included in the committee that was framed to consider a scheme of reforms by M.A. Jinnah. He commanded such a high regard that he was elected president in his absentia in the tenth session (December, 1917-January, 1918) of the Muslim League.¹⁷¹ After their arrest they were interned in Mehrauli. It was not far from Delhi and so large number of people visited them every day. Alarmed by this the Government moved them to Lansdowne a small hill station and imposed additional restriction on their activities such as a censorship over private letters and stoppage of all sorts of writing for the press.¹⁷² But the small Muslim population of Lansdowne soon discovered that the detainees were among the founders of the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Ka'aba* (Servants of Ka'ba) society, and Shaukat Ali was its secretary, they began to come to them for enlistment as members. This disturbed the Government greatly and orders of their transfer was issued to Chhindwara a far remote place in the Central Province with additional restrictions on receiving visitors.¹⁷³ Mohamed Ali stayed three and half years in this place.

During these lonely years in prison Mohamed Ali did not remain inactive. He "had enough and undisturbed peace and quiet to read the Quran and thoroughly soak ourselves in that perennial fountain of Truth that the gathering dust of thirteen centuries has not been able to choke or dry".¹⁷⁴ The study of the Quran thus left a profound and far reaching effect on Mohamed Ali's mind. This was also evident from his own words, "I had found a new meaning in life and in this world and an entirely new significance in Islam".¹⁷⁵ Henceforth the fundamentals of Islam became his main source which subsequently inspired him in the spirit of attaining independence of the country from alien servitude.

In conclusion an analysis of Mohamed Ali's political career reveals that initially his main aim was to work for the wellbeing of his community. In pursuance of this objective he joined the All India Muslim League the only possible organisation of the Muslims and presented his considered view vis-a-vis the interests of his community and issues of other importance in its different session. During this time, Mohamed Ali left civil service for its confined nature and opted journalism as a means to assist his own community in the prevalent political situation entailed by the Morley-Minto reforms. Serving alongside the interests of his own community Mohamed Ali Also tried to remove the misgivings of the Hindus caused by the reforms and pleaded for Hindu-Muslim rapprochement which he felt necessary for the development of national unity and progress. It was from this realisation that he toiled hard to incorporate the resolution of attainment of self-government as the aim of the Muslim League in its council session. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 was the culmination of this effort. During this period Mohamed Ali's relation with the old guard loyalist leadership was strained because they considered his radical stance detrimental to the interest of the community. The young educated section of the Muslims however lend their support to his efforts. Initially Mohamed Ali was moderate in his criticism towards the government and maintained close touch with the officials for he believed that attachment with the British was useful for the interest of Indian Muslims. But this attitude of Mohamed Ali did not last long. For successive events since 1911 shook his confidence on the British with regard to their policy hostile to Muslim interest perused at home and abroad. Nevertheless, Mohamed Ali maintained his cool and remained loyal to the government till his internment in 1915. During the lonely years of imprisonment, Mohamed Ali was possessed by Islam, which transformed him into an anti-imperialist and inspired him for struggle to win the freedom of India from British domination.

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48. *Pakistan Times*, May 29, 1966, Magazine, pp.1& 4, *A rare letter of Mohammad Ali*, Dr.S.R.Wasti.
49. *Ibid.*
50. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.72.
51. Rahman, *Consultation*, *op.cit.*, p.99.
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54. Rahman, *Consultation*, *op.cit.*, p.99.
55. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.21.
56. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I *op.cit.*, p.77.
57. *Ibid*, p.82.
58. *Ibid*, pp.133-134.
59. *Ibid*, p.197.
60. *Ibid*, 197-198.
61. *Ibid*, p.198.
62. The conference was held at Allahabad in 1910 on the initiative of Sir William Wedderburn for the purpose of exchanging notes and holding friendly discussions on all questions affecting the general wellbeing of the country. One hundred leaders of Hindus and Muslims on a ratio of 60:40 were invited. But it did not produce the desire results, although a good atmosphere was created, Noman, *Muslim India*, *op.cit.*, pp.111-112 ; *Freedom Movement*, *op.cit.*, pp.119-120.

63. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.199.
64. *Ibid*, pp.208-209.
65. *Ibid*, p.215.
66. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.35.
67. *Iqbal, Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.58.
68. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.255.
69. *Ibid*.
70. *Ibid*.
71. *Ibid*, p.257.
72. *Ibid*.
73. *Watson*, *op. cit.*, p.13.
74. *Ibid*.
75. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, pp.51-52.
76. *Ibid*, p.52.
77. Noman, *Muslim India*, *op.cit.*, p.66.
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79. Moinul (ed.), *Life and Work*, *op.cit.*, p.23.
80. *The Comrade*, 16 December 1911.
81. Haq (ed.), *Life and Work*, *op.cit.*, pp. 85-86.
82. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.262.
83. *Ibid*.
84. Robinson, *Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.203.
85. *The Comrade*, 16 January 1912.
86. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I. *op.cit.*,p.250.
87. *Ibid*.
88. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.261.
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91. Jafri, *Selections, op.cit.*, p.251.
92. Shan Muhammad, *The growth of Muslim Politics in India (1900-1919)*, Delhi, 1991, p.197.
93. *Ibid*, p.139.
94. Robinson, *Separatism, op.cit.*, p.204.
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98. *Omnibus*, “A nationalist Conscience”, *op.cit op. cit.*, p.37.
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100. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.69 ; Jafri (ed.) *Selections, op.cit.*, p.189.
101. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.70.
102. Shan Muhammad, *The growth of Muslim Politics, op.cit.*, p.141.
103. Hasan, *Ideology and Politics, op.cit.*, p.20 ; Shan Muhammad, *The growth of Muslim Politics, op.cit.*, p.138.
104. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway, op.cit.*, p.17.
105. Hasan, *Ideology and Politics, op.cit.*, p.20.
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107. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.75.
108. *Ibid*, p.79.
109. *Ibid*, p.74.
110. *Ibid*, p.75.
111. *Freedom Movement, op.cit.* p.209.
112. *Omnibus*, “A nationalist Conscience”, *op.cit.*, p.69.
113. Gail Minault, *The khilafat movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, Delhi, 1982, pp.35-36, Bamford, *Histories of the Non-Cooperation, op.cit.*, p.113.
114. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.148.

115. *Ibid*, pp.56-57.
116. The deputation was consisted by Raja of Mahmudabad, Vikar-ul-Mulk, Dr. Ziauddin and Aftab Ahmed Khan, Rahman, *Consultation, op.cit.*, p.265.
117. *Ibid*, pp.265-266.
118. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.59 ; Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p.130 ; Rahman, *Consultation, op.cit.*, p.266 ; Aparna Basu, *The Growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898-1920*, Delhi, 1974, p.165.
119. Shan Muhammad, *The growth of Muslim Politics, op.cit.*, p.142.
120. Rahman, *Consultation, op.cit.*, pp.266-267.
121. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p.131; Basu, *The Growth of Education, op.cit.*, p.168.
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126. Robinson, *Separatism, op.cit.*, p.213 ; Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali, op.cit.*, p.213.
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134. Yusufi, *Maulana Mohamed Ali, op.cit.*, p.227.

135. Haq, (ed.) *Life and Work, op.cit.*, p.89.
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147. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan, vol.I. op.cit.*, p.313 ; Haq, (ed.) *Life and Work, op.cit.*, p. 90.
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149. *Ibid*, pp.258-259.
150. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.269.
151. Minault, *The khilafat movement, op.cit.*, p.56.
152. Hasan, (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics, vol.I. op.cit.*, p.185.
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161. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.82.
162. Jafri (ed.) *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.524.
163. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, pp.83-84.
164. Ganesh, *Life, Services and Trial*, *op.cit.*, p.89.
165. *Ibid*, pp.88-89.
166. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, pp. 343-344.
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168. *Ibid*, p.27.
169. Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.113 ; Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.25-26.
170. Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I. *op.cit.*, p.343.
171. *Ibid*, p.400.
172. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, pp.89,94.
173. *Ibid*, pp.106-107.
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CHAPTER-IV

Evolution of Mohamed Ali's Political Ideals: His Vision of Islam as a political Ideal, External contacts, Sources of His Inspiration

Mohamed Ali began his career as a politician of secular outlook. In the first phase of his political activities he was more interested in domestic politics than religion. His initial aim was to assist his own community in the existing political fabric under the British rule. For this reason he opted the career of journalism regarding which he said that, “it was not a religious call” rather “it was more the secular affairs of my community that seemed to require this alteration in my plans”.¹ His perception of Islam as he said sometime later was largely a formal matter for him.² He did not consider religion initially as a practical basis for Muslim politics in India. He was not even concerned about the religious aspects of the fact that Muslims were living under a non-Muslim power.³ But the situation changed on account of British policies pursued in India and towards the Muslim world. The annulment of the partition of Bengal, the Tripolitan and Balkan wars, the rejection of the Muslim University demand, the Cawnpore mosque incident, and finally the First World War against Turkey, all these events had profoundly influenced Mohamed Ali and led him to believe that the British government was no longer sincere to protect the interests of the Muslims on whom they loyally relied upon for the security of their community and religion as well. Thus a sense of Muslim identity overcast his previous view. He was gradually drifted towards religion and began to express his pent-up feeling through his newspaper *The Comrade* which

the government felt threatened for the peace and stability of British India. The present study portrays how Mohamed Ali was inspired by the creed of Islam which transformed him from a secular politician to an exponent of Islamic idealism, his synthesis with his newly acquired religious vision with politics and its impact on his subsequent activities.

When the First World War broke out Mohamed Ali was interned by the government of India for security concern. The lonely years in prison was a turning point for Mohamed Ali, because it made him more devoted to Islam and enabled him to imbue himself afresh in his Islamic heritage. It was perhaps this time that Mohamed Ali made a systematic study of Islam. During the solitude of his interment he spent most of his time in reading the Quran and the works of Imam Ghazzali and Maulana Shibli Numani. At the same time he also read the *Sihah-i-Sittah*, a compilation of the Prophets Traditions (hadith) and the treatises of T.W. Arnold and the Poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi and Mohammad Iqbal. Such reading helped him to fill his gaps on the doctrines and ethical codes of Islam and he became aware of the strong links which bounded Muslims throughout the world.⁴

The study of the Quran during the enforced leisure introduced Mohamed Ali with a new meaning in life and entirely a new significance in Islam. The main tenets of Islam which had erstwhile appeared to him 'little more than a bundle of doctrines and commandments now acquired 'a new coherence and as it were, fell suddenly into place, creating an effect of unity such I had never realised before'.⁵ According to him the Quran is a book of guidance regulating all the activities of those who profess Islam.⁶

Mohamed Ali's vision of Islam thus took a comprehensive form that incorporates all important aspects of life. To him Islam is not a ritual confined inside the mosque, "it is a complete scheme of life, a perfect code of right conduct and a comprehensive social system as wide as the human race and in fact as wide as the entire creation".⁷ In his view there was no distinction between spiritual and temporal affairs. Religion to him was an "interpretation of life",⁸ which guided man in every concern,⁹ and for this reason he spurned the notion of segregation of politics from religion. Because it would confine the scope of Islam in non-spiritual matters, which was against the spirit and injunctions of the Quran and the practices of the Holy Prophet.¹⁰ Expressing his view on the matter he said, "I must disprove that the doctrine that politics should be separated from religion, which either meant that Mussalmans should not be allowed to follow their religion which governed their politics as every other aspect of their private or public life, or that politics should be divorced from all spirituality and should become the plaything of pretenders and self-seeking charlatans".¹¹ According to Mohamed Ali secularism is a Western concept which cannot be exercised in the East. In the West politics defines the limits of religion, while in the East politics were still regulated by religion.¹² He remarked that, "what politics is to the West today, religion is still to the East"¹³

Mohamed Ali's new orientation after his study of Islam and its history also made him conscious about the significance of the disintegration of the Muslim states and felt the need that Indian Muslims should identify themselves with the misfortunes of their coreligionists around the world. Such thinking betrays his predisposition towards the promotion of the idea of the Brotherhood of Islam or Pan Islamism. But this idea did not emerge from his own imagination. He advocated it

because the spirit of Islam called for the unity of the Muslims.¹⁴ Islam as a religion and social system binds all Muslims together. It approves neither the sanctity of colour nor the virtue of geography. By offering a set of common ideals, it offers the only rational basis for unity and cooperation among its followers. “The sympathies of a Muslim are co-extensive with his religion because They have been bred into him by the unifying spirit of his creed”.¹⁵ According to Mohamed Ali “this spiritual unity would have been of no avail if it did not provide a social unity”.¹⁶ He laid great stress on “the main principles underlying the social synthesis ...throughout the Islamic world”.¹⁷

Mohamed Ali’s aim was to achieve certain social and religious ideals. The protection of Islamic institutions in India and abroad and the promotion of the concept of Muslim Brotherhood were the ideals which had a great emotional and religious appeal to him.¹⁸ Mohamed Ali’s notion of Pan Islamism was the result of his intense study and profound thought on religion. His cardinal point of view was based on the concept of *umma*,¹⁹ as he said accordingly that, “the basis of Islamic Sympathy is not a common domicile or common parentage, but a common outlook on life and common culture. And the embodiment of that common culture is the *Khilafat*”.²⁰

Mohamed Ali viewed Pan-Islamism and Nationalism as compatible ideologies.²¹ He attempted to synthesise between Islamic Universalism and Indian Nationalism.²² This became evident from his own assertion, ‘I believe in theocracy’, he said ‘that is my sovereign. I say God is my sovereign first’²³ “where God commands I am a Muslim first, a Muslim second and a Muslim last, and nothing but a Muslim... .. but where India is concerned, where India’s freedom is concerned,

where the welfare of India is concerned, I am an Indian first, an Indian second, an Indian last, and nothing but an Indian”.²⁴ To clarify his stance and harmonious blending of India and Islam he further added that, “I belong to two circles of equal size, but which are not concentric. One is India, and the other is the Muslim world”.²⁵ He admitted that Muslims of India are “the blood brothers of the Hindus”, but there are millions outside the confines of India who are their brothers in faith. ‘Islamic brotherhood he said is the greatest gift of the Holy Prophet’. It is a priceless heritage, the wonder of the age the most vital and binding human cement assigned by the divine providence²⁶

Mohamed Ali’s emotional disposition in religious affairs was associated with his response to events in Turkey. Because the Sultan of Turkey was the successor of the Prophet, Commander of the Faithful and Custodian and protector of the Holy places, *Makkah* and *Madinah* situated in the area known as *Jazirat al-Arab*. Which according to the injunctions of the Prophet must remain under Muslim sovereignty with the *Khalifah* as its warden. His sympathy for Turkey was therefore, “not political or territorial but religious”.²⁷

Mohamed Ali’s idea of *Khilafat* and its significance derived further inspiration from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s description of ‘political centre’, according to which, the fundamental principles of Islam required international solidarity of all Muslims and the unity of the Muslim community was integrally connected with the centralised guidance of the *Khalifah*. The *Khalifat* knits scattered individual Muslims together in an organic whole and so without the *Khalifah*, the collective existence of the Muslims as ordained in the Quran was not possible. Echoing Azad’s rationale Mohamed Ali also maintained that

Islam had two centres, the ‘personal centre’ was the *Khalifah* and the ‘local centre’ was the Island of Arabia which was the Sanctuary of Islam.²⁸ Mohamed Ali’s concern for *Khilafat* was not merely a respect for religious principles, it was based solely on scriptural authority.²⁹ The classical theorists endorsed the Authority of *Khalifah* as the defender of the faith, who wielded influence to ensure the observance of sharia by the Muslims.³⁰ This is why Mohamed Ali considered the *Khilafat* as the ‘most essential institution of the Muslim community throughout the world’³¹ and its protection a sacred duty.

He was of the opinion that the spiritual force of Islam did not rely upon political superiority. But what concerned him most was ‘the weakening of temporal power of Islam to the extent that it might become liable to suffer, without adequate power to prevent, the curtailment of its spiritual influence through the pressure of the temporal power of rival creeds’³²

The defence of the *Khalifah* and the Sanctuaries was therefore, seen as a way of guaranteeing the Muslims the freedom to follow their religious instructions properly. In fact, Mohamed Ali envisioned of a renaissance Islamic world in which all Muslim peoples were united in a strong tie of fraternity. His view of *Khilafat* which he expressed at the *Makkah* Conference in 1926 was that, it would be based on the model of the *Khilafat-i-Rashida*. It would be a democratic institution, elective rather than dynastic and the holder of the office would be chosen by virtue of his godliness and his devotion to Islam.³³ In a word Mohamed Ali visualised a new Islamic world, unified by their common religious culture around the *Khalifah*, presenting a single force to whatever power attempted to jeopardise the rights of any Muslim.³⁴ But the defeat of

Turkey in the First World War and its possible dismemberment by the Allied powers made Mohamed Ali concerned about the future of Islam and the *Khilafat* and the responsibility of the Indian Muslims to protect the dignity and prestige of the sole surviving independent Muslim kingdom symbolising the temporal greatness of Islamic achievements. He anticipated that Indian Muslims as the largest single community in the Islamic World, would yield leadership in the struggle to emancipate Islam.³⁵ Thus by relating Indian Muslims agony with Turkey's future Mohamed Ali's anti British antagonism was intensified further. He was bitterly opposed to the mutilation of any part of the territories of the *Jazirat al-Arab*, and considered it a religious duty more sacred than any other 'to prevent further disintegration of the temporal power of the *Khalifah* which was indispensable for the defence of the faith'.³⁶ Hence Mohamed Ali's earlier activities which had been directed before his internment by communal loyalty, now after his religious experience altered into motivation to Islamic duty.³⁷

While Mohamed Ali was in prison Muslim opinion in India was increasingly began to view the question of *Khilafat* as a religious issue close to their hearts and found it under British threat. It was becoming clear from the statements appearing in various European journals that Britain and her Allies were averse to giving Turkey a fair and just treatment.³⁸ This made Indian Muslim opinion concerned about the fate of the *Khalifah*. Because the *Khilafat* could not sustain without Turkish independence. The mounting Muslim anxiety necessitated organisational efforts and a systematic mobilisation campaign. This found expression in the formation of a *Khilafat* committee in Bombay, in March 1919, followed by branches all over India. The provincial committees were assigned to hold meetings in big cities and towns to attract wide range of

Muslims into the movement by keeping them informed on the *Khilafat* problem and to transform Muslim feelings into effective pressure on the government. The newspapers also played a vital role in creating popular base for the movement. Ever since the Turko-Italian and the Balkan wars Mohamed Ali's journals *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard*, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad's *Al-Hilal* and Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar* constantly gave extensive coverage of the events in Turkey which stimulated the religious consciousness of the Muslims. The vernacular newspapers of different areas were also instrumental in this regard. For the first time Muslims came to be acquainted with the relevance of the *Khilafat* in relation to their religious beliefs.³⁹

The other significant development in the organisational enterprise of the movement for the restoration of the *Khilafat* was the participation of the *ulama*. The Muslim professional men who until now dominated the Muslim politics felt the need of the support of the *ulama* to rally public opinion. Contacts were therefore, established with the *ulama*. Leaders like Abdul Bari and Maulana Kifiatullah were invited to the meetings and given important position on the platform for adding weight to the *Khilafat* demands.⁴⁰ The first important move in this direction was initiated by Maulana Abdul Bari of *Firingi Mahal*, Lucknow. In May 1913 assisted by Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali Abdul Bari establish the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Ka'aba* (Society for the Servants of the *Ka'aba*). Although designed purely for religious purposes it provides the basis of fusion between the *ulamas* and the western educated Muslims. Apart from prominent *ulamas* like Maulana Abdul Bari and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad the *Anjuman* was also represented by men of professional rank namely Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk former Secretary of Aligarh College and of

course the Ali brothers as its members.⁴¹The alliance was important in the sense because it shows that the western educated could work concertedly on purely religious affairs, for common ends.⁴²Regarding this accord between the religious and the men of 'New Light' Mohamed Ali observed that, "The orthodox and the anglicised were drawn together and as in a flash of lighting, saw that after all they were not so unlike each other as they had imagined Once more Muslim society in India presented a level of uniformity and the bitterest opponents of a generation ago stood shoulder to shoulder, working together with great zeal and with a mutual appreciation of the good points which each lacked himself, but which the other possessed. If even a decade previously any one had ventured to foretell such a result, he would have been laughed at for such a fantastic prophesy..."⁴³

At the annual session of the Muslim League in December 1918 Dr. Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan in an attempt to persuade the *ulama* converted the Muslim League aim from protecting political rights of Indian Muslims to protecting the religious interests as well as both inside and outside India.⁴⁴ This created a trust and confidence of the leading *ulama* on the men of professional background, which was evident when Dr. Ansari and Shuaib Qureshi were invited at the same time to speak at a meeting at the *Juma Masjid*, Delhi. There they spoke in favour of the Muslim League and proposed that Mohamed Ali and Mohammad Husain be represented at the Paris Peace Conference.⁴⁵ In this way through the concerted efforts of the *ulama* and the western educated men, utilising the provincial and local committees the movement for the preservation of the *Khilafat* took an organised form.

The next crucial step after the formation of the Bombay *Khilafat* committee was an All-India Muslim Conference held on 21 September in Lucknow. The Conference was attended by a sizeable delegates including a large number of *ulama*. The most important resolution of the Conference was the decision to observe an All India *Khilafat* Day on October 17, 1919.⁴⁶ The observance of the All India *Khilafat* Day was a huge success. The effectiveness of *Khilafat* propaganda and the depth of its penetration among different groups of Muslims was well demonstrated. Muslims living in different parts of the country observed the Day spontaneously. Besides it marks the beginning of a more aggressive approach on the part of some of its leaders who now began to realise that the only way to save the *Khilafat* was to keep pressure on the government by intensifying the agitation.⁴⁷

The *Khalifat* Day was significant for yet another reason because it brought M.K. Gandhi into the forefront of the *Khilafat* agitation. Impressed with widespread excitement generated by the internment of the Ali brothers and the bruised feelings of constant disregard showed to the religious sentiments of the Muslims by the British, he saw a way to gain Muslim adherence to the drive for self-government which he called *Swaraj*.⁴⁸ The question of Ali brothers release brought Gandhi into contact with Abdul Bari the religious mentor of Mohamed Ali. They met in Delhi in March 1918 and Abdul Bari wanted to enlist Gandhi's support to secure the release of Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali from interment.⁴⁹ Gandhi took up the cause seriously. For he had worked with Muslims in South Africa and after his return to India, he was keen to establish contacts with Muslim leaders. He met Mohamed Ai and his brother Shaukat Ali in Aligarh and Delhi in 1915. He also attempted to visit them in the Chhindwara prison but was denied

permission by the government. On 31 December 1917, Gandhi attended the Muslim League session at Calcutta and was inspired by observing the excitement and resentment on the detention of the Ali brothers assured the delegates that the Hindus were with them to a man in their just struggle for the release of Mohamed Ali and his brother. In a letter to the Viceroy on 1 January 1918, Gandhi urged that the Ali brothers were loyal to the British government and their internment was causing great bitterness in India among both Hindus and Muslims and he pleaded for their release. But his request was overruled.⁵⁰ Gandhi laid great importance to his relation with Mohamed Ali because he wanted to secure his cooperation in promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. In a letter to Mohamed Ali Gandhi wrote, "My interest in your release is quite selfish, we have a common goal and I want to utilise your services to the uttermost in order to reach that goal. In proper, the solution of the Muslim question lies in the realisation of the *Swaraj*".⁵¹ He firmly believed that if the Hindus and the Muslims worked together, self-government could be achieved. So he devoted himself for securing a lasting unity between the two communities. He assumed Mohamed Ali as a representative of Muslim opinion and an ideal instrument for creating a Hindu-Muslim alliance with the object of attaining *Swaraj*. For to him *Swaraj* meant not merely a political Home Rule, but a state of communal harmony and Mohamed Ali was valuable to him for cementing a communal alliance.⁵²

Gandhi's efforts for the release of Mohamed Ali and his brother made an impression upon them. His notion of *Swaraj* was two dimensional, self-rule for India as an independent nation and self-rule for each individual Indian. This attracted Mohamed Ali, because it appeared to him not only as an assurance of freedom from British

colonial rule but also at the same time allayed any fears of Hindu domination in that promised independent India.⁵³

Thus Gandhi was successful in enlisting the support of Mohamed Ali for his non-violent programme. He also succeeded in utilising the resentment nurtured against Britain's policy towards the *Khalifah* of Turkey and galvanising Muslim support for the *Satyagraha* or non-violent programme amid rumours that, the Rowlatt Bills were intended to intimidate and prevent the Muslims from giving trouble so as to facilitate the dismemberment of Turkey.⁵⁴

In May 1919 at a *Khilafat* meeting in Bombay Gandhi emphasised that the *Khilafat* question was 'the greatest of all, greater even than that of the repeal of the Rowlatt legislation; for it affects the religious susceptibilities of millions of Muslims'.⁵⁵ He also urged the Muslims to 'make a move at once in the desired direction' before it was too late to do anything.⁵⁶ Gandhi's first opportunity to play an important part in the *Khilafat* movement appeared at the All India Muslim Conference in Lucknow on 21 September 1919, where he supported the resolution for observing the *Khilafat* Day and appealed to his co-religionists to join the Muslims and 'thus put a sacred seal on the Hindu-Muslim bond.'⁵⁷

The impressive response to the *Khilafat* Day encouraged Gandhi and so from October 1919 he began to take more active part in the *Khilafat* movement. On 23 and 24 November he attended the All India *Khilafat* Conference held in Delhi and supported the resolution to the boycott the Peace Celebrations to send deputations to England and withhold cooperation with the government if the *Khilafat* question was

not settled according to the desire of the Muslims.⁵⁸ Thus before the release of Mohamed Ali the demand for the preservation of the Turkish *Khilafat* had crystallised into an organised movement.

Mohamed Ali was released from prison on 28 December 1919. With his release the *Khilafat* movement reached a new level of intensity. Years of prison could not dispirit him. Soon after his release, he went straight to Amritsar where the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League were holding simultaneous sessions. At the Congress session presided by Motilal Nehru Mohamed Ali was directly elected as a delegate at the proposal of the Chairman of the reception Committee. The meeting expressed its full solidarity with the Muslims on *Khilafat* issue and Motilal prevailed on Mohamed Ali to take part in the deliberations.⁵⁹ His entry in the Congress marked the beginning of an historic phase in the history of the nationalist movement and the climate of Hindu-Muslim unity and amity was never so pervasive.⁶⁰ The approach of Mohamed Ali's speech in the Congress session was anti-colonial. He said that, he had been interned for criticising the wrongs done by the British government to India and Islam and will continue to do so even if it mean returning to prison. Referring to the massacre at Amritsar on 13 April, 1919 and the government's reaction to it he related that it penetrated not only India's body but affected its soul as well. He emphasised that merely passing of resolution would not bring desired effect until people resolve to accomplish the ideals of their resolutions and must be determined to endure all sorts of sufferings to secure for the coming generations 'a free India and not an India of born slaves'.⁶¹

His speech at the Muslim League session which was presided by Hakim Ajmal Khan was concerned mainly with religious affairs. He spoke on the absolute supremacy of Allah and expressed his willingness to sacrifice everything even his life for the cause of Islam.⁶² He maintained that Muslims were subjects of Allah and not of Great Britain and urged the audience to defend the honour of the Holy Places at the cost of their lives.⁶³

At the same time and venue Mohamed Ali participated the *Khilafat* Conference presided over by his elder brother Shaukat Ali and also attended by Dr. M.A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abdul Bari and others. In the session Mohamed Ali along with his brother Shaukat Ali issued a manifesto, which included sober methods like sending deputation to the Viceroy and creation of a *Khilafat* fund with a target of ten lakhs of rupees.⁶⁴ But the most important part of it was the revision of the constitution of the Central *Khilafat* Committee by placing its rules on a strong, effective and functioning basis and incorporate in its objective “to secure fair terms for Turkey through approaching British Ministers”.⁶⁵ The Conference also decided to send a delegation to England to plead the Indian Muslim view on the *Khilafat* question.

In accordance with the decision of the Muslim leaders as referred to in the above manifesto, an influential deputation of Indian leaders representing both Hindus and Muslims waited upon the Viceroy on 19 January, 1920. It was led by Dr. M.A. Ansari and consisted by M. K. Gandhi, Shaukat Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abdul Bari, Mohamed Ali's religious preceptor, Hasrat Mohani, and others. The address which was presented to the Viceroy was prepared by Mohamed Ali and was signed by twenty seven

prominent leaders, reiterated the *Khilafat* demands and declared that Muslims' could not accept any settlement which might jeopardise their eternal salvation.⁶⁶ The Viceroy sympathetically assured the deputation to place Muslim opinion before the Peace Conference and replied that, the war was not a war between Turkey and Britain, it involved other great powers also. The future of Turkey was also not being decided by His Majesty's government but by the representatives of all the powers⁶⁷. The Viceroy thus did not give any assurance to the delegation about the fate of Turkey. But he tried to pampered the deputationists with sympathetic words and expressed his hope that whatever the decision, the Muslims of India would remain staunch in the allegiance and loyalty to their King Emperor.⁶⁸ The reply of the Viceroy did not satisfy the deputationists and the following day they issued a rejoinder in which they openly declared that if the peace terms were unfavourable to 'Muslim religion and sentiments', it would be impossible for them to give the assurance of loyalty which the Viceroy had hoped for.⁶⁹

On 1 February 1920, the *Khilafat* Delegation led by Mohamed Ali left Bombay to plead the Indian Muslim view on the *Khilafat* question. The members of the Delegation were Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, the disciple and successor of Shibli Numani, Syed Hussain, Editor Independent (Allahabad) a paper owned by Motilal Nehru, and Abul Kasem. Hasan Muhammad Hayat an old friend of Mohamed Ali, also went along as its secretary.⁷⁰

The Delegation arrived in London on 26 February, 1920.⁷¹ After his arrival Mohamed Ali found the atmosphere was not exactly of a congenial nature. It was highly prejudiced against the Turks. When this became clear to him, Mohamed Ali on his arrival went straight to the

House of Commons, which was debating on the future of Constantinople. He witnessed from the speech of the Prime Minister to the majority of the members that there was a widespread antipathy towards Turkey and little sign of any sympathy or understanding. There was a strong volume of influential opinion in England who wanted Turkey to be driven out of European soil.⁷² But Mohamed Ali was not a person to be easily discouraged. Realising the gravity of the situation he devoted himself to deal with the matter. He made appointments without any delay with Cabinet Ministers. On March 2, 1920, the Delegation met H.A.L Fisher the Education Secretary on behalf of Montague as he was indisposed at that time. Mohamed Ali reiterated the demands that, since the *Khalifah* as ordained by Islam was charged with the function to unite both temporal and spiritual work, his authority must remain unharmed and for the defence of the faith the integrity of the Ottoman territories must be maintained.⁷³ He insisted that their demands were purely religious and that they came to England as Muslims and not representatives of the Turks. Fisher inquired that if Muslims could not approved of European mandates in the Arab territories like Syria and Palestine then how could they accept British rule in India? Mohamed Ali tactfully answered that circumstances of the two were not the same. Arabia contains the Holy Places, which according to the injunctions of the Prophet prohibits non-Muslim control. On the other hand in absence of any such obligation British rule in India was permissible and it was bounden duty of the Muslims to remain loyal to the government so long as their religious freedom was respected.⁷⁴ The Delegation also proposed to visit Constantinople and interview the *Khalifah*. But Fisher avoided this point in his reply.⁷⁵

On March 17 the Delegation met with Lloyd George the British Prime Minister. Mohamed Ali again acted as the spokesman. In his conversation Mohamed Ali made eloquent exposition of the *Khilafat* cause tracing the whole history of the affairs and surveying Muslim point of view in regard to Turkish question.⁷⁶ He made specific references to the Prime Ministers pledge and religious obligations of the Muslims.⁷⁷ But Lloyd George who was averse to Turkey, tried to put the Delegation in an awkward situation. He asked Mohamed Ali to explain whether he was opposed to Arab independence. Mohamed replied in the affirmative but said that he was not opposed to the idea of self-government under Turkish sovereignty. It is interesting to note that while the British government was willing to give independence to the Arab states it was not interested in applying the same policy with regard to India, which was then struggling for self-rule. Referring to the situation in India Mohamed Ali said that having known the position of subject races he would certainly not deny autonomy to the Arabs. He also proposed a scheme of a satisfactory settlement between the Turks and the Arabs.⁷⁸ “We have come here in the interests of peace and reconciliation There have been differences between the Arabs and the Turks, but I hope the Emir Feisal, when he looks upon the matter from the point of view of a Muslim, as he is bound to do, will realise that his own personal ambitions, and even the ambitions of the Arabs, can be entirely satisfied within the scheme of Turkish sovereignty.”⁷⁹

The Prime Minister however, was not convinced with Mohamed Ali’s argument who replied that, “We cannot apply different principles in the settlement of a Muhammadan country to those which we sternly applied in our settlement with the Christian Communities with whom we were also at war.”⁸⁰ Mohamed Ali was quite disappointed at this. In

response to the Prime Minister's reply he firmly articulated that, it was not possible to compromise the issue of *Khilafat* since religious obligations were concerned and the duty entrusted upon them by their people. Muslims were obliged by religious compulsions which must be respected at all times, even their loyalty to their Majesty was also conditioned entirely by freedom in matters of their faith. He maintained that the preservation of the temporal power of the *Khalifah* with regard to his wardenship of the Holy Places were related to religious obligations and that they would always place those first.⁸¹

In a letter to Shaukat Ali describing his reaction of the interview with Lloyd George Mohamed Ali wrote: "What we said did not matter in the least to Mr. Lloyd George, and he gave a reply which had evidently been prepared ever so long ago To this one sided argument I naturally wanted to reply; but the man had been showing impatience throughout the hearing, and even with my dexterity I could not put in much under the guise of a sort of vote of thanks to him for giving us a hearing. He was so impatient that to reply without quarrelling on the spot quite violently, I could not have proceed any further. But I made sufficiently clear to him and to the whole world that this is not the end of the matter, and that, as the ambassadors of the nation, we could convey to it his reply and for our part declared that in any case our allegiance to God and his Prophet took precedence over any allegiance that we owe to any earthly sovereign."⁸²

However, despite little possibility of any tangible consequence Mohamed Ali did not gave up campaigning. With the aid of George Lansbury and other Labour party members, he was able to arrange some public meetings, which enabled him to explain clearly the Muslim view

of the case before the British people. Meetings were arranged for him at such well-known places as the Albert Hall and Kingsway Hall.⁸³ He also addressed at the Labour party session in Scarborough.⁸⁴

The speech he delivered at the Essex Hall, London on March 23, 1920 was significant claiming alongside *Khilafat* demands and insisting on their religious character, another theme added was that they do not represent the Turks but advocates claims of the Indian Muslims. In his pronouncements, Mohamed Ali also addressed the unrest in India. Speaking about the religious freedom and its defence he said that, “Viscount Bryce wants the Allies to use the argument of the “Big Stick” against the *Khilafat*.... Well so long as there are your Bryce and your “Big Sticks”, we too, must have some sort of a stick for the defence of our faith.... if you think you can please the Muslims of India by allowing the Turks to retain Constantinople in such a way that the *Khalifah* is worse than the Pope at the Vatican ...worse for he would be the prisoner of people of an alien race and faith, then ladies and gentlemen, you know very little of Islam and the Muslims, or of India and the Indians. That affront shall never be tolerated, and if you think that you can make out that all this “agitation” is “fictitious” and “factitious”, then you will be compelling the Indian Muslim solidarity to disprove this lie in a manner that will be far too unambiguous for your tastes or for ours. Beware, beware”.⁸⁵ Mohamed Ali thus identified Muslim interests with Indian interests in his speech and warned that, the tremendous popular enthusiasm that had erupted all over India for the cause of *Khilafat* should not be ignored.⁸⁶

The Delegation also visited France and Italy the two members of the Allied powers. In France, they met with some success in influencing

public opinion but failed to win over the French government. Milleraund the French Premier gave no encouragement. The Italian Prime Minister Giolitti was more responsive and promised all help to the Delegation. He even allowed Mohamed Ali to use the Italian diplomatic bag at Rome to correspond with Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish Nationalists. The Delegation also met the Pope and re-established contacts with Taalat Pasha and the Committee of Union and Progress in Territet (Switzerland). But failed to obtain any effective outcome.⁸⁷

Finding it difficult in influencing the British opinion, the *Khilafat* Delegation sought to approach the Peace Conference that was sitting at San Remo (North Western Italy). But on 20 April, 1920, British Secretary wired from San Remo that the Indian Delegation could not be given the opportunity of expressing their views before the Supreme Council.⁸⁸

The *Khilafat* Delegation during its visit also did not receive any favourable treatment from the British Press. It practically ignored the activities of the Delegation except making one or two announcements and when made any mention of it often opposes its claims. Mohamed Ali with his fearless characteristic optimism helped starting *The Moslem Outlook* in London and *Echo de Islam* in Paris with the object of keeping India in touch with the opinions of foreign nations on the burning question and providing information to foreign press on views of Muslim India relating to *Khilafat* and other issues. These two organs affect a marked change in European opinion regarding Turkey but could not make any headway to change the attitude of respective European governments.⁸⁹ Having utilised every source of influence, official as

well as non-official, the press as well as the platform in France, Italy and Britain Mohamed Ali realised that it was useless to rely on the good offices of European nations to secure the salvation for Muslim requirements.

He, therefore, maintained close connection with events in India and showed sympathy with the growing intensity for Non-cooperation. Whenever it became clear to him that it would not be possible to affect any changes in the Turkish peace terms, he was confirmed in his conviction that the questions of prestige and leadership of Indian Muslims would have to be settled in India through political means and not in the gatherings or Cabinets of Europe.⁹⁰ In 1920 he wrote to his religious Mentor Abdul Bari from London that “if Muslims wanted to liberate *Ka’aba*, they would have to liberate India first”.⁹¹ He wrote to Shaukat Ali in May that “the real work lies in India and it is you who has to order us, and not the other way about, and we shall return when you recall us”.⁹² He suggested that the *Khalifat* Committee should immediately embark on a programme of action without waiting for the outcomes from Europe and felt that Muslims should participate actively in the Non-cooperation movement by taking it as a religious commitment.⁹³

While the Delegation was still in Europe, the proposed terms of peace with Turkey were made public on 14 May, 1920. It generated a fire of indignation among the Muslim community and gave a new dimension to the *Khilafat* movement. Under the peace terms, Turkey was deprived of its Arab possessions, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Hijaz and other Turkish Provinces of Arab peninsula were put under French and British mandates. Eastern Thrace and Smyrna were ceded to

Greece. Though Constantinople remained Turkish, the portions on the Asiatic and European shores of the Bosphorus was to be internationalised. The other half extending from St. Stefano to Dalma Bagtche was declared a port of international interest under a commission on which Turkey was not even represented. In reality the peace terms dismembered Turkey, imposed authority over the Sultan and retained protectorate of the Holy Places of Islam in non-Muslim hands, which according to the Indian Muslims would affect the status and dignity of the *Khalifah* as the religious head of the community. The efforts of the *Khilafat* Delegation therefore, hardly achieved any success, and it was not unusual because the demands they made were not compatible with British Imperial designs.⁹⁴

The terms of treaty upset the Indian Muslims. They considered it as a disregard to their religious feelings and sentiments. Gandhi in his reactions to the peace proposals termed it as a “staggering blow” to the Indian Muslims and proclaimed that in his view ‘Non-cooperation was the only effective remedy both avoiding violence and for healing the wound inflicted on Mohamedan sentiment’.⁹⁵ But this suggestion of Gandhi was not new, because early in March, 1920 he had already declared that Non-cooperation was ‘the only most effective remedy left open to us’.⁹⁶ This decision was endorsed by the Central *Khilafat* Committee on 14 March.⁹⁷ On 2 June a joint meeting of the leaders of All Parties and Central *Khilafat* Committee held in Allahabad reaffirmed the approval of Non-cooperation in four stages,⁹⁸ and appointed a sub-committee with Gandhi as its principal member,⁹⁹ to give practical effect to the movement. The Conference also decided to spread up the activities of its volunteer organisation. On 22 June a memorial signed by a large number of Muslim leaders and forwarded by

Gandhi on behalf of the Central *Khilafat* Committee was submitted to the Viceroy requesting him to urge upon the British Cabinet the vital necessity of reviving the Turkish Peace Terms and holding out the threat that if their suggestions were not adopted they would withdraw cooperation from the government with effect from 1 August, 1920.¹⁰⁰ In a separate letter to the Viceroy explaining his connection with the *Khilafat* demands Gandhi wrote that, 'in his opinion their cause was just' and so he advised the Muslims to embrace Non-cooperation because the peace terms was a direct contravention of the Ministerial pledges which disregarded Muslim sentiment and so as 'a staunch Hindu wishing to live on terms of the closest friendship with his Muslim countrymen' he decided to 'stand by them in their hour of trial.'¹⁰¹

After winning over the *Khilafatists* to his side Gandhi's next difficulty was to persuade his own co-religionists to accept Non-cooperation. At the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in early September, 1920 Gandhi put forward his scheme which called for surrender of titles and honorary offices, refusal to attend levees and durbars, withdrawal from council elections, withdrawal of children from government educational institutions, boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, refusal to serve in Mesopotamia and boycott of foreign goods.¹⁰² Among the *Khilafatists* other than Mohamed Ali who was then leading the *Khilafat* Delegation in London, Shaukat Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Azad, Zafar Ali Khan from Lahore and Mazharul Haq from Bihar all had supported Gandhi solemnly.¹⁰³ After a prolonged debate Gandhi's proposal was carried by majority both in the subjects committee and at the open session. At Nagpur session of the Congress in December, Gandhi once again emerged

victorious, which marked a great personal triumph for him. No doubt, that the Calcutta decision of the Congress gave the *Khilafat* movement the image of being a truly national movement,¹⁰⁴ but this was also true that the triumph of Gandhi at Calcutta and Nagpur session of the Congress was due largely to the overwhelming support of the Muslims for the Non-cooperation programme.¹⁰⁵

Mohamed Ali and the *Khilafat* Delegation reached Bombay on 4 October, 1920. He arrived at such a moment when the Non-cooperation campaign was advancing to its most vital stage. At a large gathering held in the evening of that day to welcome his return, Mohamed Ali said that after careful study of his tour in Europe he reached a definite conclusion that freedom of India was absolutely necessary for the freedom of Islam. He insisted that Muslims should devote themselves whole-heartedly to fight for *Swaraj* by joining the Non-cooperation movement with their non-Muslim brethren, for that is the only possible way to achieve the *Khilafat* aims.¹⁰⁶

Immediately after his return to India Mohamed Ali actively took part in the movement. Aligarh again found the first place on his programme. Non-cooperation had created a new hope for him to fulfil his old cherished dream of an Aligarh, independent of government control, a cultural centre for a revived, self-confident and powerful Muslim Community.¹⁰⁷ On 12 October, 1920, Mohamed Ali along with his brother Shaukat Ali and M.K. Gnadhi reached Aligarh college and addressed at a meeting of the students at the college union club explaining the scheme of Non-cooperation movement. On 23 instant Mohamed Ali along with Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari and others attended a meeting at the college mosque.

In his speech Mohamed Ali elaborated that, the purpose of their movement was to free education from the shackle of slavery. He proposed a scheme of National College and offered himself as its principal. On the other hand Dr. Ansari suggested the name of Abul Kalam Azad as the Dean of the college and announced as its inaugural date on October 29, 1920. Hakim Ajmal Khan also delivered inspiring address to the students to join the movement.¹⁰⁸ In a note to the Honourary Secretary of the college Mohamed Ali informed that “in pursuance of the policy of the All India Muslim League and the Indian National Congress and the Non-Cooperation Committee of the All India *Khilafat* Conference it had been decided to boycott educational institutions functioning on government grants”.¹⁰⁹ An ultimatum was issued to the Board of Trustees, which was signed by Mohamed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Azmal Khan and others to give up grants in aid from the government and warned that if the trustees did not comply by October 29, then direct appeal would be made to the students to boycott the college.¹¹⁰

In the meantime Mohamed Ali accompanied by his cohorts took up residence at the Old Boys Lodge with the aim of motivating the students towards Non-cooperation. Speaking about the purpose of the programme he observed in a speech on 23 October that, “the object of their movement was to free education from the bond of slavery.”¹¹¹ He also urge the students to cease cooperation with a government which so disregarded their religious duties and sentiments.¹¹² Mohamed Ali’s appeal moved the students so much that hundreds of young students responded to his call. It was the first time that students as a body, were drawn into national struggle.¹¹³ The extent of influence of his appeal can be assessed from the statement of Muhammad Abid Husain, an

undergraduate student who wrote on 24 October to Ziauddin, the Principal of the college in the following:

“Respectfully I beg to inform you that, I have got my doubts removed within the last four or five days, and I am now a strong supporter of Non-cooperation I can and will read in your college only in case it is nationalized. Otherwise, I am ready to face the doom awaiting my Non-cooperating brothers”.¹¹⁴

The college authorities were alarmed at this. They took a firm stance and to quell the disturbance expelled the Non-cooperators. When this step failed to produce desired results, they decided to close down the college. The UP government also came to the assistance of the authorities. To arrest further escalation of Non-cooperation it suspended the scholarships of Non-cooperating students. The government also solicited the aid of the Trustees who were the principal financial supporters of the College.¹¹⁵ Thus the college authorities with the backing of the government succeeded in bringing Aligarh under control and the movement lost its pace after the closure of the college on 26 October, 1920.

On October 27, the Honourary Secretary convened a meeting of the Trustees to consider the demands of the Non-cooperators led by Mohamed Ali. In the Meeting Mohamed Ali, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and others stood for the rejection of government funding and the expected charter of the Muslim University but the overwhelming majority of the Trustees who were identified with Aligarh administration decided not to renounce government grant in aid and also expressed their determination to run the institution on old

established lines.¹¹⁶ On the expiry of the ultimatum Mohamed Ali on 29 October announced the establishment of National Muslim University entitled The *Jamia Millia Islamia*. The inaugural ceremony was held at the Aligarh College Mosque.¹¹⁷ Mohamed Ali became its first Vice Chancellor. Gandhi backed this institution and participated in the committee for framing a constitution for the National Muslim University.¹¹⁸ Mohamed Ali devoted himself to giving the *Jamia* a firm Islamic footing. He revived the discourses of Shibli on the Quran and from the very first day of its operation he ensured that ‘the day began with a full hour devoted to the full exegesis of the Quran’.¹¹⁹ But Mohamed Ali’s enthusiasm for the institution did not last long. Because the growing intensity of the movement in the country soon dragged him into active politics. In December 1920, Mohamed Ali resigned from his post and headed for Nagpur with a following of fifty students to attend the sessions of the Congress, the Muslim League and the *Khilafat* Conference.¹²⁰

At the Nagpur Congress session, Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali exerted their influence enrolling large number of Muslim delegates to secure overwhelming majority for Gandhi’s scheme of Non-cooperation.¹²¹ This session was significant for yet another reason, although M.A. Jinnah did not oppose to any strong measure in support of India’s claim he disliked the programme of the Congress and resigned from the party in protest against the ‘pseudo-religious approach to politics’.¹²² But regardless of Jinnah’s exit from the Congress Mohamed Ali devoted himself to the movement and played a key role in bringing the Muslim League into line with the Congress. It was he who at the Nagpur session of the Muslim League proposed a resolution that, “The attainment of *Swaraj* by the people of

India by all peaceful and legitimate means” as the object of the League and had it carried.¹²³ At the *Khilafat* Conference held simultaneously at the same place and time Mohamed Ali moved a resolution that Muslims would remain firm in their demand regarding the *Khilafat* and the *Jazirat-al-Arab*. The resolution was passed unanimously.¹²⁴

In 1921 after attending the session in Nagpur, Mohamed Ali plunged himself wholeheartedly promoting the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation campaign by delivering speeches before crowds and local committees and organising support for the programme. With Gandhi and his elder brother Shaukat Ali, Mohamed Ali was constantly on the move touring all over India preaching the doctrine of Non-cooperation and urging the people to contribute as far as they could to the *Swaraj* and *Khilafat* funds.¹²⁵ His appeal for men and money appears to have had a tremendous effect on the people. By his fiery speeches that were full of sincerity, sentiments and emotions he was able to attract large crowds wherever he went and the audiences who listened to his appeal became a zealous supporter of the Non-cooperation movement. At the *Khilafat* meetings, he influenced major policy decisions and dictated the tone and content of various resolutions.¹²⁶ He espoused not only *Khilafat* but also a variety of causes, which he thought consistent and connected with the central theme of *Khilafat*. ‘He called on parents to withdraw their children from government aided schools, he called on trustees, managers and teachers of government school to help nationalise them, he called on lawyers to suspend practice, he called on merchants to boycott foreign trade, he called on aristocracy to give up their titles, he called on bureaucracy not to help their masters, he asked the Muslims to give up eating beef and asked the Hindus to refrain from obtaining cow protection through legislation, he donned *Khaddar* and asked others to

join him in spinning it, he asked those who stood for working constitutional reform to quit the councils, he asked for funds and volunteers and above all asked for justice for Turkey'.¹²⁷ Thus for Mohamed Ali's boundless enthusiasm, sincerity and earnestness the platform of the *Khilafat* and the Congress became almost identical.

On 8 February 1921, Mohamed Ali addresses a Non-cooperation gathering at Gorakhpur. In his speech, Mohamed Ali urged his Muslim as well as Hindu audiences to join hands with each other for the emancipation of the country. He said that, "If the Muslims love Islam, if they wish to preserve the sanctity of the Quran and Hadith, and if they want to liberate their *Ka'aba* of Jerusalem ... there is only one course open to them at this time. It is to grasp the hands of the Hindu brethren and make the country independent ... In the same way I will tell my Hindu brethren that though they may not bear any love towards the Turks or *Ka'aba* and may have no regard for the Muslims, they love their mother country. Let them show sympathy with the Muslims in their grieves, if they wish to make India free and if they wish to remove the fetters of India. This is the only way to achieve freedom".¹²⁸

At the end of February Mohamed Ali presided over a *Khilafat* Conference at Lucknow where the question of *Swaraj* was brought into prominence, Gandhi was also present in the Conference and delivered a speech explaining the meaning of *Swaraj*. While speaking on the position of various communities in India he said that ' he had joined the *Khilafat* movement to help the Muslims, for to him their success meant *swaraj*'.¹²⁹ Impressed with Gandhi's sayings Mohamed Ali in the course of his speech showing respect and firm belief in Gandhi's leadership said, "I declare today that the Indian army is the army of Mahatma

Gandhi ; the Indian police is the police of Mahatma Gandhi, every man is on the side of Gandhi, nay on the side of religion and country. The aspect of affairs is now quite changed. I see that God hath already issued His commandments”.¹³⁰

The conference also considered the draft constitution of the Central *Khilafat* Committee and passed several resolutions. Noteworthy among them was one expressing thanks to the Amir of Kabul for having agreed to receive the deputation of Indian Muslims in connection with the *Muhajirin* and condemning the refusal of the government to permit the deputation to proceed.¹³¹

It is worth mentioning that in the summer of 1920 the ulama issued a fatwa calling for jihad against the British and *Hijrat* to the *Dar al-Islam* (abode of peace) From the *Dar al-harb* (abode of war). This idea was given added weight by fatwa in favour of the migration by *Maulanas* Abdul Bari and Abul Kalam Azad. But they declared it as an alternative and not a replacement of Non-cooperation.¹³² This suggestion was misconstrued by some agitators and some clerics of Sindh and North West Frontier. Consequently, thousands of Muslims of those areas started migrating to neighbouring Afghanistan, but were turned back by the officials of that country, causing untold miseries to the migrants. The Central *Khilafat* Committee was quite unprepared by this spontaneous movement, and to supervise the situation it resolved to dispatch a delegation to visit Kabul which received the consent of the Amir but the government did not approve of it.¹³³

In the middle of March 1921, Mohamed Ali reached Aligarh. But the District Magistrate who was aware of his influence served a notice

prohibiting him to deliver speeches in Aligarh for several months.¹³⁴ Towards the end of March he attended the meeting of the All India Congress Committee held at the Southern Indian city of Bezwada. At a secret session in April 1921, the Working Committee resolved to hinder recruitment in the army, to approach persons employed in the army, the police and the Civil Services to induce them to resign from the service of the government, to organise volunteer corps to spread Non-cooperation and the Congress creed and establishment of arbitration courts in all towns and villages.¹³⁵

After the Bezwada meeting Mohamed Ali made a tour with Gandhi in Madras to publicise the Non-cooperation scheme. At the Conference of the *Majlis-ul-Ulama* at Erode in the city of Madras on 2 April 1921, Mohamed Ali delivered a violent speech in which he openly stated that, “if the Amir of Afghanistan or any outside power were to invade India, not with a view to its subjugation, but to attack those who wished to subjugate his people, who held the Holy Places of Islam, who wished to crush Islam and to destroy the Muslim faith and the *Khilafat*, then it would be the duty of Muslims not merely to refuse to assist the government but to give up their loins and fight the good fight for Islam”.¹³⁶

The speech created considerable misgivings among a section of Hindus and Gandhi had to allay this Hindu fears and apprehension. Defining his own attitude Gandhi said that, “I would in a sense, certainly assist the Amir of Afghanistan if he waged war against the British government; I would openly tell my countrymen that it would be a crime to help the government, which has lost the confidence of the nation to remain in power. On the other hand, I would not ask India to

raise levies for the Amir.”¹³⁷ Mohamed Ali, also explained his position subsequently in an interview with the representative of the *Independent* newspaper that, “subject to Islamic dictates he was a patriot as he thought Mahatma Gandhi too was first a Hindu and then only a patriot”.¹³⁸ Mohamed Ali thus ruled out the menace of the Hindus as imaginary.

While tours of *Khilafat* Conference continued unabated the leaders laid emphasis on strengthening the relation with the Hindu community. Mohamed Ali and his family gave up eating beef, which was highly appreciated and proudly pronounced by Gandhi. Aversion to cow-slaughtering now added a new theme along with Turkey in Mohamed Ali’s speeches. At the special session of *Jamiat-ul-Ulama* held at Moradabad on 10 and 11 April Mohamed Ali referred to the maintenance of English soldiers who could not live without beef, and held them responsible in India for cow-slaughtering.¹³⁹ As a gesture of goodwill to the Hindu neighbours Mohamed Ali’s religious preceptor Maulana Abdul Bari also appealed to the Muslims to give up cow-killing.¹⁴⁰

On 3 April Mohamed Ali presided over the Madras Muslim Volunteers’ Conference at Erode, where he delivered a fiery speech. In his speech Mohamed Ali made a graphic survey of the Independence of Ireland but did not desire to follow the path. He observed that violence was not the only solution in the world. There were seven and half lakhs of villages in India and if all the villages contributed with a volunteer then he said that, “ we shall not have to wait six or nine months, we shall get *Swaraj* in a month or perhaps, a week because I am not a disbeliever in the absolute docility and peacefulness of our masses”.¹⁴¹

The last part of his speech was significant where he said that, “ we want to prove that it is not necessary to go about making speeches but still carry on the work and correct a government that is based on tyranny. We want the government to mend itself. If it will not mend itself, we have got to do it. We give it a chance. It was I who was against declaring absolute independence in the Congress, because I want to give the British government one more chance, we should honestly give them a chance. We do not want to subvert the government merely for the sake of subversion. We do not hate the government because it is foreign and if we had a government of Indians, which was equally ‘Satanic’, we will hate it all the more. That is the work we have got to do. When we decided at Bezwada that the country was not sufficiently ripe and disciplined to undertake civil disobedience, it was because there were not enough volunteer corps. If you enlist in sufficient numbers the best blood amongst you, the most educated and enthusiastic among you and at the same time exercise self-restraint, *Swarajja* will come to the nation. *Swaraj* will come to the nation when *Swaraj* has come to the individuals. When self-government is within you, it will be with you. Self-government of the individuals will result in the self-government of the nation. We want you to go to the fire and be placed on the anvil so that the leaders may hammer you and you will come out as a true steel which will never bend. I want you to be that steel for we have got to face a very big, bold enemy”.¹⁴²

Mohamed Ali’s speech created a profound impression on the masses and also caused uneasiness in the perception of the government. From April to August 1921 Mohamed Ali addressed at meetings and conferences in various parts of the United Provinces, which set the whole country politically ablaze in an unprecedented way. In April 1921

Viceroy Lord Chelmsford was succeeded by Lord Reading. The new Viceroy on his arrival in India followed the previous government's policy of patiently observing the Non-cooperation movement. Erstwhile in the Viceroy's council a decision had been taken to prosecute all persons convicted of seditious speeches. But in the case of the Ali brothers' government had to think of the undesirable consequences that might possibly ensue on their arrest. The problem for the government was that Gandhi was closely associated with Mohamed Ali and his brother and without Gandhi's persuasion it could not touch the Ali brothers.¹⁴³

Meanwhile, Lord Reading wanted to understand the Non-cooperators point of view and through the arbitration of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who was in good books of government arranged an interview with Gandhi. The Gandhi reading interview took place on 14 May at Simla. During the course of interview, Lord Reading draw the attention to the speeches of the Ali brothers contrary to the doctrine advocated by Gandhi and of their proposed prosecution. Lord Reading also showed him the selected passages from Mohamed and Shaukat Ali's speeches. Gandhi then acknowledged that the phrases might be interpreted out of context as violent, but he was convinced that they did not do it intentionally.¹⁴⁴ Gandhi said that, he would see the brothers soon and asked them to express their regret publicly for the unconditional incitement. The Viceroy on his part also agreed that his government would withhold proceedings against the brothers.¹⁴⁵ At Gandhi's advice the Ali brothers gave a statement repudiating any such intention on their part. The press soon published their statement in the following:

“Friends we have drawn our attention to certain speeches of ours which, in their opinion, have a tendency to incite to violence. We desire to state that we never intended to incite and we never imagined that any passage in our speeches were capable of bearing the interpretation put upon them, but we recognise the force of our friends arguments and interpretations. We, therefore, sincerely feel sorry and express our regret for the unnecessary heat of some of the passages in these speeches and we give our public assurance and promise to all who may require it that so long as we are associated with the movement of Non-cooperation, we shall not directly or indirectly advocate violence at present or at future, nor create an atmosphere preparedness for violence. Indeed, we hold it contrary to the spirit of non-violent Non-cooperation to which we have pledged our word.”¹⁴⁶

After the publication of the statement the government issued an official communiqué saying that, “The immediate object of the government in determining to enforce the law on the present occasion was to prevent incitement to violence and to preserve order...it was urged upon the government, that their immediate object could be attained without recourse to the Criminal Courts. The government consequently suspended further action... So long as the solemn public undertaking contained in the statement issued to the press is observed.”¹⁴⁷The response of the press was instant. They ridiculed Mohamed Ali and his brother and considered their statement as an apology on the part of the greatest Non-cooperators to escape arrest and internment and also credited the government.¹⁴⁸

Mohamed Ali was agitated and expressed his strong denunciation of government’s projection of their statement, which made it seem that

it was dictated by the government. He observed that it was beyond his idea that the statement would be used for their exemption. He made it clear that the so called apology was in reality an expression of regret to some of his friends and that he owed no apology to government.¹⁴⁹ Gandhi realised that it was imprudent of him securing the statement and caused it to be published which certainly left a scar on the image of the Ali brothers. In an effort to remove any misunderstanding between him and the Ali brothers, Gandhi wrote in his weekly journal 'Young India' extolling their dauntless enterprise, that, "I know they are among much maligned men in India. All kinds of motive are attributed to them....Time, I am sure, will disprove all these charges. But it was necessary that no hasty expression of theirs was used against them to damage their character on good faith.... It was in order to safeguard them... against any such imputation that I advised them to make the statement...."¹⁵⁰

Despite this undesirable incident Mohamed Ali's loyalty towards Gandhi remained unwavering. Although he differed with Gandhi's non-violent methods yet he admired Gandhi's techniques of mass mobilisation and was his chief lieutenant.¹⁵¹ Speaking at a mass meeting together with Gandhi in Lucknow, Mohamed Ali asserted that Indian Muslims have chosen the path of non-violent Non-cooperation in the belief that by this course they could best secure the interests of their country and their faith.¹⁵² True to the principle of non-violence he reaffirmed in December, 1923 that 'Our compact in that as long as I am associated with him I shall not resort to the use of force even for the purpose of self-defense'.¹⁵³

Mohamed Ali's fidelity to Gandhi's leadership was no doubt genuine. But it was grounded on political calculation.¹⁵⁴ The *Khilafat* cause more than any other single factor was the driving force behind Gandhi's campaign and in order to sustain his enthusiasm for that cause it was imperative to follow his leadership. In this regard Mohamed Ali wrote in July, 1921 that, "... ...When the Congress was adopting for the first time the *Khilafat* programme of non-violent Non-cooperation, the essential thing was the unity of Hindus and Muslims and even if Muslims had been ready for violence, which they were not, they couldn't have succeeded without Hindu good will. Hitherto the English had ruled over us by playing Hindu against Muslim and Muslim against Hindu. This was their chief strength and our chief weakness. So long before we were free we had made up our minds to bring about a complete entente between Hindus and Muslims...and the best man among the Hindus to deal with was Mahatma Gandhi, a peace-loving and non-violent patriot who was intensely religious without a fury of a theologian and whose honesty all could rely upon. He found us to be equally religious and equally without fury of the theologian, and as Muslims we could not pledge ourselves to remain non-violent in all circumstances, he found that we too regarded force at present to be futile, and above all he could trust our word as much as we trusted him. Even if we ourselves wished to use force immediately, which we did not and could not, we would have lost his support and thus have lost the chance of bringing about the Hindu-Muslim entente and of bringing the government to its senses."¹⁵⁵

However, notwithstanding government attempt to discredit Mohamed Ali and his brother, it could not restrain their enthusiasm for the *Khilafat* cause and the Non-cooperation campaign. While

reaffirming his faith in Gandhi, Mohamed Ali presided over an important All India *Khilafat* Conference at Karachi in July 1921. His lengthy presidential speech was concerned mainly with the apology to government. Dispelling government interpretation of his statement and to recoup his following he reiterated his old demands and said that he could never apologise to government. To inspire the audience in Non-cooperation Mohamed Ali in the course of his speech said that, the British had conquered India not by their big army. “They conquered India by means of the money of India. India became their slave by co-operation: now if India wants her liberty she can get it by Non-cooperation.”¹⁵⁶ The Conference passed many resolutions. The most important among which was that, “The meeting further emphatically declares that in the present circumstances the Holy *Shariat* forbids every Mussalman to serve or enlist himself in the British Army or to raise recruits for it, that it is incumbent on all Muslims in general and all *ulemas* in particular to carry this religious commandment to every Muslim soldier in the British Indian Army. This meeting further declares that in case the British government directly or indirectly, secretly or openly, resumes hostilities against the government of Angora, the Indian Muslims will be compelled in cooperation with the Congress to resort to Civil disobedience and at the next session of the Congress at Ahmedabad to declare India’s independence and the establishment of an Indian Republic.”¹⁵⁷ Such speeches of Mohamed Ali infused a new life into the movement, and his campaign remained unabated. At about the same time the Moplah rebellion broke out in South India and the Madras C.I.D termed the revolt as the outcome of the *Khilafat* agitation. Although the *Khilafat* platforms call of *jihad* was stipulated by appeals for non-violence the simple Moplahs misconstrued the appeal and used the only form of *jihad* they knew.¹⁵⁸

In these circumstances the affair of Mohamed Ali's arrest again came to the fore. At the end of July Viceroy Lord Reading reported to the Secretary of State, Montagu about Mohamed Ali's indulgence in 'wild talk' and his high handedness. He informed him that Mohamed Ali was kept under careful surveillance and if he made violent speeches he would be certainly prosecuted.¹⁵⁹ After Mohamed Ali's speech in Karachi the Viceroy's Executive Council met to discuss the question of his arrest. There were two dissenting notes with strong advice against Mohamed Ali's arrest. But Lord Reading in spite of the advice of his dissenting colleagues was firm in his resolve.¹⁶⁰ On 14 September 1921 Mohamed Ali was arrested from the railway station of Waltair while he was travelling with Gandhi on their way to Madras.¹⁶¹ His trial began on 28 September, 1921 at a court in Karachi. In his famous address to the Jury Mohamed Ali described that neither for self-defense nor for securing his own release but to reveal before the world the bindings of Islamic Laws on Muslims, the trial therefore, was not 'Mohamed Ali and six others verses the Crown' but 'God verses man'. The matter was whether God should dominate over man or should man dominate over God'.¹⁶² He emphasised that a man's first duty was to his God.¹⁶³ The jury however, was not moved by the address and on 1 November 1921 Mohamed Ali and five other Muslims were sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment.¹⁶⁴

Despite Mohamed Ali's arrest his commitment and confidence towards Gandhi was unwavering. While he was on his way as a prisoner from Karachi to Bijapur, he was asked by a press correspondent regarding the Non-cooperation to which he was reported to have paid a unique tribute to Gandhi by saying that, "Only those who are outside the jail can talk about the condition of the Non-cooperation movement. All

that I can say that after the Prophet (on whom be peace) I consider it my duty to carry out the commands of Gandhiji".¹⁶⁵

Soon after Mohamed Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali's arrest and imprisonment the speeches for which they were convicted were repeated "from a thousand of platforms and manifestoes".¹⁶⁶ On October 7, Muslim and Hindu leaders issued a declaration re-affirming the validity of the Karachi resolution which was signed by M.K. Gandhi, Abdul Bari, Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M.A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasarat Mohani, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru Lala Lajpat Rai and others and the same day the Congress resolved to greet the visit of the Prince of Wales with a general strike throughout India wherever he appeared. On the arrival of the Prince of Wales on November 1921 the Congress plan went into effect.¹⁶⁷ The government came down with a heavy hand to crush the movement and within 24 hours declared the Congress and *Khilafat* meetings illegal. When the warning was ignored the government began to take action. An array of arrest were made and it was estimated that during the month of December of 1921 and January of 1922, 30,000 persons were imprisoned for political offences.¹⁶⁸ There was excitement and agitation all over the country and masses had been roused to a high level although non-violent was moving apace. In this situation when Gandhi was preparing to launch civil disobedience just at that juncture on 5 February, 1922 an unsolicited incident cropped up at Chauri Chaura in eastern U.P. where some policemen interfered with a procession and were killed. This demonstration of indiscipline outraged Gandhi's sense of non-violence and he immediately called off the Non-cooperation movement. The Viceroy Lord Reading did not spare the opportunity to arrest Gandhi on 10 March 1922.

The decision of the suspension of Non-cooperation frustrated Mohamed Ali who was then interned in Bijapur jail and considered it 'Synonymous with surrender'.¹⁶⁹ The movement was suspended but the cognate question that is the freedom of the Holy places from foreign influence and control remained. The announcement caused much confusion and disappointment among the Muslims. They had lost their sense of direction. When this was the situation the Turkish Grand National Assembly abolished the Sultanate on 1 November 1922.¹⁷⁰ This decision disillusioned the Muslims further, since the maintenance of the temporal power of the *Khalifah* was one of the main objects of the *Khilafat* movement. With the disappearance of the Sultanate the unity between Hindus and Muslims enfeebled, Hindus became rivals instead of partners.¹⁷¹ The government also contributed to create distrust between the two communities. Its home member Sir William Vincent's reference in the Central Assembly to 'the Hindus dishonoured and killed in Malabar',¹⁷² certainly injured the communal trust. Accounts of forced conversions in Malabar strengthened the Hindu community's effort of re-reconversion to Hinduism called *Shuddhi* (Purification) and *Sangathan* (organisation). These movements answered by Muslims with *Tabligh* (preaching) and *Tanzim* (Discipline) Campaigns. As a result these developments caused serious rift between the two communities and the edifice of Hindu-Muslim unity that developed during the Non-cooperation days had crumbled¹⁷³.

Mohamed Ali was released from prison in August, 1923. He was shocked to see the deterioration in Hindu-Muslim relations. In his first public appearance he expressed the depression finding the responsibility of freeing India and Islam on his shoulder. He said that he believed as before in Mahatma 'the most Christ-like man',¹⁷⁴ and his programme of

non-violent Non-cooperation.¹⁷⁵ In a letter to Saifuddin Kitchlew one of the General Secretaries of the Congress he wrote in 1923 that "... it is Gandhi, Gandhi, Gandhi, that has got to be dinned into the people's ears because he means Hindu-Muslim unity, Non-cooperation, *Swadharna* and *Swaraj*, while the rest are after petty communal or local or foreign ideals, most of them tinged with personal ambitions".¹⁷⁶

But Mohamed Ali's reverence for Gandhi did not last long. In February, 1924 Gandhi was released from prison. Mohamed Ali went to brief him on the prevalent mood of the country since he was absent from the scene for two years and so did others. Prominent among them were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, principal organiser of the Hindu Mahasabha about whom Mohamed Ali had serious misgivings for whipping up Hindu feelings against Muslims.¹⁷⁷ But when Mohamed Ali brought this accusation to Gandhi's notice he felt that Gandhi 'thought very differently of the noble Pandit'.¹⁷⁸ He apprehended that Gandhi might fall into the spell of Malaviya. In a letter Jawaharlal Nehru he expressed his suspicion openly: "I do not know whether my conversations with Bapu at Juhu have had any effect at all in the matter of Hindu-Muslim tension. Perhaps he would have heard next to nothing about the Muslim side of it if I had not told him what I had heard because I do not think many Mussalmans had corresponded with him. Since I could not speak with personal knowledge all that my conversations could do was to suggest to him that there is a Muslim side too. In one respect, however, I am positive that I failed to impress him at all and that is the character of his "worshipful brother", Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He comes out of it the best of us all! And yet both Shaukat and I were under the impression that Bapu thought very differently of the noble Pandit. If Bapu believes all that he says about

him, and there can be little doubt of it, then I must despair of the near future at any rate”.¹⁷⁹

Mohamed Ali’s apprehension about the Hindu leaders was not unfounded. In his first public statement after release on inter communal relations Gandhi commented that, “There is no doubt in my mind that in the majority of quarrels the Hindus came out the second best. But my experience confirms the opinion that the Mussalman as a rule is a bully, and Hindu a coward. When there are cowards there will always be bullies”.¹⁸⁰

Mohamed Ali felt insulted for the whole Muslim community was blamed and although in 1923 he was the President of the Indian National Congress, he was not even consulted before issuing such a significant statement. But despite such biased attitude Mohamed Ali remained loyal to Gandhi and while he was trying to minimise communal antagonism in a dispassionate and impartial manner, Hindus and Muslims were engaged in a bitter feud leading to a steady deterioration of communal relations.¹⁸¹ At this hour of peril the bill abolishing the *Khilafat* was passed in the Ankara Assembly on 3 March 1924. This was a stunning blow for Mohamed Ali who espoused the cause with so much passion and conviction. His life’s mission and dream had been shattered. On the other hand whatever little interest Gandhi had in *Khilafat* had been evaporated. This was evident when afterwards Gandhi was asked to nominate a Hindu to join a *Khilafat* deputation to Angora, he refused on the ground that it would be ‘Out of place’ for any Hindu to do so. How ironical it was that five years earlier he had urged his co-religionists to support the ‘just cause of the Muslims’ and said, ‘for the Hindus not to support them to the utmost

would be a cowardly breach of brotherhood'.¹⁸² But now he made a complete volt-face. Maulana Mohamed Ali and his associates anticipated that their Hindu colleagues in the Congress would join hands with them against the forces that were destroying the communal amity. He opposed the *Tanzim* and *Tabligh* organisation and assumed that Gandhi and Motilal Nehru would also assert against *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan*, but they did nothing of the sort. Perhaps they were afraid of losing popularity among their fellow Hindus by enunciating a word that might go against the extremist Hindu actions.¹⁸³ There were other instances also which marked Gandhi's change in view. In 1925 on the occasion of the Cawnpore Session of the Congress Mohamed Ali along with Abul Kalam Azad and others saw Gandhi and persuade him to take active part in favour of restoring inter communal harmony but he remained lukewarm to these suggestion. Shortly after, he made an unusual statement in a public meeting at Calcutta that, "... I simply now a day's... content myself by saying that someday or other we Hindus and Muslims will have to come together, if we want the deliverance of our country. And it is to be our lot that, before we can come together, we shed one another's blood, then I say, the sooner we do so, the better it is for us".¹⁸⁴ All these incidents profoundly affected Mohamed Ali's sentiment and regard for Gandhi.

While Mohamed Ali was having strained relations with Gandhi there emerged another situation which undermined Mohamed Ali's association with his religious preceptor Maulana Abdul Bari. Abdul Aziz b. Saud of Nejd attacked and captured Hejaz from Sharif Husain of Hashimite origin forcing him to took refuge in Jeddah.¹⁸⁵ Maulana Abdul Bari was skeptic of the puritanical zeal of Ibn Saud a follower of Abdul Wahhab whose followers demolished parts of historical

monuments of religious importance in the holy city and demanded the reconstruction of the demolished structures. But Mohamed Ali had no dispute with such demands and supported Ibn Saud's actions in the hope of driving the British out from Hejaz and establishing a democratic government in line with early traditions of Islam which did not approve monarchy.¹⁸⁶ This created a schism between Mohamed Ali and Maulana Abdul Bari and damaged the religious and political cooperation that was initiated since 1912.¹⁸⁷ As a consequence Mohamed Ali renounced allegiance to his religious preceptor publicly in an article entitled 'Test of loyalty' published on 13 January 1926. Maulana Abdul Bari could not endure such obstinacy of his beloved disciple and died of suffering from a serious stroke on 19 January, 1926. The same day news was received that Ibn Saud Proclaimed himself as the King of Arabia. Mohamed Ali realised his mistake but it was then too late to amend the error.¹⁸⁸

Mohamed Ali's difference with his onetime associate Gandhi was revealed for the first time in 1924. The frequency of riots increased in different parts of the country, most serious among these being the one at Kohat in the North Western Frontier Province. Gandhi and Shaukat Ali jointly investigated the causes of the riot, which arose out of the publication of an anti-Islamic poem by a Hindu author. But they arrived at different conclusions. Gandhi's response to Shaukat Ali's report marked the differences and change in his attitude towards the Ali brothers. He wrote:

"I have twice read your commentary and I see wide gulf that separates us in the affair. I am prepared to condemn the publication of the poem but I am unable to condone the looting and arson.... In my opinion the

Khilafatists have greatly neglected their duty.... I tremble to publish our statements. The publication will give rise to an acrimonious discussion. I would, therefore, even suggest the whole matter being examined by Hakim Saheb or Dr. Ansari".¹⁸⁹

The yawning of differences became more apparent when in 1925 speaking at the *Khilafat* Conference in Patna Gandhi proclaimed that he had lost hold on both the Hindus and Muslims, communal relations had deteriorated to such an extent that it was not possible for him to make any significant contribution. He also claimed that the Ali brothers too lost their hold on both the communities. Although they never had a hold on the Hindu community but Mohamed Ali was certainly no longer the undisputed leader of Muslim India that he was in 1921.¹⁹⁰

This statement certainly revealed a change in Gandhi's attitude towards Mohamed Ali. What was the reason behind this change? It is worthwhile to mention that, the common factor that acted as a bond between Gandhi and Mohamed Ali in particular and the Muslims with Hindus in general was the *Khilafat*, which was then almost a lost cause. This receded the position of Mohamed Ali from an active politician to a state with no political issue at hand which also affected his standing and popularity within his own community. The majority of the educated Muslims became aware of the fact that there was little relevance between their idealised picture of the *Khalifah* and the actual institution, so being disillusioned they turned their attentions elsewhere.¹⁹¹ Conversely Gandhi as a pragmatic politician also realised this fact that with the dissolution of the *Khilafat* issue Mohamed Ali had lost his credence as a mass leader and the capacity to attract the masses as he did before. So he opted for a replacement of the Ali brothers with a new line

of Muslim leaders who would follow the political philosophy of his and that of the Congress's.

After the debacle of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement there appeared further dissension between Mohamed Ali and his colleagues relating to policy matters. Mohamed Ali still favoured upholding the cause of *Khilafat* by securing freedom of the *Jazirat al-Arab* from non-Muslim domination and clung to the *Khilafat* institution for the promotion of Muslim interests in India and abroad. This policy was not considered feasible by Mohamed Ali's erstwhile colleagues like Dr. M.A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abul Kalam Azad, and others who realised that trying to change the fate of Turkey was an useless attempt and that they should now concentrate solely on Indian affairs.¹⁹² Thus they severed connections with Mohamed Ali and the *Khilafat* organisation and became Congress stalwarts, regarding M.K.Gandhi and Motilal Nehru as leaders above narrow caste and communal consideration. They identified themselves as 'Nationalist Muslims' and loyalty to the Congress became the distinctive features of their political creed.¹⁹³

At the end of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement when the political environment was tainted with communal strifes the British government as part of examining further political concessions to India appointed the Simon Commission in 1927. This motivated Indian leaders in formulating their demands. Hence, Mohamed Ali eagerly desired that Muslims should draw up their requirements and get them endorsed by the Congress. In his quest, he secured the assistance of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The outcome of their combined effort was the manifestation of the "Delhi proposals" formulated on 20 March 1927.

The salient features of these proposals were, separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency, to elevate North-West Frontier Province to the status of other provinces, reservation of seats in accordance with population in Bengal and Punjab and joint electorates.¹⁹⁴ Mohammad Ali made persisting efforts to get the proposals ratified by the All India Congress Committee meeting and in the Madras session of the Congress. But the Hindu Mahasabha created widespread opposition to the Delhi proposals.

In this situation when the Indian leaders were searching for a solution about the future constitution, Lord Birkenhead the Secretary of state for India accused the Indians for criticising British measures relating to the constitutional progress and rebuked that Indian politicians themselves could not succeed in producing a functional constitution.¹⁹⁵ To meet this challenge an All Parties Conference was convened at Delhi. This Conference appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to settle all the prevalent differences and recommend the principles on which the future constitution of India should be based.¹⁹⁶ The report submitted by the Nehru committee was discussed in another session of the Conference at Lucknow in August 1928 where some amendments were recommended. But at the Calcutta Convention in December, the revised version that was presented, like the original failed to appease the majority Muslim opinion.¹⁹⁷ After the Convention Mohamed Ali went to Delhi to attend the Muslim All-Parties Conference presided over by the Aga Khan on 1 January, 1929, and had invited Dr. M.A. Ansari and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the nationalist Muslim leaders but none agreed to attend.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the Conference was a success in presenting the Muslim point of view emphatically well and the nationalist Muslims were isolated from the

majority section of the community. In December 1929 Mohamed Ali went to Lahore to attend the *Khilafat* Conference where the Congress was also holding its session. Mohamed Ali pursued for an interview with M.K. Gandhi and appealed to him for an accord between the Congress and the Muslims to launch a united assault against British domination. But Gandhi was not impressed by the proposal and responded that he had contemplated to start a civil disobedience movement and if the Muslims were interested they could join unconditionally.¹⁹⁹ Such uncompromising attitude of Gandhi dissatisfied Mohamed Ali and so he urged the Muslims' to remain aloof from the movement.

Mohamed Ali would always do what appeared to him as right and would oppose even his close companions in good sense much to their annoyance. He was never inclined to create a vested interest in opinions held and propagated by him and was earnestly desirous to see the freedom of the country from British yoke.²⁰⁰ It was from this conviction that he considered Hindu-Muslim amity as an essential precondition for the achievement of independence.²⁰¹ His attachment with Gandhi during the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movement and even after that period bears the testimony of his belief. His appeal to Gandhi before the civil disobedience movement for a concordat with the Congress was his last bid for a rapprochement. But the irony of fact was that his patriotism was suspected by both in the Congress circles and also in the Hindu community as a whole, because of his concern to ensure the proper share of power for the Muslims when the country would be free from foreign domination.²⁰² This in fact the Congress was not prepared to concede, it was rather plotting to rid of Muslim influence from organisational platform. Mohamed Ali realised this trick,²⁰³ and this

finally led him to drift away from the Congress. He became frustrated with his Congress colleagues and felt exasperated for not cooperating to create a congenial atmosphere through a communal settlement to attain India's freedom.

In conclusion it may be summed up that, Mohamed Ali did not meddle much with religion at the early stage of his political career. He considered it as a conventional affair and was concerned more with the secular interest of his community. But the situation changed with the policy followed by the British government which directly affected the Muslims of India and abroad. Hence Mohamed Ali began to express his concern over those issues through his press which the government considered provocative and interned him during the First World War. Mohamed Ali's imprisonment brought about a radical transformation in his realm of thought. It enabled him to discover the basics of Islam through intense study during his detention which made him more devoted to religion. His inquisitive experience on Islam encompassed all important aspects of life which guided human being in every concern and this was the reason for which he did not approve of the notion of separation of politics from religion, because as part of human activity politics also cannot be divorced from religion. Mohamed Ali desired to see the Muslim world integrated. The fundamental view of his faith was based on the concept of umma.²⁰⁴ In his opinion Islam as a religion and social system binds all Muslims together, the sympathies of a Muslim are co-extensive with his religion which have been bred into him by the unifying spirit of his creed.²⁰⁵ Believed in theocracy, Mohamed Ali's supreme loyalty was to his God and therefore to his faith and as a sequel, to the interests of the Muslims of the world and also of India.²⁰⁶ He considered the Khalifa as the rightful vicegerent of God and His

prophet. The foundation of the *Khilafat* unites both temporal and spiritual work, which Islam believes it is charged with doing.²⁰⁷ Mohamed Ali's political ideology was thus based on the religious injunctions of Islam. Such perception made him sympathetic towards the misfortunes of his coreligionists around the world in general and the Sultan of Turkey in particular, who was the Commander of the Faithful and Custodian and protector of the Holy places of Islam. Mohamed Ali's sympathy for the Turkish *Khilafat* thus grew out of his new religious orientation during internment. It was also this time that he became a bitter opponent of the British government. Because the *Jaziratul- Arab* where the Sanctuaries of Islam situated had been attacked in the war and in one way or another under British occupation, which according to the dying injunction of the Prophet must ward off non-Muslim control and remain under the tutelage of the *Khalifah* of Islam.²⁰⁸ So he regarded the protection of the *Khilafat* as a religious duty for Indian Muslims.

As a result soon after his release from internment at the end of the war Mohamed Ali joined the movement which had been started earlier for the preservation of the Turkish *Khilafat*. In this situation M.K. Gandhi also lend his support for the *Khilafat* cause with the object of gaining Muslim adherence to the drive for *Swaraj* or self-government for India and launched his Non-cooperation movement. With the mingling of *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation the whole movement took an all India character. Mohamed Ali's participation gave the movement a fresh impetus. He led a delegation to England to plead the Indian Muslim view on *Khilafat* question. But his venture proved futile and Mohamed Ali turned his actions towards the emancipation of India in the hope that if India could be liberated then it could put pressure on the

British government to make a change in the Turkish peace terms. Thus Mohamed Ali related the freedom of Turkey with that of India which subconsciously connected his religio-centric political ideal with the Indian nationalist cause and made him an enthusiastic exponent of Indian independence. Consequently he was seen wholeheartedly plunged into the ongoing movement for the salvation of the *Khilafat* and the attainment of *Swaraj*. So he urged his co-religionists to join the Non-cooperation movement and himself followed the lead of Gandhi. Their concerted efforts for preaching the doctrines of Non-cooperation and organising disciplined support for the programme astir the whole of India and *Khilafat*, *Swaraj*, Gandhi, Mohamed Ali all became identical terms.²⁰⁹ The religious excitement generated by Mohamed Ali moved the entire country in such a way as India had experienced never before.

The momentum of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement was basically the outcome of harmonious relationship between Gandhi and Mohamed Ali. The meeting of these two minds created a unique political phenomena and gave this movement an all-pervading shape. The British administration had rightly realised the importance of this combination of leadership and predicted that, 'If trouble comes between Gandhi and Mohamed Ali, it means the collapse of the bridge over the gulf between Hindu and Muslim'.²¹⁰ After the internment of Mohamed Ali the *Khilafat* movement lost its pace and Gandhi's decision to suspend Non-cooperation and civil disobedience took the sting off of the Muslim agitation.²¹¹ On the other hand after the arrest of Gandhi the edifice of communal unity crumbled and mutual recriminations came to the surface increasing the influence of the extremist Hindus and their organisation the Hindu Mahasabha. When both Mohamed Ali and Gandhi were released, the situation had completely altered. The *Khilafat*

movement which was essentially a political movement based on religious principles lost its ground with the abolition of the institution, and Mohamed Ali no longer remained the undisputed leader of Muslim India that he was during the *Khilafat*-Non-cooperation days. This situation also influenced Gandhi's attitude towards Mohamed Ali. Being a calculating politician Gandhi saw that he had already achieved what he needed. He became the leader of the Masses, and had Congress in his grip. But Mohamed Ali now could no longer serve his purpose with his lost image. So, Gandhi decided to substitute the Ali brothers with less resilient leaders falling in the line with the political philosophy of his and the Congress.²¹²

The fiasco of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation agitation had also affected the relationship between Mohamed Ali and his former colleagues. Men like Dr. M.A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Abul Kalam Azad, considered Mohamed Ali's attempt of resuscitating the *Khilafat* as untenable and futile, so they severed connections with him and joined in the Congress politics with the intention of working for the community in line with Congress principles.

In this situation Mohamed Ali who was now disappointed by Gandhi's attitude and some of his erstwhile colleagues, turned his attention towards safeguarding the interests of the Indian Muslims. Hence when the Simon Commission was declared, Mohamed Ali became eager to frame demands for the Muslims and he accomplished it with the cooperation of M.A. Jinnah on 20 March 1927 which came to be known as the "Delhi Proposals". The proposals although approved by the Congress at the untiring efforts of Mohamed Ali, was severely opposed by the Hindu Mahasabha. Consequently an All Parties

Conference was convened which formed a committee under Motilal Nehru for recommending principles resolving all the discrepancies in framing the future constitution of India. But the Report submitted by the Nehru committee could not assuage Muslim requirement because of the intransigence of the Hindu Mahasabha. In his last attempt Mohamed Ali who believed in Hindu-Muslim amity as an essential criterion for achieving independence entreated Gandhi when he was in Lahore in 1929 contemplating to launch a civil disobedience movement for a reconciliation with the Muslims for a joint action. But Gandhi refused to enter into any such agreement with the Muslims in apprehension of losing popularity by earning the displeasure of the Hindu Mahasabha which commanded considerable influence over the Hindu community. But Mohamed Ali was not a person to be disheartened so easily, although Gandhi folded his hand of cooperation towards the Muslims, Mohamed Ali did not rest idle, he continued his efforts to achieve India's independence in the ensuing political development safeguarding the interests of the Muslims which will be seen in the subsequent discussion.

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CHAPTER-V

Mohamed Ali's Assessment of Indian Political Scenario Under British rule: His attitude towards the ruling class

The first quarter of the twentieth century was a period which was marked by the transformation in the sphere of Muslim political awareness. The introduction of several administrative and bureaucratic reforms by the government caused great uneasiness amongst Muslims. It became apparent to them that the policy of loyalty and cooperation with the British for the advancement of the Muslims, which had been advocated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other Aligarh Muslim leaders, was no more the best course of action for them. So they felt the need for reorientation of their policy in relation to the Hindus and the British government. It was amidst this changed political attitude of the Muslims that Mohamed Ali returned to India in 1902 after completion of his study in England, and observed these developments with keen interest. The present chapter delineates how Mohamed Ali visualised the changes of prevalent course of politics and how he reacted to the policies pursued by the British authorities in dealing with those affairs of the country.

After Mohamed Ali's arrival in India his choice for work fell on to Aligarh, his first love, but his application was turned down by Theodre Morrison the Principal of the college who was aware of Mohamed Ali's independent character and spirit since his college days. He then joined as chief Education officer in Rampur, his native state and

served there till he joined the Baroda state Civil Service in 1903. The ruler of Baroda was favourably disposed towards Mohamed Ali and allowed him opportunities of his indulgence.¹

It was during this time that Mohamed Ali developed a way of expressing himself by writing articles for leading Indian newspapers. In the beginning he was an admirer of the British and through his writings he reaffirmed his attachment to the British government and commented on the good that was to be accumulated to India from the beneficent contact: ‘The impulses for wholesome national life, which a contact with Western culture, has called forth the Indian mind want a home for a full, many-sided expression’.² The Muslims he made it plain in his articles were not completely satisfied with their position, but it was the social distinction between the races rather than the fact of British rule that distressed them.³ In 1907 he compiled his articles appeared in the *Times of India* and *Indian Spectator* and published as booklet under the title ‘Thoughts On the Present Discontent’. The booklet dealt with, reforms of existing institutions, especially a change in the attitude of the English government to the people they ruled and create a happier and more beneficial relationship between the two peoples. It also suggested Indian communities both Hindus and Muslims to entrusted with the charge of their own cultural matters, such as educational systems, and also suggested to have more voice in government.⁴ Mohamed Ali sent a copy of the booklet to the Viceroy with the hope “that this little booklet in which a conscientious effort in candour born of confidence in my own honesty of purpose and in its just appreciation by others the true state of the feelings of His Majesty’s subjects in India would meet with the sympathy and encouragement which India has learnt to associate now with the name of Edward the peacemaker just as she had so long

associated it with the name of our late lamented sovereign, Lady Victoria".⁵

The Viceroy was pleased, expressing his sympathy and 'hearty agreement wishing 'the book the wide circulation it deserves'.⁶

While Mohamed Ali was serving in Baroda, political atmosphere in India was becoming tense. Bengal was partitioned in 1905 for administrative purposes which gave rise to serious Hindu agitation, particularly in Bengal. In the wake of anti-partition agitation came the declaration of the reform of the existing legislature on a more representative basis. All these developments prompted the Muslims of India to protect their interests in the new reform scheme. A deputation of Indian Muslims led by the Aga Khan, therefore, met the Viceroy and demanded that Muslims should be represented as a community in the Legislative councils and local bodies in accordance with their political importance. This effort of the Muslims was followed by their consolidation in an organised political body the Muslim League in 1906. Mohamed Ali was one of those who took part in the foundation of the League and as a loyal citizen of the Empire advocated for the promotion among Indian Muslims a feeling of loyalty to the British government, remove any misconceptions with regard to the Muslims and to protect their political rights and interests.⁷ When the government of India published its reform proposals there was no provision for separate Muslim representation rather it suggested for joint electoral colleges with reservation of certain seats.⁸ This sparked adverse Muslim reactions which was revealed at the Amritsar session of the Muslim League in December 1908, when some members refused to thank Morley for his scheme. Mohamed Ali was against this view and he welcomed the reforms as a mark of evolutionary process which was

better than revolution.⁹ So he saw nothing improper in conveying thanks to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy ‘for the broad and general policy foreshadowed in the Despatch of the Reform Scheme’.¹⁰ Although Mohamed Ali appreciated the Reform Scheme of the government he did not hesitate to give vent to his views on points aggrieved. The Viceroy, he said, “was conversant with the details of the situation had proposed a scheme for our representation which would have secured us a voice in the Council Chambers of the State. But the Secretary of State who had only a distant acquaintance with our peculiar position in India failed to provide for our representation, because instead of relying on the advice of the careful and circumspect Viceroy whom he has so often and so justly praised, His Lordship listened to the sanctimonious apostles of unity”.¹¹ Commenting on the scheme of Electoral College at the Amritsar session of the Muslim League Mohamed Ali strongly enunciated that Lord Morley had ignored the most potent fact that in India the cleavage between various political interests was denominational and not territorial. Hindus and Muslims stood for ‘a different outlook on life, different mode of living, different temperament and necessarily different politics’. The Muslims asked for freedom against monopolists. Mohamed Ali observed that under the Electoral College scheme the lips and tongue would be Muslims but the voice would be that of the Brahmin. So he fervently appealed to the Secretary of State to protect the Muslims by providing them with separate electorates.¹² The government finally conceded to the demands of the Muslims in the Act of 1909, and Mohamed Ali felt satisfied for the interests of the Muslims were adequately protected.

Mohamed Ali remained in Baroda till 1910. But he was not content with the nature of job he was doing. He wanted to take part in

shaping the destiny of his own community and country. So he chose journalism as the best means to fulfil his desire. In 1911 he launched an English weekly newspaper entitled *The Comrade* from Calcutta the capital of British India with the intention of remaining in touch with the government.¹³ His main objective was to bring about reconciliation between the ruler and the ruled by acting as the spokesman of the people and addressing appeals to the British nation. He realised that the needs of advocacy was more important for the furtherance of the socio-economic and political advancement of the Muslims in particular and the cause of India in general than those of forming public opinion.¹⁴ For this reason he distributed the paper free of cost to vast member of men in authority in India and wielding power or influence in Great Britain.¹⁵ This effort made his relations with British officials cordial. High ranking British officers subscribed to *The Comrade* when it began publication, because they wanted to see someone speak up for the Muslims.¹⁶

The year 1911 proved momentous for the Muslims. Just before the end of the year the King Emperor at the imperial Darbar of his coronation in Delhi declared the annulment of the partition of Bengal, raising it to the status of a Governor's province and the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. This was an abrupt departure from the tradition of British government and a complete disruption of official customs.¹⁷ There was hardly a Civil servant in India since Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, who had not publicly reiterated that the partition was a settled fact. And yet it was annulled at a stroke in a proclamation from the sovereign. This enraged wide spread disaffection amongst Muslims. Mohamed Ali's attitude remained cooperative towards the government, and his criticism of the annulment of Bengal's partition was temperate and his stance was moderate. His suggestion to James Du

Boulay perhaps explains the reason behind his taking such position on the matter. Considering predominant necessity of instant action to avoid a Muslim agitation he insisted that “Well merited concessions wisely made at a suitable moment would prevent such an agitation far more effectively than the most strenuous efforts of the leaders of Muslim opinion”.¹⁸ In an effort to draw the attention of the Secretary of State to his point he wrote to F H. Lucas that, “It is impossible to disguise the fact that for obvious reasons Muslim feeling in India is far from normal today. I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that the presence of His Majesty in India at this juncture should be fully utilised to restore its equilibrium to that feeling, and to bind still more firmly the seventy million Muslims of India to the throne and Person of His Majesty. In my humble judgement it would be an infinite pity if such a great opportunity is lost through any avoidable delay, even if the delay is caused by the need of greater deliberation”.¹⁹

Mohamed Ali was moderate even after the outbreak of Italo-Turkish and the Balkan war in 1911 and 1912, which aroused anguish and disappointment among the Muslims of India, but he was becoming critical watching the temporal misfortune of Islam and devoted more of the space in the Columns of his newspaper on Islam and on the Muslim world . In this hour of frustration Mohamed Ali collected funds for the Turkish wounded and to advance the loan to Turkey he humbly approached the Viceroy for ‘...an authoritative declaration, that government will not oppose the loan which will confirm their confidence in the goodwill of England towards Turkey and such sympathy as is not inconsistent with neutrality’.²⁰ Lord Hardinge the Viceroy was an astute man and maintained private contacts with Indian political leaders. Mohamed Ali’s emergence as a leader of the Muslims

also attracted his attention and so he kept in touch with him. In order to keep Mohamed Ali calm in the wake of Balkan excitement Lord Hardinge advanced the loan for humanitarian assistance to the sick and wounded in Turkey that seemed also to give some satisfaction to the Muslim community.²¹ He also patronised the Delhi Red Crescent Society for the purpose.²² In this situation Mohamed Ali endeavoured to render some active assistance to the wounded Turkish soldiers. He organised a Medical Mission under Dr. Mukthar Ahmed Ansari. The Mission received the support of the Viceroy Lord Hardinge, who was also present at the farewell occasion of The Missions voyage to Turkey.²³

Mohamed Ali duly responded to such friendly gesture. He adopted conciliatory tone in his correspondence with the officials and expressed his profound loyalty to the government, reaffirming his support to its policies. This reflected in his letter to Sir James Maston the Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces, Mohamed Ali wrote, that, "I shall however, try my best to run up to Aligarh when you are there and to confirm once more what I have said before as to my anxious desire to cooperate with you and every well-wisher of my country and community in working for their progress....I can satisfy your Honour that my humble contribution to the work before us is no way detrimental to the best interests of government, the country and the Muslim community".²⁴

This is not all. In July, 1913 when the demolition of a portion of a mosque by the Cawnpore Municipality caused great distress among the Muslims, even then Mohamed Ali took a reconciliatory approach and strove to solve the problem by peaceful means. Realising the crux of the situation Mohamed Ali send a telegram to the Lieutenant Governor Lord

Meston with whom he had friendly terms asserting that ‘Great feeling prevails in Cawnpore and I am anxious to allay such excitement at present juncture’.²⁵ But Lord Meston ignoring Muslim sentiments and not paying due importance to Mohamed Ali’s caution replied that, the agitation was not grounded on a ‘genuine religious grievance’ and hoped that, ‘the good sense of the community will prevent their carrying this matter further. We shall do all we can to make matters easy for them; but you will readily realise public business cannot be held up except for good and sufficient reasons’.²⁶ Lord Meston though considered Mohamed Ali’s appeal for reconsideration very temperate and appropriate, Mohamed Ali himself was disappointed. In response to the reply of Lord Meston he wrote that, “I fear point at issue somewhat misunderstood, I would never support imaginary grievances for embarrassing government, much less at such crisis”.²⁷ He told Lord Meston that, he had refrained from discussing the matter in his newspapers *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard*, because he was optimistic that good sense would prevail and that the authority would settle the matter in consultation with Muslim *Ulama* and Lawyers, before the situation got out of control.²⁸ But despite Mohamed Ali’s reconciliatory efforts Lord Meston true to the traditions of British bureaucratic system upheld the action of the district authorities and remained adamant. As a result when the portion of the mosque was demolished it enraged the Cawnpore Muslims. The local authorities applied force to bring the situation under control which cost the loss of lives. The imprudent policy of the government excited the Muslims of India. Government interpretation of the incident was that, “there was no agitation in Cawnpore, but the agitation was excited by outside agitators”.²⁹ The authority blamed Mohamed Ali for fomenting the issue.³⁰ Mohamed Ali on the contrary held the government responsible for unscrupulous

handling of the matter and said that, "If outside agitators had been very zealous of the Cawnpore affair, it was not because it was a Cawnpore affair but was a Muslim affair. A mosque was the same whether it was in Delhi or Calcutta or Cawnpore".³¹ As regards the charge attributed to him, Mohamed Ali said that, despite repeated requests by Cawnpore Muslims *The Comrade* had not taken a stronger attitude than it had hitherto done and had he not given a "very strong advice that nothing unconstitutional should be attempted, there would have been bloodshed on the 1st July when the portion of the mosque was demolished".³²

The incident created a sensation amongst the Muslims of India. Already, events that had been taken place during the last few years, vitally affected the sentiment of the Muslims. Hence Mohamed Ali felt that to remove misgivings, a right understanding of the Muslim point of view is absolutely necessary in the interest of the government as well as in the interest of the Muslims themselves.³³ Having failed to get fair treatment from the government it was now decided by the Muslim leaders to send a delegation to England for the purpose of explaining the Indian Muslims point of view, and the salient features of the true Muslim situation in India and abroad.³⁴ Mohamed Ali was chosen to lead the delegation along with Syed Wazir Hasan, Secretary of the All India Muslim League. The mission sailed for England on 6 September, 1913. This incurred severe displeasure of Sir James Meston whose friendship towards Mohamed Ali had suddenly changed into enmity because he could not accept the idea of any delegation visiting his homeland in apprehension of its possible attack on him. He, therefore, wrote to Viceroy Lord Harding intimating him about the cause of his worry. Lord Harding urgently cabled a message to Lord Crewe, the Secretary of state on 12 September 1913 to this effect that, "Mohamed Ali of *Comrade*

and Wazir Hasan, Secretary of Moslem League of Lucknow, left suddenly for England last Saturday on a self-imposed mission to represent in England the views of the Mohammedan Community....They are both firebrands and agitators, and there is absolutely no doubt that the agitation which at present moment is pervading the Mohammadan Community in India is largely due to the misrepresentation of Mohamed Aliwith a view to increasing their importance, they will undoubtedly endeavour to obtain interviews at the India office and probably at the Foreign office, and I strongly recommend that no encouragement be given to those two persons".³⁵ The Secretary of State conveyed his assurance and communicated the same message to, among others, the editors of various British newspapers.³⁶

When the Delegation reached London, the Parliament was in recess. So they tried to meet as many people as they could and also approach the officials. Mohamed Ali wrote to Sir James La Touche Member of the Secretary of States Council requesting him for an interview with the Secretary of State. He explained to him the purpose of their visit and said that they did not come to England only for 'arranging a settlement of the Cawnpore affair' but to work for several other issues, which were agitating the public mind in India at the time of their departure. Those were, the British attitude towards Turkey over the fate of Adrianople, the fate of the Indian and particularly the Muslim press, disagreement between the Secretary of State and the government of India on the resolutions passed by the Aligarh University Foundation Committee and in addition to these relates the issues of extension of a System of Executive Council Government to those provinces which it lacks and separation of judicial and executive functions. Mohamed Ali

maintained that in achieving a satisfactory solution to all these issues “We feel that in the first instance our concern is with the Secretary of State for India and those who assist him in his work at the India Office.”³⁷ In his reply La Touche said that the request goes far beyond the range of the object of the interview and it was not possible for him to comply with it.³⁸ In reply to another letter T.W. Holderness the under Secretary of State for India informed Mohamed Ali that “Lord Crewe regrets that he is unable to accede to your request, as he does not see that any public advantage would arise from it...”³⁹ Mohamed Ali then tried to see Lord Morley the former Secretary of State for India. But he too did not accorded interview going beyond the official convention.⁴⁰ Apart from the denial of the official circle the Delegation was also not treated favourably by the press. Newspapers published long contemptuous speeches to demean them and refuse to publish their rejoinders.⁴¹ The treatment received by the Delegation from official and non-official circle was not unexpected, because it happened at the instruction of the Secretary of State on the frantic message of the Viceroy. The fate of the mission was thus a foregone conclusion. The Delegation left England on 5 December, 1913, without visiting any Ministers. On the eve of his departure Mohamed Ali said that, if Ministers would not see them, they would have to hear them, both in England and India.⁴²

Mohamed Ali’s tour of England was important in relation to his attitude towards the government. During his visit he met with people of different classes and professions and exchanged views with them. This gave him an opportunity to see Turkey from the exterior and to watch the diplomacy of European Powers in reshaping the fate of the Turkish Empire. Such observation changed his attitude on the role of the

government with regard to the Muslims. Now he considered the British no longer as the safe protector of Muslim interests and began to view their role from different angle.⁴³ He was disappointed to see that, “British politicians, journalists, authors and even ministers are hopelessly ignorant about conditions in India, and their ignorance is driving them fast to the brink of the precipice”.⁴⁴ So he wanted to speak for his co-religionists and to intimate the British government and the people the real condition in India. This made him repellent to a section among the British Civil Servants, who considered every concession a sign of weakness incompatible with the glory of the imperial rulers,⁴⁵ and they became the impediment in his way. Mohamed Ali was disgusted with distrustful and skeptical officials both in India and England, because they frustrated his efforts to see the Secretary of State and other leading members at the India office and explain to them the purpose of his mission.⁴⁶ Expressing his annoyance in this regard Mohamed Ali alleged to Lord Morley that, “if we are unable to see even His Lordship, what could we say to our people on return except that because some local officials were desirous that we and our co-religionists and many others in our country should be misjudged by the superiors”.⁴⁷ Thus Mohamed Ali’s faith and reliance on the government was shaken and his alienation from the British officials widened.

When the First World War broke out Mohamed Ali maintained cool. Despite estranged relation with the officials, he sided with the British and urged the Turks not to join the war. He advised his co-religionists that for the sake of ‘national and communal growth’ and for maintaining peace and tranquility in India they should place their loyal service at the disposal of the government.⁴⁸ His article ‘The Choice of The Turks’ published in *The Comrade* on 26 September, 1914 also

echoed the same theme, the prestige and honour of the Turks and loyalty and regard for the British. As Mohamed Ali wrote, “When in a household the parents fall out, whichever of them may be at fault, the children are bound to suffer. That will be our plight, and we shall deserve all the sympathy that we may secure.”⁴⁹ He, therefore, appealed to the *Khalifah* to refrain from the war and thereby save Indian Muslims from a fiction of loyalties.⁵⁰ The suspicious and cynical British officials however, considered Mohamed Ali’s writings as an encouragement to king’s enemies and interned him along with his brother Shaukat Ali in May 1915, without assigning any reason.

Mohamed Ali’s term of internment was marked by a change in his relationship with the British. The development of events of the past few years prior to his imprisonment confirmed his belief that the government was no longer sincere about safeguarding Muslim interests both in home and abroad and despite Muslim loyalty and support ‘blow after blow aimed at the temporal power of Islam’ often with the concurrence of the government.⁵¹ He condemned the government for its repressive policies and was bitterly opposed to the spirit of the Indian Civil Service, a political party which he considered, “perpetually in office with the power to crush its political opponents with all the resources of the state”⁵² and were the cause of unrest and discontent.⁵³ He was enraged at the lack of sympathy of the officials and their obstructive attitude. Soon after his arrest he wrote a letter to Malcolm Hailey, the Chief Commissioner of Delhi on 24 May, 1915, to the effect that, “I was not much surprised at your order of internment because I have known something of the official mind for a good many years, and I can understand how hateful must be a man of my character to officials of a certain type. I also know the all comprehensive character of the

Defence of India Act which makes even the Archangel Gabriel liable to internment by local governments on the secret testimony of Beellzebub.”⁵⁴ A month after on 2 June he proclaimed that, “No order can be expected to be obeyed unless it is in the power of the person to whom it is addressed to obey it... We consider the law under which you purport to have acted as tyrannous and unjust.”⁵⁵ To the Viceroy he wrote from internment, “The war is now over; but the spirit of tyranny that it generated is still abroad ...the government...is denying to the people of India the barest expression of opinion on questions that vitally concern them. Not only is the gag not to be removed yet from our own mouths, but a gag of prodigious proportions has been prepared now for silencing more than three hundred millions of God’s articulate creatures. The Rowlatt Bill just enacted in the most tyrannical manner has ended the reign of law and substituted a reign of terror in its place, and although it affects every section of the people of India, the Muslims are certain to be its first and its worst victims....”⁵⁶ Thus Mohamed Ali’s arrest set the seal of his relationship with the British government. The attitude of loyalty and co-operation which he reared so long had now been revised and he adopted the stand what Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had once said, “Our attitude towards the government established in this country must be governed only by one consideration the attitude of that government towards ourselves.”⁵⁷ He realised the inefficacy of the policy of subservience and felt the necessity to replace it with a more effective and forceful means for the redressal of grievances. This attitude was evident when at the end of the First World War the fate of the Turkish Empire was sealed. Imbued in his Islamic heritage afresh during internment Mohamed Ali became an exponent of the Turkish *Khilafat* and took up the issue soon after his release in December, 1919. He considered the encroachment upon the office of the *Khalifah* as a

threat to the unity and integrity of the Muslim world. So he raised his voice against British imperialist design. In connection with the *Khilafat* affairs Mohamed Ali's concern was not only confined to his own community but it encompassed the interests of India also. He was motivated very much by the desire to remove the fetters of bondage. This necessitated a combined movement of all religious groups. With this end in view Mohamed Ali joined hands with Mahatma Gandhi and concertedly launched offensive programmes against the British government for pursuing repressive and inimical policy towards India and Turkey. This entanglement further strained his relation with the ruling class. The diabolic character of the British authority became more vibrant to Mohamed Ali when he visited England as head of the *Khilafat* Delegation. During his visit Mohamed Ali discovered that most of the members of the House of Commons were prejudiced against Turkey. The British Prime Minister Lloyd George also showed a marked antipathy towards Turkey during his conversation with the Delegation and rejected their claims outright. Even the English newspapers also denounced the purpose of the Delegation. At the same time in India the introduction of coercive Rowlatt Act by the British government to throttle Indian public opinion and the massacre at Amritsar further hardened Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the rulers.

In this situation on his return to India Mohamed Ali added another theme in his scheme to reinforce his protest and it was that, Indian Muslims should concentrate their energies on winning freedom of India and then the liberation of the Holy places and maintenance of *Khilafat* would follow as a natural course.⁵⁸ To translate his idea into reality Mohamed Ali actively participated in the Non-cooperation programme launched by Gandhi for the attainment of *Swaraj*. As a

result the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation soon turned into a mass movement. Mohamed Ali travelled at various parts of the country and delivered speeches which stirred the people tremendously and excitement spread the country like a wild fire. The government was alarmed at this turn of events but was determined not to oblige. Lord Reading the Viceroy who was a former ambassador at Washington applied his diplomatic skill to create a cleavage between Gandhi and Mohamed Ali and alienate the *Khilafat* Movement which was gaining a popular base.⁵⁹ In pursuance of his design the Viceroy use the good offices of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya with whom he was in good terms and arranged an interview with Gandhi. The interview took place in Simla in May 1921. During the course of conversation, the Viceroy showed Gandhi selected passages from Mohamed Ali's speech which was contrary to his non-violent doctrine and wanted assurance from Mohamed Ali to refrain from intemperate rhetoric in the future. At Gandhi's request, Mohamed Ali gave a statement in which he regretted for unintentional incitement in his speeches and both the brothers gave public assurance that, "So long we are associated with the movement of Non-cooperation, we shall not directly or indirectly advocate violence....".⁶⁰

After publication of the statement, an official communiqué was issued by the government saying that, in view of the brothers public undertaking the government would refrain from taking any action against the brothers so long as they adhered to that undertaking.⁶¹ Mohamed Ali was infuriated at this. He denounced the government for adopting such a deceitful means to damage his reputation. In response to the official pronouncement Mohamed Ali retorted that he accepted Gandhi's advice to show humility and respect for Gandhi's leadership,⁶²

and repudiated that the statement he made was neither an apology nor an undertaking as had been publicised by the government.⁶³ However, he continued to raise his voice against *Khilafat* wrongs. Lord Reading was agitated at this. He made his mind to prosecute Mohamed Ali and wrote to the Secretary of State, that, “We have shown the utmost patience with these two (Mohamed and Shaukat Ali), but there are limits and once those limits are transgressed, can political considerations of expediency be weighed any longer? I have not raised the question in my Council, but when I do, I think there will be a majority at any rate to recommend prosecution”.⁶⁴

Hence, in July, 1921, Mohamed Ali presided over an All-India *Khilafat* Conference at Karachi which passed a resolution that, “it was haram for Muslims to serve or enlist himself in the British or to raise recruits for it, and it is incumbent on all Muslims to carry this religious commandment to every Muslim soldier in the British Indian army”.⁶⁵ The Viceroy now acted with firmness and Mohamed Ali was arrested on 14 September, 1921. He was tried and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment.

With the arrest and imprisonment of Mohamed Ali the British government succeeded in defusing the vigour of the *Khilafat* movement. When Gandhi called off the Non-cooperation and was arrested the whole edifice of the united movement crumbled.

On his release in September 1923 Mohamed Ali returned not to the India of his dreams, but to a country which was divided by internal dissensions, where unity and accord were giving way to communal bitterness and apprehensions increased.⁶⁶ When the intensity of communal tension was in such a high pitch, the British government appointed a Statutory or Parliamentary Commission in November, 1927,

known from its Chairman's name as the Simon Commission. The Commission was constituted in accordance with the recommendation of the Act of 1919 to enquire into the possibilities of further Constitutional advance which should be undertaken in 1929.⁶⁷ It was intended to consult Indian opinion as far as possible. But the composition of the Commission did not include any Indian member and hence aroused much indignation and resentment among leading Indian politicians, and the Congress, Muslim League, the All India *Khilafat* Conference and the *Jamiatul-ulama* all the parties opposed the Commission unitedly and refused to co-operate with it.⁶⁸

Mohamed Ali at this juncture could not remain aloof and actively indulged in constituting public opinion against co-operating with the Commission, and went to Calcutta to attend the session of the Muslim League. He termed the Commission as a group of persons with shallow knowledge on the affairs of this region,⁶⁹ and argued that, "no nation could accept that another nation had the right to rule over it..."⁷⁰ and the British government had no moral justification for their rule over this land.⁷¹

When the Simon Commission was at the beginning of their assignment, a conference representing all Indian parties was held to consider the drafting of a new constitution. The Conference appointed a Committee of nine members with Matilal Nehru as its chairman and his son Jawaharlal Nehru as secretary, to consider principles of the constitution of India with special reference to communal problem.⁷² The deliberations and decision published by the Nehru Committee on 15 August, 1928 was known as the Nehru Report.

The All Parties Convention was held at Calcutta on 28 December with the object of discussing the principles underlying the Nehru

Committee Report.⁷³ Mohamed Ali joined the Convention from the *Khilafat* Committee, with several other Muslim groups in the hope of securing the interests of the Muslims through constitutional guarantees. He suggested certain amendments to the report, asking among other things that the provinces have full internal autonomy in a federal union, and that the Muslim majorities in some provinces be safeguarded for a fixed number of years.⁷⁴ But for the intransigence of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha the amendments were rejected and the Convention decided that Muslims would have joint electorates and representation according to their numerical strength and nothing more.⁷⁵ Mohamed Ali felt deeply grieved at this decision and his hostilities towards the Congress deepened. The Muslim League in its session at Delhi in March, 1929, rejected the Nehru Report and drafted its own scheme in respect of the forthcoming Constitutional reforms.⁷⁶

The Simon Commission Report was published in May 1930 amid growing tension and hostility.⁷⁷ Shortly before its publication Gandhi launched another civil disobedience movement. The British government by this time decided to hold consultations with Indian leaders at a round table conference in London.

Mohamed Ali was invited by the Viceroy to attend the Round Table Conference. He accepted the invitation and did not participate in the Civil Disobedience movement launched by Gandhi. Because he was annoyed with Gandhi's fervent canvassing of the Nehru Report, his conversion to a different creed and his striving for different goals.⁷⁸ The Country, he argued, was not prepared to undertake Civil disobedience, it lacked unity, discipline and self-control. He also expressed doubt as to whether Gandhi would stick to his own programme, asserting that, "Doubtless a man could suddenly call off the Non-cooperation

campaign in Bardoli in 1922, with the same astonishing about-face can inaugurate a civil disobedience movement in 1930. But what surety is there that he would not again order suspension, just as he did eight years ago, only a few days after serving an ultimatum to the Viceroy”.⁷⁹

In this circumstance instead of joining the civil disobedience movement Mohamed Ali advised the Indians to send delegations to London to put forward their demand unanimously for Indian freedom.⁸⁰ He also expressed his own willingness to co-operate with the government and wrote to the Viceroy in this regard that, “While I deny the right of any but Indians themselves to shape their destiny, I am not only willing but anxious to proceed to England, along with other representatives of Indian communities, parties and interests, to confer with the representatives of Great Britain and persuade them to recognise India’s natural demand for self-determinationI trust I shall be able to assist the Conference in understanding the full connotation of the word “self” in the expression self-determination and that an agreed scheme of constitution for a responsible government for a free India would be framed as the result of our labours....”.⁸¹ He further added that, “while rid ourselves of the foreign incubus that has troubled us so long, we shall not create for ourselves a home-made incubus of certain small monopolist castes and interests pretending to speak in the name of the majority in India and claiming to control the affairs and destinies of the entire Indian nation.”⁸²

Thus on account of the unsteady political situation subsequent to the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement and the firm stand of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress with regard to the Nehru Report Mohamed Ali considered it prudent to align himself with the British initiative and participate in the Round Table Conference assisting the

government in framing a constitution which would protect the interests of the Muslims as against the political monopoly of the Hindus in the future independent India.

From the foregoing discussion it can be said that Mohamed Ali's attitude was loyal towards the British government at the inception of his public career. He believed that it was the beneficent contact with the government through which the Muslims of India had the best opportunity of making progress.⁸³ So he affirmed his attachment to the government through his writings to bridge the gap between the ruler and the ruled. The government also appreciated his efforts. When the Muslim League came into being in 1906 Mohamed Ali solicited to encourage the Muslims to be loyal to the British government and also expressed his gratification for protecting Muslim rights in the legislature by introducing Separate representation in the Act of 1909. His intimacy with the British officials grew with the appearance of his English newspaper *The Comrade*. But the turn of events from the year 1911 to 1914 in India and the Muslim world in which Britain was involved perturbed Indian Muslims which also caused a gradual change in Mohamed Ali's attitude towards the government. Despite extensive Muslim discontent over the undone of Bengal partition Mohamed Ali took a moderate stand and to avert any agitation suggested the government to redress the grievances of the Muslims. When the Tripalitan and the Balkan war erupted Mohamed Ali expressed his sentiment in a temperate manner covering the pages of his newspaper. The British officials did not accept his candour expression favourably and Mohamed Ali lost the grace of the officials. During the Cawnpore mosque incident Mohamed Ali experienced the antagonism of British officials both in India and London who frustrated his efforts during his visit to London to see the Secretary of State and other leading members

at the India office to explain the purpose of his mission. This embittered him and hardened his attitude towards the Indian civil service for their obstructionist policy. When the First World War began Mohamed Ali nevertheless his lukewarm relation with the officials supported the government and wrote an article in his newspaper desisting Turkey to join the War and advised the Indians in general and Muslims in particular to remain loyal to the government. But the officials considered such candid expression from a subject spokesman as an act against the Crown and arrested him. This was an important turning point with regard to Mohamed Ali's relation with the government. It made him devoted to religion, prone to the protection of the Turkish *Khilafat* and transform him into an anti-colonialist. Consequently he took active part in the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement led by Gandhi. After the collapse of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement and as a sequel of communal bickering his rapport with Gandhi deteriorated. The cleavage reached its climax when Gandhi supported and campaigned for the Nehru Report. A constitutional scheme of reforms which was accepted to the Hindu Mahasabha was produced by the Congress leaders with the help of liberals to the disgust of the Muslims, who blatantly opposed it,⁸⁴ because the Report repudiated their claims. Hence in the face of unbending attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress against any compromise with the Muslims regarding the Nehru Report, Mohamed Ali thought it proper to join the Round Table Conference in London to which he was invited in the hope of assisting the British in framing a scheme for responsible government for a free India where the interests of the Muslims would be accommodated justly and fairly.

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CHAPTER-VI

Contemporary Trends in Indian Politics: Their reciprocal influence and interactions

The period following the cataclysmic events of 1857 proved to be a turning point in the destiny of the Indian Muslims. With the consolidation of British rule, the Muslims of India were relegated to the background. British officials and institutions replaced them with educated Hindu assistance. The Hindus thus under favourable circumstances had made long strides in every direction.¹ The Muslims were fallen in sullen despair and despondency. In such an atmosphere appeared a great personality, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to rescue the declining Muslim community from darkness. Sir Syed, urged the Muslims to concentrate on English education and remain loyal to the government, dissociating from any political demonstrations distasteful to the authorities.² The new education imparted by the British acquainted the Indians in general and Hindus in particular with the writings of liberal European political theorists and with western parliamentary and representative form of government. At the same time, the British government declared the policy of associating Indians increasingly in the administration.

In 1861 and 1862 the Indian councils Acts enabled non-official Indians to be nominated as members of the Legislatures Councils of the Governor General and of provincial governors. In 1882 the municipal and rural boards with elected non-official majorities were created. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 enabled Indian non-officials to be indirectly elected as members of those councils by municipalities and

district boards. From about 1870, successful Indian candidates began to appear in the Indian Civil Service Examination.³

The Indian National Congress came into existence in 1885 and the educated Hindus who were the main supporters of the Congress from its earliest years after reaffirming its loyalty to the government continued to press in its annual session for an extension of parliamentary institutions in India and a wider recruitment of Indians for government service by open competitive examination.⁴

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan vehemently opposed the demands of the Congress. In his famous Lucknow speech of 1887 he clarified the reasons in two points, firstly, if the higher services were to be filled by competitive examinations in India, they would all go to the nation that had had an early start in education that is the Hindus⁵ and secondly, “Whatever system of elections be adopted there will be four times as many Hindus as Mohamedans and all their demands will be gratified”.⁶ Besides, he feared that, “So long as the differences of race and creed, and the distinctions of caste form an important element in the socio-political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election pure and simple cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community, and the ignorant public would hold government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever”.⁷ So he advocated that the power of appointing members to the local boards and district councils should be held by the government otherwise which would maintain that, “due and just balance in the representation of the various sections of the Indian population which the system of election of pure and simple, would fail

to achieve”.⁸ He reasoned that an educationally backward and economically impoverished minority, like the Muslims, would be permanently submerged under a democratic constitution.⁹ So he spurned all organised political activities pursued by the Congress and advised the Muslims to eschew politics, and not to join the Congress and put implicit trust in the government for the wellbeing of the Muslim Community. This part of Sayyid Ahmed’s teaching continued to dominate the Muslim mind even after his death.

The Congress leaders, however, proclaimed their organisation as non-communal to draw the support of various cast and communities particularly the Muslims. But such proclamation did not appear in reality. The Congress despite its secular protestation was often drawn into activities pioneered by Hindu revivalists. The aggressive Hinduism of Bal Gangadhar Tilak carrying into the Congress the militant Maratha political and religious tradition, the *Shivaji* festival and the annual *Ganapati* celebrations, the instincts of which were anti-Muslim naturally made the politically conscious Muslims feel even more insecure and apprehensive of their future in the Congress.¹⁰

The present study delineates that how the course of events under review influenced Mohamed Ali and steered his actions. At the beginning of the twentieth century a series of events occurred which gradually provoked the Muslim leadership to shrug off its policy of subservience advocated by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. The first came in the year in 1900 when the Governor of the United Provinces, Sir Anthony Mac Donnel approved the petition of influential Hindus to use *Hindi* language written in *Devanagri* script as the official vernacular. This decision was considered a partisan act and caused widespread resentment among the Muslims. Nawab Muhsin ul-Mulk the secretary

of the Aligarh College took up the cause on behalf of the Muslims and opposed the decision strongly. The Governor was greatly annoyed at this and threatened to discontinue government grant to Aligarh College if the opposition was not abandoned.¹¹ Consequently Muslim opposition was subsided under pressure, but the incident awakened the leading Muslims to the futility of unorganised and sporadic political action. They realised that they had to have a political organisation of their own. Mohamed Ali was then in England for higher study and returned to India in 1902. The decision to partition Bengal was initiated after his return, which gave some impetus to the growing political consciousness of the Muslims. The partition scheme was declared in July 1905, and the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam emerged with its capital at Dacca. Soon after the announcement, the Bengali Hindus registered their protests by Swadeshi and boycott of British goods. They believed that it was a plot hatched in favour of the Muslims and interpreted the partition as an attempt to weaken the national solidarity. The Congress by approving the Swadeshi movement gave it an all India character. But the Swadeshi movement in spite of its anti-British stance decidedly had revivalist overtones. Congressmen like Aurobindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal closely identified nationalism with religious symbols of Hinduism. Nirod Chandra Chaudhury in his biography wrote that "...it was not a liberal political thought of the organisers of the Indian National Congress but the Hindu revivalism of the last quarter of the nineteenth century...a movement which previously had been almost wholly confined to the field of religion...which was the driving force behind the anti-partition agitation of 1905".¹² This religious conservatism and political extremism had in effect heightened the communal tension and fostered the growth of Muslim separatism.

While the agitation against the partition continued, the British government expressed its intention for the reconstruction of existing legislature on a more representative basis. The Hindus were eager to preserve and extend their position and the Muslims were equally desirous of having their share in the administration of the country.¹³ This sparked the Muslims into action to safeguard the interests of their community. Because the electoral system of 1892 had evidently betrayed their weakness and if now the elective principle was to be confirmed and extended, the position of the Muslims would become weaker still in relation to the more powerful Hindus.¹⁴ Hence to safeguard the interests of the Muslims a Deputation of thirty five prominent Muslim leaders headed by Agha Khan waited upon Viceroy Lord Minto on October 1, 1906. The Deputation laid particular stress upon their demand for separate electorates and the right to elect their own representatives to municipal councils, rural boards and provincial and central legislatures. Lord Minto expressed his agreement with the demands of the Deputation.¹⁵ After receiving favourable reply from the Viceroy the Muslim leaders felt that they must had their own party which should protect Muslim interests and speak for the community on all important occasions.¹⁶ In pursuance of this resolve Nawab Salimullah of Dacca took the first concrete initiative. He circulated a letter containing a scheme 'the Muslim All-India Confederacy'¹⁷ at the meeting of the All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Dacca on 30 December 1906. The delegates who assembled there from all parts of India met in a session after the conference under the presidency of Viqar-ul-Mulk and decided to form the All-India Muslim League.¹⁸ Mohamed Ali attended this meeting as a young and enthusiastic delegate and seconded the resolution forming the Muslim League.¹⁹ He was also entrusted with the task of compiling the proceedings of the

meeting which he did and was published under the title “The Green Book”.²⁰

While the anti-partition agitation was ongoing, the Secretary of State outlined the reform proposals on 27 November, 1908 to the government of India which made no provision for separate Muslim representation instead it suggested electoral colleges with reservations of certain seats.²¹ The reaction of the Indian Muslims towards the scheme was extremely adverse. The most vigorous and eloquent exposition against the scheme of Electoral College was given by Mohamed Ali at the Amritsar session of the Muslim League in 1908. Considering separate electorate as a hateful necessity²² he contended that the most potent fact in India was that the cleavage between various political interests was denominational and not territorial and this reality was ignored by Morley.²³ He cautioned that mere counting of heads of the two communities was dangerous and misleading, and elaborated that, under the system of joint electorates Hindus would have secured the return of non-representative Muslims. So he strongly solicited for Separate Muslim representation.²⁴ The All-India Muslim League firmly decided the communal representation as the only way of securing to them their legitimate rights.²⁵ In the face of effective Muslim agitation and persuasion the Secretary of State Lord Morley agreed to modify scheme and the clause of separate Muslim representation was finally incorporated in the Morley-Minto reforms in 1909. The Muslim reaction to the reform was in general, one of acceptance and co-operation. The Aga Khan addressing the League’s annual session at Delhi in January 1910 said that, “I am glad our just demand has been recognised ... we must accept it as final in an appreciative spirit, worthy of our tradition”.²⁶ The Hindu leaders however consider it as a breach of

democratic principles and the Indian National Congress began a campaign of criticism and opposition and demanded the removal of such “anomalous restriction between different sections of His Majesty’s subjects in the matter of franchise”.²⁷

The indignation of the Muslims of Bengal was equally shared by educated Muslims in other parts of India. Such a flagrant disregard for solemn promises created a feeling of distrust amongst the Muslims. They felt that government had sacrificed the interests of the Muslims in order to pacify the Hindus.²⁸ The Muslim Community was thoroughly disillusioned and came to the decision that it could no longer put its trust in the British government or depend for the protection of its legitimate rights and interests.²⁹ The resentment at the annulment of the partition was so intense that a large number of League leaders recognised the necessity for a reappraisal of the Muslim policy towards the government as well as the Hindu community.³⁰ The most significant aspect of this demand was that it was made chiefly by the younger members of the party. Among them, Mohamed Ali was prominent.³¹

The reactions of the All-India Muslim League towards the revocation of the partition of Bengal were voiced at the Calcutta session on 3 and 4 March, 1912. It was significant again that the resolution on the partition of Bengal was initiated by the younger section of the League. In moving the resolution expressing the Leagues ‘deep sense of regret and disappointment at the annulment of the partition of Bengal in utter disregard of Muslim feeling’, and trusting that government would take early steps to safeguard Muslim interests in the Presidency of Bengal’. Mohamed Ali observed that it might seem strange that he, not being born a Bengali introduced the proposition. But as he considered the whole Muslim community of India as a single unit, he thought that

when one portion of the community suffered, the remaining portion shared its grief. The Muslims had learnt the lesson of unity in this matter from the Hindus, who made the question of Bengal an All-India affair. He remarked that the annulment of the partition of Bengal was a great blunder. It might shake the belief of the people that the King could do no wrong.³² It had proved the point that nothing could be considered as a settled fact, if agitation against it could be persistent in.³³ Mohamed Ali held that 'the present time was a time of patience for the Muslims and trial for the Hindus, the latter should not be carried away by a feeling of triumph into a feeling of indifference towards the interests of the Muslim community.'³⁴ The resolution was finally carried. The repeal of the Bengal partition which was the first massive Muslim grievance against the government was followed closely by the failure of Muslim University movement. Since the foundation of Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College in 1876 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan cherished the hope that it would soon develop into a Muslim university. The scheme for such a university was designed during his lifetime. But the dream remained unfulfilled until 1903 when the Aga Khan in his Presidential address to the Mohamedan Educational Conference revived the idea. The issue continued to grow in discussions and newspaper articles which gave it the shape of an organised move. The government assured that it would consider the matter if the sponsors of the scheme could arrange sufficient funds. A University Committee was formed to resolve the formalities and a fund was opened. The Aga Khan came forward as the first donor. He was soon followed by the alumni's of the college who donated their one month's income.³⁵

Mohamed Ali dedicated the columns of his newspaper *The Comrade* to mobilise Muslim public opinion in favour of the proposed

university scheme. The Aga Khan also headed in conjunction with Shaukat Ali (Mohamed Ali's elder brother) to collect subscription for the university. Their appeal evoked spectacular success and the requisite amount of three million rupees as stipulated by the government was collected soon. The leaders of the movement were very optimistic. But their proposed demand to make Aligarh an autonomous centre of a standardised system of education with the power to affiliate every Muslim educational institution all over the country confronted with the government. The government refused to grant the power of affiliation and also disagreed with the appellation 'Muslim', so that the university would be called Aligarh University instead of 'Muslim university'. Not only that the government wanted to place the University under state control and reduce it to the status of a government department.³⁶ This development naturally aggravated the communal excitement already incited by the undoing of the partition of Bengal. The decision of the government was not satisfactory and Mohamed Ali elaborated the position thus:

The Muslims "want to evolve a certain type of education suited to their need and genius, and they want an All-India organisation for that purpose. The proposed Muslim University was primarily designed to furnish that organisation. But if that university is to be deprived of the power of guiding Muslim education throughout India by a well-planned system of affiliation, the main object of underlying the university movement, falls to the ground".³⁷ Muslims were enraged against the decision which was revealed in protest meetings all over the country. But the government was firm in its resolve and refused to review the decision.

While the university agitation was still fuming the Cawnpore mosque affair came into prominence. The city Municipal Board had decided to construct a road which required among other clearances the demolition of a portion of a mosque fell within their scheme. The Muslims of Cawnpore raised their objections and laid their views before the lieutenant Governor Lord Meston in a mildly worded protest. Several Muslim leaders tried to influence the lieutenant Governor. Among them Mohamed Ali was prominent. He had personal and very friendly relation with Sir James Meston, so when the Muslim agitation was launched Mohamed Ali attempted to settle the dispute by correspondence, and kept the issue out of his journal. But his efforts failed and his advice was ignored by the diehards among the officials.³⁸ Lord Meston remained firm in his decision and the demolition was carried out on 2 July. This infuriated the Muslims and they called for immediate redress. Official attention being denied the Muslims of Cawnpore call on a protest meeting at the *Idgah* on 3 August. At the end of the meeting a procession marched towards the mosque and place loose bricks in place of the dismantle structure. The police force sent at the site to disperse the mob opened fire leaving 16 dead and many wounded. More than hundred persons were arrested to face trial for disturbance of peace. When another request was approached to Lord Meston against indifference and prosecution of the Muslims, he flatly declined to interfere by saying that he could ‘not accept or appear to accept dictation by force’.³⁹

In the meantime the incident drew overwhelming sympathy and large sums of money were collected to help the bereaved. A large number of Muslim lawyers poured from different parts of the country to defend the accused.⁴⁰ This was not enough having failed to get just and

fair treatment, ‘Muslims decided to send a deputation to England with Mohamed Ali as its head accompanied by Wazir Hasan, the Secretary of the Muslim League, to acquaint the ministers and members of the Parliament with the facts of the case.’⁴¹

Meanwhile, the rigid attitude of Lieutenant Governor Meston allowed the situation to worsen. The entire Muslim press had criticised the authorities fearlessly and the agitation by now assumed serious proportions and spread all over the country. The continued silence and inertness on the part of government might prove dangerous. At the same time the deputation was also on the move in London. Although, they met very few members, for the parliament was in recess, they continued to address meetings, gave interviews to newspapers and succeeded in convincing the people against the high handedness committed at Cawnpore. Their efforts bore fruits when Sir James La Touche, an ex-Governor of the United Provinces came forward to induce Viceroy Lord Hardinge to face the situation and pacify the Muslims. The Viceroy discussed the situation with the government and on October 14 Lord Hardinge declared to rebuild the demolished portion of the mosque and withdraw all cases against those who were charged.⁴² The Muslim leaders praised Harding’s statesmanship. But the Britons viewed this as a submission in a colonial territory.⁴³ Lord Meston felt very humiliated. He could not forgive Mohamed Ali for taking up the case to the India Council over his head and his wrath fell on Mohamed Ali in different ways subsequently.⁴⁴

While the Muslims of India felt greatly perturbed on the government for the scanty regard showed to their sentiments there occurred some other events which aggravated their anxieties. In September 1911 when war broke out between the Ottoman Empire and

Italy following an Italian invasion of Tripoli the sympathies of Britain was on the side of Italy. The request of the Sultan to be permitted to send troops to Tripoli through Egypt, which although was a part of his empire was actually under British occupation, was refused. Consequently, Turkey had to make peace with Italy ceding her the province of Tripoli. Just over a year in October 1912 the Balkan war broke out, in the new conflict like the old, Britain kept her aloof and remained neutral. The part played by the British government at this juncture shook Muslim loyalty. The Muslim community focused its entire attention on the affairs of Turkey to the exclusion of all else. They saw the Balkan war as a manifestation of European hostility towards Islam.⁴⁵ Consequently their anger rose. They were anxious about the fate of Turkey, whose Sultan was also the *Khalifah* of the entire Muslim world, and began to see a clear connection between their miseries at home and abroad and attributed it to the treachery of British diplomacy, which they thought, was being utilised to subjugate the Muslims everywhere. At this time Mohamed Ali launched two newspapers *The Comrade* in English and *The Hamdard* in Urdu. Both these newspapers voiced concern and gave vast coverage of the Italo-Turkish and the Balkan wars, which became cause of uneasiness for the government. At about the same time Mohamed Ali's *Comrade* received a pamphlet from the Turks entitled 'Come over into Macedonia and helps us', which was an appeal addressed to Britain describing the Balkan atrocities and asking for a rescue from the clutches of the Balkan allies. This cost the deposit of *The Comrade* to be forfeited under the Press Act for reprinting this document. When an appeal against this order was lodged with Calcutta High Court, the judges pilloried the act, but upheld the judgment.⁴⁶ In an effort to help the ailing Turkish soldiers Mohamed Ali

also appealed to the people to make monetary contributions and organised a 'Red Crescent' medical mission under Dr. Ansari in 1912.⁴⁷

Thus the revocation of Bengal partition, the failure to establish a university of the desired pattern, the Cawnpore mosque incident and Britain's anti-Turkish policies, gradually estranged the Muslims of India from the British government forcing a revision of their attitudes and policies. The immediate effect of this attitude was manifested at the Muslim League session held at Lucknow in December, 1912, January, 1913, dominated by the younger members of the League changed its aim from loyalty to "attainment of self-government suitable to India".⁴⁸ Mohamed Ali is said to be the chief architects of the revised creed.⁴⁹ By "suitable self-government" he meant a system of self-rule in which the Muslims were to have a share proportionate to what they considered to be their political rather than numerical importance. He interpreted it as self-government for the Muslims along with other communities of India.⁵⁰ The change in attitude of the Muslims made it possible for the Muslim League to come closer to the Congress, which culminated in the Hindu-Muslim concordant the Lucknow pact in 1916.

The outbreak of the First World War and Turkey's participation in it against Britain created a dilemma for Indian Muslims. Their spiritual allegiance to their *Khalifah* and their loyalties to the King Emperor drag them in opposite directions. Realising the situation Mohamed Ali cabled a message to the Turkish minister of Interior Affairs Talat Pasha requesting him not to join the war and thereby saving Indian Muslims from conflict of loyalties. He urged him to follow a policy of strictest neutrality.⁵¹ In this context he wrote in *The Comrade* that if Turkey joins with Germany Muslims would have no other alternative but to stand by their government and would not in any way add to the embarrassment of

their rulers.⁵² At this time the tone of the British Press was however inflammatory. *The Times of London* in an editorial entitled 'The choice of the Turks' left two alternatives for Turkey, either Turkey should support the Allies or she should be considered as an enemy.⁵³ In response to *The Times* Mohamed Ali wrote a befitting reply in *The Comrade* under the same caption. The British authority considered it a direct incitement to Turkey to participate in the war and so he was interned in May 1915.

Turkey ultimately joined the war on the side of Germany. The sympathy of Indian Muslims naturally fell in favour of the Turks. Realising the situation the British government hope to allay Muslim hostility by promising to respect the status of the *Khalifah* and the right of the Turks to their homeland. With the Allied victory at the end of the war Muslims became apprehensive about the probable destiny of Turkey. When the peace conference met in Europe to negotiate the peace terms it was revealed that Britain was bent upon dismembering Turkey with full vengeance. Hence it was demanded that the *Jazirat-ul-Arab* including Mesopotemia, Arabia, Syria and Palestine with the Holy places situated therein must always remain under the direct suzerainty of the *Khalifah*. The protection of the *Khilafat* thus became a rallying point for all section of the Muslim Community.⁵⁴ In order to provide organisational expression to Muslim sentiment a *Khilafat* Committee was formed in Bombay in March, 1919, which aimed to secure not only a just and honourable peace treaty but also the fulfillment of the pledges given by the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George.⁵⁵ After the formation of the *Khilafat* Committee the next important stage was the *Khilafat* Conference held at Lucknow on 21 September which decided to observe, 17 October as *Khilafat* Day. It was a huge success and its

significant part was the participation of M.K. Gandhi in the movement. Gandhi actively took part in the movement by attending the All India *Khilafat* Conference at Delhi on 23-24 November 1919, and advised the Muslims to resort to Non-cooperation as a method of forcing the British to yield to their demands regarding the *Khilafat*.⁵⁶

Mohamed Ali was released from prison on 28 December 1919. Immediately after his release he went to Amritsar where the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the recently formed *Khilafat* Conference were holding their respective sessions.⁵⁷ The *Khilafat* Conference resolved to send a delegation to England under the leadership of Mohamed Ali to plead the cause of the *Khilafat* and explain the Muslims point of view.⁵⁸ The Deputation in its mission in Europe addressed various meetings in Paris and London. Appealing for the preservation of the *Khilafat* in a speech at Paris on 21 March, 1920 Mohamed Ali put forward his threefold claim: “That the *Khilafat* shall not be dismembered, but that the *Khilafat* shall have sufficient temporal power for the defence of the Faith, that in the Island of Arabia there shall be exclusive Muslim Control without mandate or protection, and that the *Khilafat* shall remain as heretofore the Warden of the Holy Places”.⁵⁹ He continued while speaking at London on March 23 that, “Turkey cannot be torn into fragments like Germany and Austria, because the day you tear the Empire of the *Khilafat* to fragments you outrage the feelings of seventy-five millions of your own people. That is where the principle of self-determination comes in”.⁶⁰ But these entreaties or alarm was of no effect.

On 17 March, the delegation met the British Prime Minister Lloyd George who took no account of the points raised by the deputation and bluntly said that all vanquished powers, Muslims or Christians, would

be treated exactly alike. The French Premier also re-echoed Lloyd Georgian phraseology.⁶¹ Propaganda against Turkish atrocities in Armenia was so vigorously carried out by the intellectuals and the press that it created a negative impression about the Turks on the British public opinion and other members of Parliament as well. The delegation therefore, could not achieve any tangible success and returned to India empty handed in November, 1920. By the time he returned Mohamed Ali had persuaded himself that the freedom of India was absolutely necessary for the freedom Islam. The only way the Muslims could rectify this wrong was by joining with the Hindus to work for the emancipation of India.⁶² While the *Khilafat* mission was busy in Britain, the treaty of Sevres had been published in May 1920. Under the treaty, Ottoman Empire was reduced to a small Turkish state confined mainly to the interior of Asia Minor. Indian Muslims staggered under the blow. Gandhi saw in these bruised feelings a way to gain Muslim adherence to drive for self-government.⁶³ He acted swiftly. Erstwhile the *Khilafat* Conference in March 1920 decided to launch a Non-cooperation movement to get their wrongs redressed. This decision was reaffirmed at a meeting of the Conference at Allahabad in June. In this situation Gandhi called upon the Hindus to help the Muslims to the utmost in their hour of trial, for such an opportunity of uniting the Muslims 'would not arise in a hundred years'.⁶⁴ He offered himself as a 'humble instrument' for the unification of Indian people.⁶⁵ The Muslims unhesitatingly accepted the assistance advocated by Gandhi. Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali who possessed unrivalled hold over Indian Muslims threw their weight behind Gandhi, and professed unqualified faith in his 'non-violent Non-cooperation'.⁶⁶

After winning over the *Khilafatists* Gandhi exerted his influence to persuade the Congress to join the Muslims in their campaign. At the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920, Gandhi presented his scheme. A powerful section of opinion opposed the participation of the Congress in a purely religious matter. After a prolonged debate Gandhi's proposal was approved. The Nagpur session of the Congress in December also carried Gandhi's proposal.

Mohamed Ali and the *Khilafat* delegation arrived in Bombay on 4 October 1920, at a time when the Non-cooperation campaign was moving into its most active phase. Immediately after his return, Mohamed Ali along with his brother Shaukat Ali joined Mahatma Gandhi promoting the Non-cooperation campaign by speaking before crowds and local committees and organising disciplined support for the programme. From January to February Mohamed Ali addressed meetings in several parts of Eastern and Western India. His presence at the Erode session of the *Majlish-ul-Ulama* in March gave a tremendous boost to the *Khilafat* movement, as did his presence in April, at various meetings in Madras, which attracted huge crowds of Hindus and Muslims.⁶⁷ The whirlwind tours of the country by Gandhi and the Ali brothers preaching the gospel of Non-cooperation met with phenomenal success. The whole of India was astir. In this situation Mohamed Ali as part of his campaign presided over a *Khilafat* Conference at Karachi where a resolution was passed that it was religiously unlawful for Muslims to continue to serve in the British army.⁶⁸ Hence the Indian government searching for scopes to muzzle the Non-cooperators and the *Khilafatists* arrested Mohamed Ali on 14 September 1921, and was sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment.

Against this background, Hindu and Muslim leaders on 7 October in a declaration reaffirmed the validity of the Karachi resolution and the Congress resolved to greet the visit of the Prince of Wales, which was scheduled on 17 November 1921 with general strike all over India. The Congress plan went into effect as it was decided. The government also reacted accordingly by declaring Congress and *Khilafat* meetings illegal and arresting thousands of people. Despite government repression excitement continued throughout the country and when Gandhi was contemplating to launch civil disobedience, just at that juncture unexpectedly called off the Non-cooperation because on 5 February 1922 a police station at *Chauri-Chaura* in Eastern UP was attacked and set on fire by the agitating mob burning alive all the policemen on duty. A few days later Gandhi was arrested on 10 March, 1922.⁶⁹

While the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation agitation was on the move there occurred two painful incidents, the *Hijrat* movement and the *Moplah* rising which discredited the movement seriously and roused the latent hostility between the two communities.

The *Hijrat* or mass exodus which happened in August was the result of a suggestion by certain *Ulama* or religious leaders issued a *fatwa* (religious decree) of mass migration to a Muslim country as a means of escape from infidel British rule. Accordingly hundreds of Muslim families mostly from Sindh and North-West Frontier Province marched towards Afghanistan. But they were turned back by Afghan authorities. This caused untold sufferings to the migrants who on their return found themselves homeless and penniless.⁷⁰ The other incident was the Moplah uprising. The Moplahs were a group of poverty stricken Muslim peasants along the Malabar Coast of South India in the province of Madras. In the summer of 1921 excited by the Non-cooperation and

Khilafat movements they first rose against the British authorities and then against their Hindu neighbours. After a great deal of bloodshed the authority declared Martial Law and restored order.⁷¹

After the suspension of Non-cooperation and the arrest of Gandhi, the *Khilfat* movement lost much of its effectiveness. Mohamed Ali was utterly disappointed at this decision of suspension, and consider it as a defeat and ‘synonymous with surrender’.⁷² The withdrawal of the Congress from the field of Non-cooperation left the *Khilafatists* in the lurch. They became angry and disappointed. Its immediate consequence was that the edifice of communal unity crumbled and mutual recriminations between the *Khilafatists* and their allies increased. Many of the supporters of Hindu-Muslim unity made a complete reversal of their stand and drifted towards current of communal politics.⁷³ In this context Mohamed Ali’s own statement testifies the graveness of the situation. He observed that, “With our imprisonment the Hindu Mahashabha raised the banner of revolt against Mahatma Gandhi and Non-cooperation. Mahatma Gandhi, after having given an ultimatum to the government adopted an attitude at Bardoli which the country considered as being synonymous with surrender and he too was imprisoned like us. After his imprisonment...the Hindu Mahashabha started the movements of *Shuddhi* (Purification) and *Sangathan* (organisation) which inflamed religious prejudices which we had so successfully cooled down. The Muslims of the Punjab, in retaliation, started *Tabligh* (preaching) and *Tanzim* (Discipline) and a wordy duel began which proclaimed the bankruptcy of patriotism and nationalism”.⁷⁴

There were several factors which contributed to the growth of inter-Communal antagonism during this time. The Moplah riots of

August 1921 which led to the killing of Hindus and Muslims, the revival of *Shuddhi*, *Sangathan* and *Tabligh*, *Tanzim* movement which consequently aggravated Communal consciousness, and the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms that led to an intense struggle for power, influence and status in the newly created self-governing bodies.⁷⁵ Hence the decision of Gandhi to suspend the Non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement in March, 1922 not only took the sting out of the Muslim agitation but also demoralised the leaders and created frustration among the masses. The restrained energy of the people relinquished during the Non-cooperation days now transformed into communal bickering.⁷⁶

Soon after the suspension of civil disobedience Muslims were struck by yet another surprise. On 1 November 1922 the Nationalist government of Turkey abrogated the Sultanate. This decision shook the mind of the Muslims, for the maintenance of the temporal power of the *Khilafat* was one of the main objects of the *Khilafat* movement. The final blow was struck on 3 March 1924 when the Turkish National Assembly abolished the institution of *Khilafat*. This was undoubtedly devastating for Mohamed Ali, it shattered his dream which he reared with so much affection.

Mohamed Ali was released from prison on August 29, 1923. In his first public address he expressed his despair at finding on his shoulders the burden of freeing Islam and India.⁷⁷ Non-cooperation still remained the main principle of his politics. But things had changed during his internment. At the Gaya session of the Congress in 1922 there developed two factions on the question of participating the new Legislative Councils created by the Montague-Chelmsford reforms in 1919. The 'no changers' under C. Rajagopalachari still against council

entry and the ‘pro-changers’ were led by C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru who created the *Swaraja* Party within the Congress and wanted to be elected to the council so as to wreck the reform from within.⁷⁸ When Mohamed Ali came out of prison he declared against council entry by saying that, “If co-operation was *haram* according to the Islamic law two years ago, it cannot become *halal* today”.⁷⁹ But in mid-September it was Mohamed Ali who proposed the compromise resolution at the Delhi special Congress enabling, “such Congressmen who have no religious or other conscientious objections against entering the legislature...to stand as candidates” and calling for “united endeavour to achieve *Swaraj* at the earliest possible moment”.⁸⁰ The reason behind this change of mind may be explained as Jawaharlal Nehru perceived was that, the lack of any political agenda and the fiasco of the no changers to launch an effective programme, which would satisfy those who believed in the system of parliamentary exercise after a wave of direct political action.⁸¹ It might also be argued that Mohamed Ali was motivated by the aspiration to patch up differences of various Congress factions and forge a unity among them.⁸² His eagerness for unity was expressed vividly in a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru who was induced to accept the Secretaryship of the Congress much against his desire for Mohamed Ali’s year of Presidentship.⁸³ He wrote “Let the Provincial Congress assembly sent from the sacred soil of Kashi itself the message of the greater and more solid *sanghathan*, the *sanghathan* of the National Congress, which should aim at the union of all-down-trodden and oppressed humanity suffering untold torture and humiliation under the heel of Europe. And let us all go forth from this conference truly *shuddh*, purged of all narrowness bigotry and intolerance in order to free our motherland from the most cramping slavery -the slavery not only of the body but also of the soul If there is still anything of the old world

of spirituality in Kashi, let us recommence the work of our great Chief Gandhiji, in the spirit of religious devotion and utter unworldliness”.⁸⁴ But whatever might be the reason behind Mohamed Ali’s decision of associating himself with the *Swaraj* party it disappointed his friends, colleagues and admirers.⁸⁵

In December, 1923 Mohamed Ali became the President of the Congress. The speech he delivered was although criticised by a section of the press⁸⁶ furnished a fuller exposition of Mohamed Ali’s ideas about Indian politics and the Muslims part therein.⁸⁷ In his speech Mohamed Ali examined thoroughly the past half-century in terms of nationalism and Hindu-Muslim unity. The main theme was that during the past few years unity had grown as an essential element and it was still absolutely necessary if Indians hoped to realise their aims. Similarly Non-cooperation was outmoded even if one were to grant (only for the sake of argument) that Non-cooperation had failed, there was no better alternative to that programme. All Indians must therefore, follow the course to which they had pledged themselves.⁸⁸

In his speech Mohamed Ali spoke of his long-standing dream of a ‘Federation of Faiths’, a ‘United Faiths of India’.⁸⁹ In this country, he said, hundreds of millions of people are “infinitely split up into communities, sects and denominations. Providence had created for us the mission of solving a unique problem and working out a new synthesis”⁹⁰ and that synthesis must be of a federal type. For the lines of cleavage were too deeply marked to permit a union of any other sort. He further added, that, “For more than twenty years I have dreamed the dream of a federation grander, nobler and infinitely more spiritual than the united States of America, and today when many a political Cassandra prophesies a return to the bad old days of Hindu-Muslim

dissensions, I still dream that old dream of 'United Faiths of India' it was in order to translate this dream into reality that I had launched my weekly newspaper, and had significantly called it *The Comrade*- "Comrade of all and partisan of none".⁹¹

In solving communal problem, Mohamed Ali was dispassionate and suggested various measures in reducing communal tension. He considered communal representation in the Lucknow pact satisfactory for the time being and emphasised that Indians should hasten the peace to *Swaraj*,⁹² "So that we may readjust communal shares in representative bodies".⁹³

According to Mohamed Ali, the motives for Indian Muslim efforts towards *Swaraj* were still dual. They aimed at freeing India and freeing Islam. The relationship between Indians and Turks was in the nature of a compact, because both Turkey and India were oppressed by the same imperialism. Once India was free and her forces could not be driven to fight against the Turks, both Turkey and Islam would be safe. On the other hand, it was in order to keep India enslaved that Britain insisted on such harsh terms for the Ottoman Empire. Presumably he meant, suggested John Watson that the Turks would have fought for the freedom of their co-religionists, including Indian Muslims, and hence India if they had not been so enfeebled.⁹⁴ If so, his lack of realism in assessing the aims of the Turks did not stop here. Although the Turks under the Nationalist forces were making headway towards victory, Mohamed Ali still pictured them as fighting for the ideal *Khalifah*. He observed that, "I feel confident that once they are free from the distractions inevitable after the victories both of war and peace they will revive with God's assistance the glories not of Omayyad or Abbasid Empire, but of the first thirty years of the *Khilafat* before there were any

Kings or dynasties”.⁹⁵ He further said that he had his own view on “the possible adjustment of the relations of all Muslim states and the *Khalifah*”, but this was not the time to state them.⁹⁶

The abstract of Mohamed Ali’s above Presidential address reveals his faithful exposition of Indian nationalism and of his pan-Islamic proclivities which caused uneasiness among his Congress colleagues. His review of the communal relations, his study of the Congress maneuver and comprehension of British rule was both adroit and impressive. His devotion to the Congress movement as indeed to its leader Gandhi was striking.⁹⁷ Ever since his Presidentship Mohamed Ali had an opportunity of working closely with the top brass of the Hindu leadership. But as soon as he came to know them, his trust on them began wane away. Malavia and Lajpat Rai two of the most reactionary Hindu leaders of the Congress frankly and forcefully pleaded for an aggressive revival of Hinduism. There were other members too who were pledging them support privately. Consequently the deficit of confidence became vivid. Gandhi alone command respect and despite his branding the Muslim community as a bully, Mohamed Ali reposed complete trust in his leadership.⁹⁸ This was evident from his letter to Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, one of the General Secretary of the Congress. He wrote, “It is Gandhi, Gandhi, Gandhi, that has got to be dinned into the people’s ears because he means Hindu-Muslim unity, Non-cooperation , *Swadharma* and *Swaraj*, while the rest are after petty communal or local or foreign ideals, most of them tinged with personal ambitions”.⁹⁹

While Mohamed Ali was appealing for establishment of communal harmony the situation of the country, as a whole, was no better, if not worse. Communalism, in its increasingly dangerous form, had raised its ugly head and there were grumblings, bickerings, and even

riots at different places, specially in 1923¹⁰⁰ which gradually led to the deterioration of communal relations. In February, 1924 Gandhi was released from prison. He had not been in touch with the situation which had changed during his two years prison. Mohamed Ali went to brief him and so did others. Prominent among them was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who was the chief organiser of the Hindu Mahasabha and wielded great influence on Gandhi. Mohamed Ali had grave misgivings about him. Because he whipped up the feelings of aggressively organised Hindus against the Muslim minority.¹⁰¹ Mohamed Ali's apprehensions about the Hindu leaders was not altogether unfounded. In his first public enunciation after release Gandhi set forth his own diagnosis of the cause of political order. He held responsible both Hindus and Muslims for failing to perceive the relation between means and ends.¹⁰² And after delivering some sagacious advice he divided the relative liability of the two communities for violence and fastened the entire guilt on the Muslims by saying that, "There is no doubt in my mind that in the majority of quarrels the Hindus come out the second best, my own experience but confirms the opinion that the Mussalman as a rule is a bully, and the Hindu as a rule is a coward. Where there are cowards there will always be bullies".¹⁰³

The whole community had been censured unfairly. Mohamed Ali whose faith in Gandhi till then was unbounded and who was serving as the incumbent president of the Congress felt deeply hurt, for he was not even consulted before issuing of such a significant statement.¹⁰⁴ Gandhi's phrase, the 'Coward and bully' soon acquired the force of an argument and was used extensively by Hindu journals and public men. Muslims were indignant in general at the unpleasant judgment which damaged the communal relations considerably.¹⁰⁵

In spite of all this, Gandhi commanded considerable influence over Muslim leadership. But after his release, instead of exerting himself to reduce communal tension he had withdrawn himself from active politics and remained apparently a neutral spectator of the political scene, and kept his lips sealed about Hindu-Muslim relations. When he was approached by his former lieutenants and requested to break his silence and to restrain the deteriorating situation he remained reluctant. The interpretation of which was that he was no longer interested in solving the Hindu-Muslim communal impasse.¹⁰⁶

When Gandhi was free from internment there was speculation as to what attitude Gandhi would take up with regard to the *Swaraj* party. On principle Gandhi was bitterly opposed to the *Swarajist* policy of 'Council-entry' albeit he adopted a conciliatory approach, probably because he felt that the changed circumstance in the country necessitated an alteration in tactics. He arrived at understanding with the *Swarajist* leaders C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru. According to the agreement the promotion of *Khadi* campaign was to rest on Gandhi and the *Swaraj* party was to carry on its work within Councils 'as an integral part of the Congress organisation' He also announced that 1926 would be a 'year of silence' for him.¹⁰⁷ However, in the 1923 elections the *Swarajists* scored a striking success. Das led the *Swarajists* in the Bengal legislature, and as long as he lived, no ministry could function in the province. One of his most courageous acts was to sign an agreement with the *Khilafat* leaders pledging forty percent of the seats in the provincial legislature and the same proportion of places in the administration of the province for Muslims. While the terms of the Bengal Pact as it came to be known was gratified to the Muslims, the Hindus raised a storm of protest at the 'Surrender'. But Das was firm in

his decision. Unfortunately Das suddenly passed away in June, 1925. Soon after his demise Muslims walked out of the Swaraj party. Because they found that Hindu *Swarajists* would behave as Hindus first and as nationalists afterwards. Their apprehensions came true. Hindu *Swarajists* as a body voted against a resolution demanding a much needed grant of money for improved educational facilities at Dacca University. Not only that the Congress also ignored Muslim demands and repudiated the Bengal Pact under pressure from Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai who disapproved the attempt to solve an all India question on provincial lines.¹⁰⁸

Besides, in absence of C.R. Das dissensions began to appear within the party. When Pandit Motilal Nehru assumed leadership of the *Swaraj* party differences broke out between him and his Maharashtrian followers. Mr. Jayakar and Mr. N.C. Kelkar who severed their connections with the *Swaraj* party and formed the Responsivist party. Its main points of difference with the *Swaraj* party was that it advocated discriminate opposition as against the *Swarajist* policy of indiscriminate opposition to the government in the legislatures and secondly it did not approve of the pro-Muslim attitude of the *Swaraj* party or of the Indian National Congress and on the contrary it allied itself more with the Hindu Mahasabha,¹⁰⁹ a party which was founded in 1915 in order to safeguard the 'separate and distinct interests of the Hindu community'.¹¹⁰ Both Mahasabha and the Responsivist party held that Muslims by co-operating with the government was able to strengthen its position and further its interests. While the Indian National Congress through its policy of indiscriminate opposition failed to do anything for the Hindus.¹¹¹

In 1925 at the Cawnpore session of the Congress it was decided that the Indian national Congress should itself take up the task of running the election which was due in 1926, instead of leaving it to the *Swaraj* party. But the question that ensued a storm was as to the policy to be followed. Whether it be a Non-cooperation as originally advocated by the *Swaraj* party or whether it should be discriminate opposition as propounded by the newly formed Responsivist party. Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai supported the *Swarajist* policy, whereas opposed to them were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Kelkar. Although Motilal-Lala group won the day before the end of the year Lala Lajpat Rai left the *Swarajist* camp¹¹² and together with Pandit Malaviya formed the Independent party which played the same role as Responsivist party.¹¹³ Thus the accentuation of Hindu-Muslim differences in 1925 and after, threw the more Hindu Congressmen into the fold of the Hindu Mahasabha.¹¹⁴ Against this background held the election of 1926. The story of the event can best be described in the words of C.S. Ranga Iyer, a member of the *Swaraj* party in the central Legislative Assembly:

“The elections of 1926 were fought on national versus communal lines. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai fought Motilal Nehru and Srinivasa Iyengar on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha against the Congress and its pro-Muslim nationalism. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, who is a very energetic politician and capable of organising his forces, captured a large number of seats in South India. Pandit Motilal Nehru, who has the special gift of riding roughshod over the feelings of his friends and opponents ...met with what he himself mournfully as ‘a veritable rout’. Every Hindu Congressmen in the United Provinces was defeated Pandit Motilal Nehru himself would have lost his seat had

not Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya with his usual generosity given him an uncontested seat. The success of the Hindu Mahasabha made a profound impression on the Congress leader, who practically accepted the Hindu position, and surrendered to the Hindu Mahasabha¹¹⁵ In the Assembly leadership passed in effect from the hands of the Congress Pandit to the Mahasabha Pandit. The two parties virtually followed identical policies, chose to sit in separate blocks and Pandit Malaviya's lead was followed unquestionably".¹¹⁶

The success of the Hindu Mahasabha reflected the working of the Hindu mind. It frightened the Congress leadership and drew it closer to the Hindu Mahasabha deleting the line of distinction between the two organs. Mohamed Ali was convinced that the Congress and the Mahasabha were between them, leading the country to disaster and blamed Gandhi for his self-imposed silence in 1926 and abstinence from politics, which allowed the Mahasabha to play upper hand in the Congress.¹¹⁷ He could not accept any scheme as designed by the Mahasabha. Because he held that the majority rule without safeguarding the interests of the minority would be the worst form of tyranny.¹¹⁸ M.A. Jinnah who was designated as the resolute Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity had come to the conclusion by 1926 that, "The Congress point of view on the subject of the Muslim position in the country was far from assuring. No responsible Congressmen or Hindu leader had come forward with a concrete proposal with regard to the future of the Muslim community. Individual pronouncements were however, made by one person or other: nothing definite was forthcoming. There was no escaping away from the fact that communalism did exist in the country. By mere talk and sentiment it could not be removed. Nationalism could not be created by having a mixed electorate".¹¹⁹

The years between 1919 and 1924 the Muslim League identified itself with the Congress and did not meet as a separate body. In May 1924 it held its annual session in Lahore under the presidentship of Jinnah. The resolution at this session was of far reaching importance. Its resolution on *Swaraj* contained six principles. The first four dealt with minority safeguards and separate electorates. But the last two introduced two new demands, one is India must be a federal state and the other was any territorial redistribution shall in no way affect the Muslim majorities in the Punjab, Bengal and the North-West Frontier Province.¹²⁰ In the same session there was yet another resolution which described the Reforms of 1919 as “Wholly unsatisfactory and altogether inadequate to meet the requirement of the country” and demanded “a complete overhaul of the Government of India Act, 1919”.¹²¹

In November, 1925 the Secretary of State for India announced the appointment of a Statutory Commission.¹²² When the formation of a commission was declared it became evident that political reforms were imminent. This prompts the Indian leaders to formulate their demands. On March 20, 1927 Mohamed Ali attended a Conference of influential Muslim leaders of all parts of India held at Delhi under the presidentship of M.A.Jinnah.¹²³ The object was to find a way out of the existing political impasse. After a prolonged discussion, the conference agreed to forego separate electorates, a key stone of Muslim constitutional politics since 1909 in favour of joint electorates if their four demands were endorsed altogether. The first of these demands was that Sind should be separated from Bombay Presidency and constituted into an independent province. The second was that reforms should be introduced in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, raising both to the same administrative status as any other full-fledged provinces in India. And

the last two demands were that Muslim representation in the Punjab and Bengal legislative councils would be in Proportion to their population and Muslims would be allowed one-third of seats in the central legislature in addition to weightage.¹²⁴ The scheme came to be known as Delhi proposals. Jinnah declared that the ‘four proposals’ had to be accepted or rejected in Toto. The aim of the League was to carve out and extend the number of Muslim majority provinces in British India so as to be in a position to avenge any attacks on Muslims in provinces where Hindus were in a majority.¹²⁵ Mohamed Ali made a significant remark in this regard. He bluntly stated that, “the presence of the Hindus in the Muslim-majority provinces would guarantee the safety of Muslims in the Hindu-majority provinces, and that the establishment of Sind as an independent province was necessary for the so called ‘balance of power’ between Hindus and Muslims in British India”.¹²⁶

Desirous to forge a unity between the Hindus and the Muslims the Congress Working Committee in May 1927 and the All India Congress Committee in December, 1927 accepted the Delhi proposals.¹²⁷ This broadened the prospect of a rapprochement with the Muslim leadership for framing a new constitution for India.¹²⁸ But this truce was rejected outright by the Hindu Mahasabha. Motilal Nehru and Srinivasa Iyengar were bitterly attacked for persuading the All India Congress Committee to adopt the proposals.¹²⁹ B.S. Moonje president of the Patna Mahasabha session warned the Congress that it should confine itself to ratifying agreement negotiated by leaders of the communities. He requested the Congress on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha “to confine your resolutions at present only to what has been mutually accepted by the Hindus and Moslem leaders...if the Congress were to adopt any resolutions concerning these details before the differences on them are

reconciled, the Congress may not only fail in achieving its object but I am afraid undesirable complications may arise.”¹³⁰

The Punjab Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution denying the Indian National Congress any right to represent the Hindu community in negotiations with the Muslim League, and declared that any settlement arrived at would not be binding on the Hindus.¹³¹ The general Hindu sentiment on the issue also found its expression in the editorials of *The Hindustan Times* thus, “In what way is the establishment of joint electorates connected with the separation of Sind and the introduction of Reforms in North-West Frontier Province....? Muslims feel that in conceding to Hindus the principle of joint electorate they are entitled to expect as a price of this concession more power in Sind..... and North-West Frontier Province where they constitute an immense majority.....The object Muslims have in view is to obtain as much as they can without conceding as little as possible”.¹³²

In regard to *The Times* editorial Mohamed Ali precisely pointed out the truth that, “Hindus did not desire to live as a minority anywhere, not even in the North-West Frontier ProvinceThey cry hoarse in bidding Muslims to live as a minority in the country and dispel the fear of Hindu majorityThey are out to deny the Muslims the very safeguards that they demand for themselves”.¹³³

While the debate over the Delhi proposal was at its height, just at that juncture on 8 November, 1927 the Secretary of State for India announced the appointment of a Statutory Commission, known from its Chairman’s name as the Simon Commission. The Commission did not include any Indian as its member, which aroused much indignation and resentment among leading Indian politicians. Consequently, the Congress in its Madras session, which met at the end of the year, voted

to boycott the Commission. The Muslims despite their differences with Hindus made common cause with them. Since the Congress did not yet reject the Delhi Proposals, the Muslim League therefore, reacted much the same way as the Congress did against the exclusion of Indians from the Commission.¹³⁴

In this situation Mohamed Ali did not remain as a silent spectator. He actively endeavoured to form public opinion against Co-operating with the Commission. With this end in view he attended the Calcutta session of the Muslim League and forcefully argued in his discourse that 'no nation could accept that another nation had the right to rule over it' and so the British government had no moral justification for their rule over this land.¹³⁵

In the wave of criticism of government policy, the controversy over the Delhi Proposals receded to the background. But the problem remained unresolved. It appeared again when a conference representing all Indian parties was held to consider the drafting of a new constitution. The first meeting of the All-parties Conference was held on 12 February, 1928 at Delhi. It was attended by over a hundred delegates including Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, M. A. Ansari, Maulana Mohamed Ali, T.B. Saprú, Hasrat Mohani, B.S. Moonje, M.A. Jinnah, Shafi Daudi, Nawab Ismail Khan, Seth Haji Abdullah Haroon of Sind, H.N. Kunzru, Jairamdas Daulataram, and the Raja of Mahmudabad. Amongst them were representatives of the Congress, the liberal party, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League.¹³⁶

The Conference faced serious difficulties over the question of Sind. The Mahasabha leaders rejected the Congress resolution relating to the creation of an independent Sind Province. They demanded that the affairs of Sind should be reviewed again. But Jinnah, Hasrat Mohani

and Mohamed Ali refused to agree. The Mahasabha delegates also rejected the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal. On this point they were supported by Motilal and Jawahar Lal Nehru, the Sikh delegate and other Hindu Congressmen.¹³⁷ Pertinently it is interesting to note that Gandhi who kept silent about the issue of separate electorates during the *Khilafat* movement for the fear of antagonising the Muslims now began to speak against it.¹³⁸ However this volte face by the Congress leaders were not received well by the Muslim delegates. They felt betrayed and argued that having once accepted the Delhi Proposals Motilal Nehru and others had no justification in changing their views. So the League decided to boycott the All-Parties Conference. Hence Motilal Nehru found himself in a dilemma, expressed his concern over the unsympathetic attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha, and condemned its stance for the failure of the conference meetings. The negotiations confronted impasse over all essential issues of concessions to Muslims posed a crisis for the Indian National Congress to develop a formula on power sharing in India.¹³⁹

To find a way out of existing political impasse the All-Parties Conference appointed a Committee with Motilal Nehru as chairman and Jawaharlal as secretary to draft a constitution for India. The Nehru Committee published its report on 15 August 1928. The report introduced joint electorates, removing separate electorates and weightage for Muslims. It offered Muslim reservations in provinces where they were in a minority, but rejected the reservation of seats for the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal. The constitution restricted the Muslim quota in the central legislature to a fourth instead of a third as demanded by the Muslim League. It rejected the demand for the creation of Sind as a separate province on the basis that the

reorganisation of states would take place on linguistic grounds, subject to financial and administrative considerations. It stated 'dominion' status and not full independence as its goal and proposed an Indian federation based on a unitary government with all residual powers lay with the centre.¹⁴⁰

The Report received wide publicity. Gandhi who could have exercised greater restraint publicly extolled the achievement and congratulated Motilal Nehru.¹⁴¹ The Hindu Mahasabha was felt elated as the privileged position of the Hindus had not been disturbed. This was evident from the remarks of the Mahasabha leader Makund Ramrao Jayakar in a letter on 28 August, 1928 to Narasimha Chintaman Kelkar where he wrote that, "Personally I am inclined to agree with the Nehru Committee's Report not perhaps as an ideal arrangement, yet on the whole being more beneficial to the Hindus than any scheme so far suggested on the Congress side".¹⁴² The Muslims were annoyed with the Congress because they felt that their interests had been sacrificed and they had been delivered at the mercy of the majority community by the Nehru Committee's recommendation.¹⁴³ It was unfortunate for the Muslim community that the two leading Muslims, Jinnah and Mohamed Ali were absent from the country at this crucial moment.¹⁴⁴ The draft was placed before the plenary session of the All-Parties Convention in Lucknow on 28 August 1928 and was unanimously approved.¹⁴⁵ When Jinnah returned to India he neither accepted the report nor the decision of the Lucknow Conference as final and warned against the danger of a constitution under which minorities felt insecure.¹⁴⁶ Mohamed Ali on his return was furious to see that the Delhi proposals, in shaping which he had played a prominent part had been thrown into waste paper basket by the Nehru Committee. He condemned Motilal Nehru not only for

undermining the Delhi proposals but also rejecting the resolutions of the Madras Congress. He alleged M. K. Gandhi with inconsistency and with abandoning the Muslims.¹⁴⁷

The second session of the All-Parties Conference was held on 28 December, 1928. Dr. M.A Ansari who now belong to the Congress camp chaired the session by praising the Nehru scheme. Gandhi was given a royal ovation as he entered the conference, although he did not take part in the proceedings and remained a silent spectator.¹⁴⁸ Jinnah was invited at the session and Mohamed Ali also received a mandate from the *Khilafat* Committee to attend the Convention with a view to seeking suitable amendments.¹⁴⁹ From the beginning the Hindu Mahasabha representatives were rigid in their attitude and threatened to withdraw its support if one word was changed in the Nehru Report.¹⁵⁰ The Congress leaders who were under the clutches of the Hindu Mahasabha also nodded to the Mahasabha decision. The outcome of the convention was easily discernable. When Jinnah and Mohamed Ali moved their amendments they were rejected by an overwhelming majority and the Nehru Constitution was voted exactly as the Hindu Mahasabha desired.¹⁵¹

Mohamed Ali was very disappointed. His grievance was that after having accepted the Delhi Proposals Motilal Nehru and his Hindu Congress colleagues did not adhere to their decision. Instead, they had succumbed to the pressures of the Hindu Mahasabha and revised their earlier agreement. Shaukat Ali angrily protested that the Congress had become an associate of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Nehru Report bore the mark of Hindu influence.¹⁵² He also censured the Congress leadership for their reversal. In a letter to Dr. Ansari Shaukat Ali wrote that, "It is you who has changed while the Central *Khilafat* Committee

and I stand where we were, not in a spirit of obstinacy but because we consider that Motilal and his Committee have intentionally or unintentionally treated the Muslim point of view with undeserved contempt".¹⁵³ He also criticised Abul Kalam Azad for working at the instruction of Motilal Nehru for enlisting the support of the Muslims in Bengal.¹⁵⁴ Mohamed Ali also supported Shuakat Ali's account. He was bitterly critical of the Nehru Report for several reasons. First among these was that the Report abandoned the demand for complete independence and accepted Dominion status to which Mohamed Ali was dead against. At the All India *Khilafat* Conference held in Calcutta on 25 December, 1928 Mohamed Ali stated that, "Today Mahatma Gandhi and Sir Ali Imam would be sitting under one flag and over them would fly the flags of the Union Jack. The Nehru Report had at its preamble admitted the bondage of servitude".¹⁵⁵ In this regard he further added that, in the days of the East India Company, the beat of drum was accompanied by the cry "Creation is God's, the country is the King's, and the rule is that of John Company Bahadur." The Nehru Report, observes Mohamed Ali meant "that the Creation was God's, the country was the Viceroy's or of the Parliament's and the rule was Hindu Mahasabha's. That was the meaning of accepting Dominion status and yet denying Mussalman's protection".¹⁵⁶ We had accepted he said the Madras resolution on independence as our goal. Compare that with what the Nehru Report offers us. It is only meant to perpetuate slavery and Hindu domination.¹⁵⁷

Another reason for the criticism of the Nehru Report was that it recommended a unitary central government instead of a federal type. The demand of the Muslims were in favour of a decentralised federal government with residuary powers vested in the provinces, so that

Muslim interests would be safeguarded against the Hindu-dominated central legislature. The Nehru report also suggested the Muslim quota in the central legislature to 25 percent instead of 33 percent as against the claim of the Muslim League. Mohamed Ali felt offended at this and expressed his indignation by saying that, “You make compromises in your constitution every day with false doctrines, immoral conceptions and wrong ideas but you make no compromise with our communalists with separate electorate and reserve seats. Twenty five percent is our proportion of population and yet you will not give us 33 percent in the Assembly. You are a Jew a bania. But to the English you give the status of your dominion”.¹⁵⁸

Separate electorates and weightages were other two important issues which flared up Mohamed Ali against the Nehru Report. From the very beginning he considered separate electorate as the foundation stone of Muslim political demands for it safeguarded the minority from being submerged by overwhelming majority. In this regard he observed that, “The principle of communal electorates is a confession of our failure in winning the confidence of minorities, and it would cease only when the majority proves not by its words with which it is ever free but by its acts, that it is not only Hindu, but Indian also”.¹⁵⁹

The Nehru Report also rejected the weightage in the future representative system by which UP Muslims were to receive more seats in the legislature for their past historical and political importance rather than their number deserved. In the Lucknow Pact of 1916 the Congress recognised this Muslim demand. Now its rejection perturbed Mohamed Ali. He expressed his concern that without weightage, ‘Muslims would be subservient everywhere and Hindus would be able to establish a legalised tyranny of numbers’.¹⁶⁰

The verdict of the All-parties Convention in favour of the Nehru Report deeply grieved and wounded Mohamad Ali. He deplored Gandhi's fervent canvassing of the Report and quoted from his writings of 1924 and 1925 to show that Gandhi was now converted to a different creed and was striving for different goals. He wrote to this effect that, "Gandhi has defeated all Muslim attempts for a compromise. He wants to kill communalism by ignoring it. He is giving free reins to the communalism of the majority. The Nehru Constitution is the legalised tyranny of numbers and is the way to rift and not peace. It recognises the rank communalism of the majority as nationalism. The safeguards proposed to limit the high-handedness of the majority are branded as communal".¹⁶¹ Thus the gulf that separated Gandhi and Mohamed Ali seemed unbridgeable and brought their relationship at a breaking point.

By the end of 1928, Mohamed Ali was completely disillusioned with the Congress and became its most uncompromising critic. He was now convinced that the Congress had lost its credence as national body and became a communal one, which is unprepared to work towards the creation of an India in which all communities could live in harmony.¹⁶² Thus the process of estrangement, which began in 1923 with his election as President of the Congress was now complete. In December 1919, virtually the whole of Muslim India joined the Congress with Mohamed Ali and exactly nine years later the whole of Muslim India left the organisation with Mohamed Ali. The number of Muslim leaders who remained in the Congress after his exit was less than a score.¹⁶³ Jawaharlal Nehru observed that it was a misfortune that Mohamed Ali left the country for medical treatment to Europe in the summer of 1928. Had he been in India it is conceivable that matters would have shaped differently.¹⁶⁴ In this context it remains unintelligible from Jawaharlal

Nehru's remark how Mohamed Ali's avowed presence in India could change the situation when the Indian National Congress had succumbed to the pressure of the Hindu Mahasabha.

However, after the Calcutta Convention Mohamed Ali went to Delhi to attend the Muslim All-Parties Conference presided over by the Aga Khan on 1 January, 1929. He had invited Dr. M.A. Ansari and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the nationalist Muslim leaders, but none agreed to attend.¹⁶⁵ The main resolution passed at the Conference called for a federation with complete autonomy and residuary powers being vested in the constituent states. It also detailed the demands for separate electorates, for weightages in legislatures and local bodies, for a due share in public services, for the separation of Sind from Bombay Presidency and for the establishment of provincial governments in Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, and Baluchistan. The Conference unequivocally declared that 'no constitution by whomsoever proposed or devised' was acceptable to Indian Muslims unless it conformed to the principles embodied in its resolution.¹⁶⁶ Mohamed Ali supported these demands to put Muslim point of view forcefully and well.¹⁶⁷

The Delhi Conference was followed by a series of meetings to resolve differences and restore unity among the Muslims so that they would unitedly 'try and faithfully reflect Muslim desires and aspirations'.¹⁶⁸ The effort bore fruit and on 24 March 1929, the 'Delhi Manifesto' was issued by 20 Muslim leaders including Jinnah, Mohammad Shafi and Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali. The signatories appealed to the Muslims not to take part in any demonstration organised by the Congress, because its leaders were determined to strengthen the Nehru Report which the Muslims rejected outright.

Jawaharlal Nehru angrily reacted against Mohamed Ali's signing the 'Delhi Manifesto'. He accused the former president for treason against the Congress. In a sharp response to Jawaharlal Mohamed Ali condemned Congress leaders like Malaviya for defying the party's decisions over Non-cooperation, non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and the removal of untouchability. As a price of his cooperation, Malaviya 'Wanted to place a revolver in the hands of every Hindu lady, no doubt as a token of non-violence, and of course all the Hindu-Muslim riots in which he has never said a word against Hindus are in full conformity with the Congress precepts of Hindu-Muslim unity'. Likewise he criticises Motilal Nehru for defying the Congress resolutions against council entry and for 'killing Non-cooperation just as he is killing the Congress today and merging it into the Hindu Mahasabha in spite of his well-known lack of Hindu Orthodoxy'.¹⁶⁹ Thus Mohamed Ali's participation in the All Parties Muslim Conference marked his complete alienation from the Congress.

While Indian political leaders were engaged in rivalry with regard to framing a constitution for the country, in May 1930 after two and a half years of undertaking The Simon Commission published its report.¹⁷⁰ Shortly before the publication of the Report Gandhi launched a 'civil disobedience' campaign for the enforcement of the Nehru constitution.¹⁷¹ Mohamed Ali strongly denounced Gandhi's Campaign. At a meeting of the All-India Muslim Conference at Bombay in April 1930 Mohamed Ali bluntly said that, "While Indian Muslims were opposed to British domination, they were equally opposed to Hindu domination. 'We refuse to join Mr. Gandhi, because his movement is not a movement for complete independence of India but for making the seventy millions of Indian Muslims dependents of the Hindu

Mahasabha'.¹⁷² He argued that the country lacked unity and discipline and was unprepared to embark on a programme of civil disobedience.

In the meantime the British government announced its decision for a Round Table Conference in London to hold discussions with Indian leaders. Mohamed Ali was impressed by the Viceroy's announcement believing that a change of heart at long last was taking place. He advised the Muslims not to close the door of negotiations on government or any party and expressed his desire to participate in the Round Table Conference.¹⁷³ The government in the changed circumstances recognised the potentials of Mohamed Ali's name and so the Viceroy invited him as a delegate to the conference.¹⁷⁴ Mohamed Ali joined the delegation to London led by the Aga Khan with the aim of examining "what the British proposed to give us, provided that my community was truly and adequately represented therein".¹⁷⁵

Mohamed Ali's participation in the Round Table Conference was his last bid for the solution of the communal problem achieving Indian independence. He was seriously ill prior to his journey to London. Yet he decided to risk his life for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity and Indian independence. Earlier in a letter to one of his daughters, he wrote, "May God grant both Hindus and Muslims an opportunity of mutual justice, fair play and tolerance, and may they become so thoroughly disgusted with slavery that they should not tolerate to become the slaves of any one nor should they seek to make any one their slave".¹⁷⁶ In The Round Table Conference he demanded complete independence for India and proposed a federal form of government for the solution of Hindu - Muslim problem. He said that, "The centrifugal and centripetal tendencies are so well balanced in India that we are bound to have a

federal system of government there, not as a distant ideal, as the government of India says, but to-day , now, this minute”.¹⁷⁷

After speaking on 19 November at the fourth plenary session of the Round Table Conference Mohamed Ali's failing health prevented him from attending the session. On 3 January he dictated from sick bed his fateful letter to the Prime Minister of Great Britain in which he laid down a scheme that dealt with the problems of the Minority community in India. The next day January, 4, 1931 he breathed his last. His death marks the fall of a luminous star from the firmament of Indian struggle for independence.

An analysis of the political events of the period under review entails that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's loyalist policy towards the government dominated the Muslim mind even after his death. But at the turn of the century events like Urdu-Hindi language controversy jolted their sentiment. Although on that occasion Muslims yielded to government pressure, they felt the necessity to organise themselves for safeguarding their interest. It was in this situation that Mohamed Ali returned to India in 1902 after completing his study in London. During the tumultuous years of the partition of Bengal he joined in active politics by participating the inaugural session of the All-India Muslim League in 1906. In the midst of the anti-partition agitation of the Congress and the Bengali Hindus, the British government granted the Muslims separate representation in the legislature in the reform scheme of 1909 which allayed Muslim fear of majority domination. Mohamed Ali's reaction to this concession was one of acceptance and co-operation. But this satisfaction did not last long. The British government eventually yielded to the Congress agitation and revoked the Partition of Bengal. This shocked the Muslims rudely. Mohamed Ali did not like the

decision but he advised the Muslims of India to accept the verdict of the government.¹⁷⁸

During the period under review government adopted several other policies which perturbed the Muslims and aggravated their anxieties. First among these was the university affairs. Muslims proposed to make Aligarh an autonomous centre of Muslim education with the power of affiliation of every Muslim educational institution all over the country.¹⁷⁹ But in 1912 the government declined to grant permission on such terms. Mohamed Ali who worked hard to publicise and mobilise support for the proposed university reacted indignantly by saying that without the power of guiding Muslim education the main object of establishing a university would be useless.¹⁸⁰

Just after the university affairs the demolition of a portion of a mosque at Cawnpore and the mishandling of the case by the United Provinces government created another commotion. Mohamed Ali tried to solve the matter mutually. But failing in his attempt for the unbending stance of the government he took up the case to the India Council in London, which consequently solve the problem. But this impairs Mohamed Ali's relation with the British officials.¹⁸¹

While the British government was showing little affection for the sentiment of the Indian Muslims, the Turko-Italian and the Balkan war in 1911 and 1912 captivated the attention of the Indian Muslims. British aloofness on both occasion angered the Muslims and they turned anti-British, for the *Sultan* of Turkey was the *Khalifah* of the Muslim world. About this time Mohamed Ali launched two journals *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard*. Both these newspapers gave wide coverage to the plight of the Muslim world. He also advocated a medical mission to Turkey to treat the wounded soldiers.

Hence the annulment of Bengal partition, rejection of the Muslim university scheme, the Cawnpore mosque affair and Britain's anti-Turkish policies alienated the Muslims of India from their rulers forcing a revision of attitudes and policies. The manifestation of which was the 'attainment of self-government suitable to India'¹⁸² was adopted as the aim of the Muslim League and Mohamed Ali played a key role in this modification. The alteration made by the Muslims drew them closer to the Congress which was culminated in the conclusion of the Lucknow pact of 1916.

When the First World War broke out in 1914 Mohamed Ali was interned for an alleged article published in *The Comrade*. He served imprisonment throughout the war. When Turkey was defeated and its possible dismemberment became inevitable, Indian Muslims were distressed at the losses of Turkey's authority and they organised a *Khilafat* Committee for the preservation of the authority of the Turkish *Khalifah*. In this situation Gandhi's participation and converging the Non-cooperation with the *Khilafat* issue gave the movement an all India character. When Mohamed Ali was released after the war he immediately joined the movement. Together with Gandhi Mohamed Ali toured different parts of the country preaching the gospel of Non-cooperation and *Khilafat* setting the whole of India ablaze. At this turn of events the Karachi *Khilafat* Conference under Mohamed Ali's presidentship passed a resolution against serving in the British army by the Muslims which led to his arrest again in September 1921. In February, 1922 Gandhi called off Non-cooperation at the untoward incident of Chauri Chaura which resulted in his arrest.

With the suspension of Non-cooperation the *Khilafat* movement lost its force and the communal unity which was formed during the

Khilafat and Non-cooperation days disappeared finding its outlet in communal squabbling. Mohamed Ali was released from imprisonment in 1923 and was elected to preside over the Congress session. He was disconcerted to see the declining communal situation and laid great stress in his speech on Hindu-Muslim unity and urged to adopt measures to reduce communal tension. But despite his appeal situation remained unchanged.

After Gandhi's release in 1924 Muslims anticipated his intervention in checking the mounting communal feuds. His former colleagues met him and requested him to come out of silence to restrain the declining situation. But Gandhi showed no interest, instead he retired from politics for some time and shifted his emphasis from Hindu-Muslim unity to the promotion of *Khadi* campaign,¹⁸³ this helped the emergence of Hindu Mahasabha to a position of commanding influence. From this time the interest of the Mahasabha in the sphere of politics increased. This was manifested in the general election of 1926 when the Hindu Mahasabha scored a single success over the Congress. The result frightened the Congress leadership and from 1927 onwards Congress was driven towards conformity with Hindu Mahasabha policies.¹⁸⁴

By the end of 1927 the British government appointed a statutory Commission in pursuance of the Government of India Act of 1919 to enquire into the working and future of the Indian constitution.¹⁸⁵ The Act of 1919 provided for the appointment of a Statutory Commission after ten years in order to examine the working of the system of government, and to report as 'to whether and to what extent it was desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government existing therein'.¹⁸⁶ But since the Commission did not include any Indian

member an All Parties Conference was convened as a mark of protest to consider the drafting of a new constitution. The Conference appointed a committee with Motilal Nehru as chairman to fulfil this task.¹⁸⁷

The Nehru Committee published its report on 15 August 1928. The report repudiated all the demands made by the Muslims in the Delhi proposals on 20 March, 1927, which was also accepted and embodied by the Congress in its two different resolutions in May and in December, 1927.¹⁸⁸ At the All Parties Convention held at Calcutta in December 1928 the alternative proposals were discussed. Both Jinnah and Mohamed Ali argued their views, but in the face of stiff opposition of the Hindu Mahasabha the Congress could not accept the amendments. Mohamed Ali condemned Motilal Nehru for accepting the Delhi proposals first and then abandoned it, and Gandhi instead of using his influence for a compromise gave a free rein to the communalism of the majority.¹⁸⁹ The Delhi report was in part his brain child which had been consigned to waste paper basket. Mohamed Ali was exasperated, he formally left the Congress and advised the Muslims not to take part in its programmes.¹⁹⁰

In 1930 Gandhi launched a civil disobedience Campaign. But Mohamed Ali did not participate in it. At the invitation of the Viceroy Mohamed Ali despite his indisposition joined the Round Table Conference in London with the object of putting a bridle on the political monopoly of the Hindus and protect the interests of the Muslims in future independent India.

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93. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.301.
94. *Watson, op.cit.*, pp.72-73.
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104. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p. 315 ; Hamid, *Muslim Separatism, op.cit.*, p.165.
105. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism, op.cit.*, p.165.
106. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism, op.cit.*, p.166 ; Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, pp.315-316.
107. S.C. Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, London, 1935 , pp.126-127 ; Hamid, *Muslim Separatism, op.cit.*, p.167 ; *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Sumit Sarkar, Palgrave Macmillan, 1989, p.228.
108. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism, op.cit.*, p.169 ; Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.333 ; Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.216.
109. Bose, *Indian Struggle, op.cit.*, pp.136, 137,139.
110. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.254.
111. Bose, *Indian Struggle, op.cit.*, p.139.

112. The change in politics of Lala Lajpat Rai was due to the Hindu-Muslim tension in the Punjab and the influence of the *Hindu Mahasabha*. Bose, *Indian Struggle, op.cit.*, p.140, fn.2.
113. *Ibid*, pp.140-141.
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115. Iyer, *India, op.cit.*, pp.116-117.
116. *Ibid, op.cit.*,p.17.
117. Rahman, *Understanding Minority Politics, op.cit.*, p.81.
118. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.343.
119. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, 1926, vol-2, p.376.
120. I.H. Qureshi, *Struggle for Pakistan, op.cit.*, p.53 ; Pirzada,(ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I, *op.cit.*, p.578.
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124. Prabhu Bapu, *Hindu Mahasabha in colonial North India, 1915-1930*, New York, 2017, p.141 ; Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, pp.266-267 ; Noman, *Muslim India, op.cit.*, pp.244-245; *All Parties Conference,1928: Report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to determine the principles of the Constitution for India, Allahabad,1928*, p.18; Pirzada, (ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.II, *op.cit.*, pp.118-119.
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128. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.267; Bapu, *Hindu Mahasabha, op.cit.*, pp.141-142.
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132. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.194.
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142. Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism*, *op.cit.*, p.41.
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181. Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.112.
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183. Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.316 ; Bose, *Indian Struggle*, *op.cit.* pp.126-127.
184. Hamid, *Muslim Separatism*, *op.cit.*, p.179.
185. I.H. Qureshi, *Struggle for Pakistan*, *op.cit.*, p.54.
186. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.265, fn.3.
187. The other members were, Ali Imam and Shoaib Qureshi (Muslims), M.S. Aney and M.R. Jayakar (*Hindu Mahasabha*) , Mangal Singh (The Shikh League), Tej Bahadur Sapru (Liberals), N. M. Joshi (Labour), G.R. Pradhan (Non-Brahmins), Nanda, B. R. *Builders of Modern India*, **MOTILAL NEHRU**, New Delhi, 1964, P,185; Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.272.
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CHAPTER-VII

Mohamed Ali's Vision of Indian Independence:

His strategies and action Plan

Mohamed Ali's rapport with the Congress was established in 1919 and lasted till the proclamation of the Nehru Report in 1928. His prime concern was to resolve communal schism by forging Hindu-Muslim alliance to expedite the struggle for Indian independence. But in attaining this goal he was not prepared to compromise the distinct entity or to relinquish the just demand of the Muslims and to remain in the Congress. His venture at the All Parties Convention in 1928 on sharing powers with the Hindus on just and equitable terms for the Muslims in the future constitution of India was his last bid to solve the communal standoff. But the Hindu Mahasabha with its uncompromising attitude pressed the Congress party which was then heavily under Mahasabha influence not to bend on Muslim demands which frustrated Mohamed Ali's attempt for a joint action achieving India's freedom. Hence Mohamed Ali parted company with the Congress, but did not give up the efforts of Hindu-Muslim unity for the sake of India's independence. He joined the Round Table Conference in 1930 with the hope that "an agreed scheme of constitution for a responsible government for a free India would be framed".¹ It was here in London at the Round Table Conference and in his last letter before his death to the British Prime Minister that Mohamed Ali expressed his considered view on the adequate and effective representation of the Muslims and preservation of their honour in the future constitution of independent India. The present study deals with Mohamed Ali's insight into the communal problem and its meaningful solution in framing a constitution for India

where Muslims would have their proper share in the administration of the country and would live with honour along with other communities.

Mohamed Ali envisioned a composite Indian nation, where different nationalities would treat each other on equal footing and eliminate any intention of domination.² He was well aware of the fact that India was a country where millions of people live, who were deeply attached to religion and also divided into communities, sects and denominations. The division was so distinct that only a federal system could unite the country and the cleavage that existed was not territorial or racial but religious.³ Realising this divergence as far back as 14 January, 1911 in the first issue of *The Comrade* Mohamed Ali expressed his opinion on the question of relationship of communities and groups that formed the body politic of India thus, “We have no faith in the cry that India is united... We have less faith still in the sanctimoniousness that transmutes in its subtle alchemy a rapacious monopoly into fervent patriotism The problems of India are almost international We may not create today the patriotic fervor and fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordat like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love-marriage, born of romance and poetry. But a marriage de Convenance, honorably contracted and honorably maintained, is not be despised”.⁴ In this regard he further alluded that, ‘We think it possible to evolve out of the jealousies of today a political entity on federal lines, a unique constitution because, in accordance with our unique situation it would be a federation of faiths’.⁵

Mohamed Ali’s above statements give the impression that he was looking forward to some sort of agreement and an active partnership between the Hindus and the Muslims.⁶ He favoured the idea of

inclusiveness in the process of nation making. He cautioned his countrymen that while contemplating of forming an Indian nation it should be kept in mind that "... In India political unity can be achieved not so much by annihilating smaller units that may appear to conflict with the ultimate scheme of unity, but by recognising their force and inevitableness.⁷ In this context he referred to the United States of America as a pattern in the method of Indian nation making and suggested that India was to be a united states composed of various nationalities.⁸

From the very beginning Mohamed Ali was conscious of the religious differences prevailing in India. He was of the opinion that unless a generous and broad-minded view was taken of communal question no solution could be possible. He considered the Hindu-Muslim problem as a "national problem" without which there was no hope of any real advancement towards forming a constitution.⁹ He believed that a country would be free if the basic law or the constitution of that country was sound. He observed that a sound constitution was one which does not make people slaves of one another.¹⁰ But ever since the publication of the Nehru Report Muslims were gripped by the fear that the intention of the Hindus was to gain political domination over the Muslims. So he felt that in any constitution framed for India must provide definite guarantees for the Muslims against such possibility.¹¹ In a letter to M. A. Jinnah Mohamed Ali expressed similar views. He wrote: "...As for the Muslims my advice to them is not to close the door of negotiation with the government or any party and to examine every scheme with a view to satisfy themselves that,

- (1) We are really getting freedom, or *Swaraj*, or full responsible government, whether with or without British connection, by whatever name people call it, and that
- (2) The Muslims are getting an adequate and effective share in the government of India as defined in the points which you and me formulated last year".¹²

In pursuance of a communal settlement, Mohamed Ali and other Muslim leaders endeavoured to convince M. K. Gandhi to take up the cause. But he was reluctant in this issue.¹³ An attempt was however made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who approached various parties and groups like the All India Muslim Conference, the Nationalist Muslims, National Liberal Federation and the Hindu Mahasabha to bring about a settlement of the Hindu Muslim question. Every party other than the Hindu Mahasabha responded favourably. The Hindu Mahasabha declined to discuss communal question. It had been encouraged to maintain such intransigence chiefly because of the attitude of the Congress leaders who had completely underestimated the importance of solving the problem.¹⁴

However, as a result of the efforts of the desirous group of settling Communal Problem, an All Parties Conference was convened by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in Delhi in February, 1930. Mohamed Ali anxious to reach a communal settlement also attended the Conference. The other leaders who were present included Annie Besant, Jinnah, Raja of Mahmudabad, Sir Ali Imam, Sultan Ahmed, Sikandar Hayat Khan, Yaqub Hasan, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Nawab Mohammad Ismail, A. H. Ghaznavi, C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Col. Gidney and Col. Crawford.¹⁵ Tej Bahadur Sapru was sympathetic to the idea of giving Muslims ample safeguards and representation in the central and provincial

legislatures.¹⁶ In this regard the Conference also called a consultative meeting in March, 1930. The Hindu Mahasabha was also approached to cooperate. But the Mahasabha changed its stand now for it apprehended that the liberals might concede to the demands of the Muslims. The Mahasabha leader B. S. Moonje in a letter to M. K. Gandhi entreated not to promise any concessions to the Muslims which were “incompatible with nationalism”. He emphasised that any agreement which might be arrived at with Muslims would not be binding upon the representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha.¹⁷ Thus when there appeared a possibility to reach an agreement the Hindus represented by the Congress and the Mahasabha skillfully avoid the issue. Hence Mohamed Ali charged Gandhi and Motilal Nehru for preventing a settlement by remaining aloof in this regard for the sake of their own popularity to the Hindu Mahasabha,¹⁸ which vanished the prospect of any settlement in India prior to the Round Table Conference.¹⁹

Mohamed Ali attended the first Round Table Conference in London in 1930 and spoke at the fourth plenary on 19 November. Revealing the sole purpose of his visit he said that “I want to go back to my country if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise I will not go back to a slave country”.²⁰ While paying tribute to Lord Irwin Mohamed Ali termed the Simon Commission Report as the most disappointing document because it failed to satisfy the demands made by the Muslims on January 1, 1929 and instead of advancing the present constitution towards self-government, it set it back in certain respects.²¹ He therefore, suggested to formulate a new constitution for India. When speaking about the constitution Mohamed Ali made it clear that he had no faith in the attainment of Dominion status and that what he believed was complete independence. For the

reason in 1928, he opposed the very first clause of the Nehru constitution, which dealt with Dominion Status,²² because once it became the creed of the Congress nobody would be allowed to admit into the Congress who did not hold that creed.²³ That was what Mohamed Ali did not want. In a letter to M. A. Jinnah early in 1930, he wrote that, “While I am not committed to a refusal of Dominion Status at once, I cannot commit myself to an abhorrence of Independence either... We therefore, do not exclude those who want only Dominion status, as the Congress must do henceforward. But we do not exclude those either who want Independence. For my part I am prepared to accept Dominion Status; but I am not going to make that my goal to be attained ‘in due course’ ”.²⁴ He therefore, liked to keep the door of negotiation open so that it would be easy to reach any solution.

Dealing with the communal problem Mohamed Ali pointed out that the problem that existed between the Hindus and Muslims were no doubt founded on the fear of domination. Because the Hindus were in a majority and in a representative system, ‘wisdom consisted in lung-power multiplied by millions and political strength lay in counting of heads’,²⁵ and the important fact was that for the first time in its history India was going to introduce the principle of majority rule.²⁶ Hence Mohamed Ali suggested that Muslims would accept majority rule only in a federation in which their interests were safeguarded and would not be trampled underfoot by the sheer weight of numbers.²⁷ In his last letter to the British Prime Minister Mohamed Ali clearly revealed his view on the features of the government in the Constitution that was to be formulated for India.

In the first place Mohamed Ali considered it a misnomer to call the Hindu-Muslim question a question of minorities and presented two

points in this regard to distinguish the case. Elaborating his argument Mohamed Ali stated that Muslims ruled over India from the eighth to the middle of the nineteenth century in one way or another which no other community did. Moreover, the important aspect of their rule was the feeling created over the years for so long and over so large a part of India. He held that, there was hardly a community who did not possess a real or imaginary grievance against their former rulers and a feeling against the Muslims did exist in the minds of some Hindus and some members of other community whether Sikh or Mahratta or Rajput.²⁸ Taken such situation into cognisance Mohamed Ali suggested that safeguards must be provided against such feelings, while framing a Constitution in future for an ideal Indian government in which all Indians irrespective of creed and caste would feel safe, equal and free.²⁹

His second contention was that Muslims constitute not a minority as the concept was used after the Great War to denote European minorities. “A Community that in India alone must now be numbering more than seventy millions cannot easily be called a minority in the sense of Geneva minorities, and when it is remembered that this community numbers nearly four hundred millions of people throughout the world...” then “to talk of it as a minority is a mere absurdity”.³⁰ The fact was that, Muslims ruled India for a thousand years and now the Hindus were determined to rule India in the spirit of majoritarianism which would mean replacing the ‘nation Shopkeepers’ that were British by their Indian counterpart the bania.³¹ It was the cast of banias which aspired to have the sovereign power and effective hand in determining the ‘destinies of the Hindu community and that being the majority community of the Indian nation as a whole through it’,³² and for this reason Mohamed Ali asserted that “I do not wish to create a home-made

incubus of a cast of shopkeepers of our own”.³³ He deplored that “most of the agitation of today is being financed and partly for selfish reasons by the banias of Bombay and Gujarat... but it is not the fight for India’s freedom in its larger sense”.³⁴

Thus when the Hindus aspired to govern India Mohamed Ali was then anxious to ensure safeguards for the Muslim minority in India. In this context, he expressed his disagreement on the Lucknow pact for two reasons to which he was not associated for he was in prison then and which according to him weaken the position of Muslim representation. He explained that, on the first place the Morley Minto scheme of constitutional reforms which introduced separate electorates on account of the “deficiency that the Muslims were expected to encounter through the narrowness of the Hindu majority in their representation through the general territorial electorates” had at the same time allowed the Muslims to participate in elections in the general constituencies. But the Lucknow Pact dropped this provision and confined the Muslims to their separate constituencies.³⁵ Mohamed Ali regarded this as a ‘fatal mistake’ because while keeping their separate electorates intact, it deprived the Muslims of the possibility of influencing results in the general constituencies.³⁶ The second blunder of Lucknow Pact which Mohamed Ali deemed disastrous for the Indian Muslims, was the agreement on the part of the Muslim leadership to substitute the small Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal provinces into minorities in order to gain a few more seats in some Provinces which ultimately reduced the status of the Muslims as a minority community in every Province.³⁷

According to Mohamed Ali the problem before the Muslims was not to ascertain the pattern of electorates mixed or separate that suited the best means of ensuring their representation. The real problem was to

secure ways and means of protecting the interests of the Muslims in a situation in which they were in a minority.³⁸ To resolve the problem Mohamed Ali suggested that Muslims should be given full power in such provinces where they constituted a majority and provided protection in such provinces where they were in a minority. The same principle should be followed in the case of the Hindu community also.³⁹ To counter balance the Hindu influence in the government Mohamed Ali favoured the federal system so that the central unity government with a permanent Hindu majority should not override the Muslims everywhere. In accord with the Muslim demand, he also supported one third representation for the Muslims in the federal government, reservation of seats in proportion to population in the Punjab and Bengal where Muslims had small majorities, extension of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan which had so far been denied by the combination of British, military and civil domination and Hindu narrowness virtually endorsing it and the creation of Sind as a separate province like that of Assam.⁴⁰ He emphasised that these five provinces where Muslims constituted majority should be allowed to exercise exactly the same power as the Hindus had everywhere else.⁴¹

Thus to ensure the protection of minorities Mohamed Ali developed a scheme which might be termed as the theory of hostages. According to him the five Muslim majority provinces The Punjab, Bengal, Sind, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province where the Hindus were in a minority will provide a guarantee in the hands of the Muslims and keeping this in mind both the communities would treat each other with justice and tolerationBoth the parties would give each other with such guarantee of good conduct, so that if the Muslims

deal with the Hindus justly, the Hindus would also had no ground to deal unjustly with the Muslims.⁴²

Mohamed Ali expounded this theory more vividly in his last speech at the Round Table Conference. He said, “If there is one other sin with which I charge Great Britain, in addition to the sin of emasculating India, it is the sin of making wrong histories about India and teaching them to us in our schools, with the result that our school boys have learnt wrong Indian history”⁴³ through which the motives of quarrel had been instilled into the hearts of our so-called intelligentsia...for political purposes. If that feeling, which writes “Revenge” , “so large over the politics of certain people in India, existed as it does, and if it existed to the extent which it does today, and the Muslims were everywhere in a minority of 25percent and the Hindus were everywhere in a majority of 66 percent. I could see no ray of hope today; but thanks to the Gerrymandering of our saints and our soldiers, if there are Provinces like that of my friend Dr. Moonje, in which I am only 4 percent, there are other Provinces where I am 93 percent, as in the Province of my friend Nawab Sir Abdul Qaiyum, for which we demand equal freedom. There is the old Province of Sind, where the Muslims first landed, where they are 73 percent; in the Punjab they are 56 percent and in Bengal 55 percent. That gives us our safeguard, for we demand hostages to Hindus in the other Provinces where they form huge majorities”.⁴⁴

Mohamed Ali considered weightage as an effective means for protecting the minorities. Because according to him the feeling for or against the Muslims were practically the same in every province. While it was bitter in the Punjab, it was not likely to be less bitter in Provinces where Muslims were in a small minority and virtually would remain

under the rule of the Hindu government. Hence, the fear which concerned Mohamed Ali, was that the intention of revenge which occupied so much of the minds of the young men on account of wrong teaching and misinterpretation of Indian history for political purposes.⁴⁵ To remove such misgivings Mohamed Ali supported weightage for the Muslims in every province where they were in such meagre minorities. He argued that weightage did not give them a certain amount of influence everywhere.⁴⁶ It would create an impression on the community so represented that it had also a share in the governance of the country.⁴⁷ Likewise he was also willing to give Hindus the same weightage in Provinces wherever they formed a similar minority.

But in the case of the Punjab and Bengal where Muslim majorities were only 6 and 5 percent Mohamed Ali dissented to grant weightages to the Sikhs or to the Europeans. In his opinion, the idea was designed to deprive the Muslims of their small majorities.⁴⁸ He explained that despite their minority status, in every way Hindus in Bengal were better organised, more powerful than the majority politically, wealthier and educationally well equipped. The same was the case of Europeans in Bengal. The government suggested Mohamed Ali through its instrument of instruction could secure the interest of the Europeans against any revenge from the Indians of their past feeling. He argued that a mere weightage of 3 or 10 percent would be absolutely ineffective for the Europeans what it would do was to rip the Muslims off of their majority position.⁴⁹ The condition of the Punjab was also the same. The Sikhs in their one generation of rule amassed huge land in the Punjab and exercised much influence over the poor tenants in the villages. Besides every other consideration they were socially attached to the Hindus and had been working with them politically. So it would be undesirable to

grant them weightage.⁵⁰ Mohamed Ali therefore, suggested that both in the Punjab and Bengal Muslims should be given as many voters as their population ratio,⁵¹ because their voting strength was far below their proportion of population.⁵² Mohamed Ali condemned the idea of providing weightage in the Punjab and Bengal as unnecessary and a Hindu Mahasabha fiction.⁵³

Like the Bengal and the Punjab Hindu minorities of Sind were also in upper position economically, educationally and politically from their Muslim counterparts. Though, there were big Muslim landlords Mohamed Ali suggested to accede weightage to the Muslims of Sind as far as possible.⁵⁴ Although Mohamed Ali was determined to maintain majority status of the Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal, he was equally willing to give the Hindus and Sikhs not only twice as much representation of their population but three times as much in the Frontier Provinces so that the Hindus and the Sikhs should feel that the province was their own as well as the Muslims and that they had a share in the government of the province also. That is the kind of thing observed Mohamed Ali that Muslims should feel in the provinces where they were in a minority.⁵⁵

Until 1927 Mohamed Ali was an adherent of separate electorates. At the Congress presidential address at Coconada in December, 1923 he clarified the necessity of separate electorates and the harmful effects of mixed electorates by saying that, "The creation of Separate electorates was hastening the advent of Hindu-Muslim unity. For the first time a real franchise, however restricted was being offered to Indians, and if Hindus and Muslims remained just as divided as they had hitherto been since the commencement of British rule, and often hostile to one another, mixed electorates would be the best battle ground for inter-

communal strifes, and would have still further widened the gulf separating the two communities.... The creation of separate electorates did a great deal to put a stop to this inter-communal warfare".⁵⁶

But subsequently to remove the political impasse and reach an agreement with the Hindus he changed his view and on 20 March, 1927 at the Delhi Muslim Conference he accepted joint electorates on certain conditions with other Muslim leaders.⁵⁷ Although in 1928 the Nehru Report rejected the proposals of the Conference Mohamed Ali remained firm in his resolve. In his last letter to the British Prime Minister he said that, "Although nearly a generation ago I was one of the authors of the separate electorate I have felt that the time for it has passed, and that we should now have, in the interest of Indian nationalism a mixed territorial electorate. But a territorial electorate in India of the type of England is an absurdity".⁵⁸ In justification of his stand on joint electorate Mohamed Ali explained that, the intention of Lord Morley for introducing Separate electorate was not to create a parliamentary government in India, but to give India a parliamentary British government, with British official majority. In addition, each community were given the opportunity through separate electorates to send their representatives to the parliament to present their case before the government. Now that when a talk of formulating a constitution for India was in progress, there was no need of separate electorates for there would be a federal constitution for India to shape its destiny.⁵⁹

Against this backdrop, Mohamed Ali came out with a novel suggestion regarding representation in the legislature. His new scheme was that seats should be reserved in the council for both the Hindu and the Muslim communities. But no candidate would be declared elected unless he secured at least 40 percent votes cast by his own community

and at least 5 percent of the votes cast by other communities. This rule was applicable where the population of the candidate's own community would be 10 percent or less than that, and where the candidate's own community would be a larger minority or in a majority then he had to secure at least 10 percent of the total votes of other communities.⁶⁰

According to Mohamed Ali this would serve three objectives. In the first place the candidate had to go to both the communities to seek support which was not required in the Morley-Minto Reforms and would also stop the abuse of sister communities which destabilised the socio-political life of India. Secondly, no person would be eligible to represent his community in the legislature unless he represents not necessarily the majority as in the case of separate electorates but a fair percentage of his own community and lastly, despite securing majority representation of his own community no person would be considered eligible for election unless he was a *persona grata* to a sister community.⁶¹

However, regardless of reservation of seats for the minorities Mohamed Ali did not consider it feasible to introduce free, fair and mixed territorial electorate like that of England. He substantiated the point by citing an example of the contemporary Indian context. He said that the proportion of the Hindu and Muslim in the UP was 96 percent and 4 percent and in the North West Frontier Province the proportion was 7 percent and 93 percent respectively.⁶² Hence if only seats were reserved for the minorities without stipulation of securing a certain percentage of votes of both the communities then there would be no chance for minorities of getting their true representatives elected. Because in that case men of straw who were merely religiously Hindu or Muslim could be elected by the votes of politically Muslim or Hindu

majorities in any province irrespective of entire opposition of the community for which the candidate was standing for election as a representative.⁶³ The scheme also kept the door open in situation where no candidate from a constituency satisfies the minimum criteria. In such case, the candidate who secured the highest votes of the community for which the seat was reserved would be declared elected. In this case, Mohamed Ali desired that only that portion of separate electorates to be spared in the new national constitution.⁶⁴

He expressed his conviction that unless Muslims felt that their interests were safeguarded through adequate and effective representation in the legislature and were free from subjugation of the authoritarianism of the majority community, they would never accept joint electorates. So he appealed to the British Prime Minister to consider the demands of the Indian Muslims sympathetically with regard to their sentiments.

While Mohamed Ali demand safeguards for his own community, he was also equally vociferous in his demand for India's freedom. In his last letter addressed to the Prime Minister of England, he contended that "... We want to go back not with Separate electorates only, nor with weightage only for the Muslims but with freedom for India including freedom for the Muslims and unless we can secure that, I can assure the Prime Minister that the Muslims of India will join the Civil Disobedience Movement without the least hesitation no matter what we may say and what the other Muslim delegates may say".⁶⁵ Mohamed Ali's statement revealed that he was concerned with the freedom of his country more of an anti-colonialist than a Muslim separatist. Although he had alienated himself from the Congress this did not dampen his patriotic fervour in the least till he breathed his last.⁶⁶

From the foregoing discussion it may be stated that Mohamed Ali visualised the Indian nation as a composition of diverse communities, denomination and sects. He was conscious of the fact that religious difference was the main impediment in the way of an inter-communal accord. He realised that without solving the communal problem no advancement could be made towards formation of an ideal government. But the publication of the Nehru Report in 1928 complicated the communal stalemates further. Hence, Mohamed Ali considered it imperative to ensure proper share of the Muslims in the governance of the country. To solve the impasse he, therefore, made conciliatory attempt under the auspices of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru a leader of the Liberal Party by approaching various groups and parties including the Hindu Mahasabha. Nevertheless, the apathetic attitude of the Congress leaders for resolving the problem encouraged the Hindu Mahasabha leaders to frustrate the attempt. Mohamed Ali also persuaded Gandhi to interfere in the matter. But Gandhi along with Motilal Nehru in apprehension of losing the sympathy and support of the Hindu Mahasabha showed their reluctance in the matter. Mohamed Ali became agitated at this and said in anguish that “we who worked for ten years through thick and thin with Gandhiji pressed action upon him, but the desire of retaining Hindu popularity for himself and for Pandit Motilal Nehru prevented a settlement”.⁶⁷ Hence he severed relation with the Congress and decided to join the Round Table Conference, which he considered politically beneficial for the community and the country as well. This intention was revealed from his letter written to the Earl of Halifax where he said that, “I am not only willing but anxious to proceed to England, along with other representatives of Indian communities, parties and interests to confer with the representatives of Great Britain and persuade them to recognise India’s natural demand for

self-determination...in understanding the full connotation of the word ‘Self’ in the expression self-determination and that an agreed scheme of constitution for a responsible government for a free India would be framed as the result of our labours.....”⁶⁸

In the Round Table Conference Mohamed Ali took a flexible stand by keeping the door of negotiations open with government or any party and examining every possible scheme to reach satisfactory solution. But on the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement he insisted on a government of federal type to counterbalance the Hindu Majority rule, which India was going to experience for the first time in its history.

Hence, the question of ensuring safeguards for Muslim minorities became a necessary corollary. In this context, Mohamed Ali criticised the Lucknow Pact, for it reduced the position of the Punjab and Bengal the two Muslim majority provinces into minority position in order to secure some more seats in some other provinces. Whereby Muslims became minority in every province. He explained that the basic problem of the Muslim community was to ensure protection in a situation in which they were in a minority. And to solve this problem Mohamed Ali proposed to give full power to the Muslims in provinces where they formed a majority and provided protection where they constituted minority and advised to follow the same principle for the Hindus. He insisted that the Punjab, Bengal, Sind and Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province these five provinces where Muslims were in a majority should have precisely the same power as the Hindus had everywhere else. Because as Mohamed Ali said, “... ..We demand hostages as we have willingly given hostages to Hindus in the other Provinces where they form huge majorities.”⁶⁹

Mohamed Ali was an ardent supporter and the author of the Separate Electorate system, but after 1927 he changed his mind and accepted mixed territorial electorate on certain conditions as agreed upon in Delhi that year in conjunction with other Muslim leaders for the sake of communal arrangement. But he did not agree to introduce in India a territorial electorate like that of England. As against it, he devised a new formula. According to his design a candidate aspired to contest in the election as a representative had to secure a certain percentage of votes not only from his own community but also from the sister community to prove his representative quality, acceptability and eligibility to both his own and the sister community. He emphasised that without these conditions minorities would not get their true representatives elected and Muslims would never accept mixed electorates. For mere reservation of seats would not produce desired results and in that case despite opposition from the entire community a man of straw merely religiously Muslim or Hindu could be elected by the votes of the majority community a position which would be even worse.

To conclude Mohamed Ali's view of independent India was that, India would be a federal state where the residuary powers would be vested in the provinces and states. Muslims would have their fair share in the governance of the country. To protect the interest of the Muslims they would enjoy full power in the provinces where they were in a majority, similarly Hindus would also enjoy the same privileges. This would generate an equitable balance of power which would eradicate the fear of a majoritarian rule and prevent both the communities to trample underfoot the interests of each other and create an impression that, after the exit of the British "the future government of India is not going to be a government only for one or two communities, but the government of all Indians irrespective of creed and caste".⁷⁰

Notes and References

1. Iqbal, *Life and Times*, *op.cit.*, p.377.
2. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.204.
3. Iqbal (ed.), *My Life: A Fragment*, *op.cit.*, p.256.
4. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.257.
5. Jafri (ed.), *Selections*, *op.cit.*, p.268.
6. P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 1998, p.182.
7. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.263.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism*, *op.cit.*, 1977, p.53.
10. Moin Shakir, *Khilafat to Partition*, *op.cit.*, pp.82-83.
11. Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism*, *op.cit.*, pp.53-54.
12. Mohamed Ali to Jinnah 16 January, 1930, Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.159.
13. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.475.
14. Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism*, *op.cit.*, pp.54-55.
15. *Ibid*, p.57.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism*, *op.cit.*, p.58.
18. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.477.
19. *Ibid*, p.475.
20. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.460.
21. Zaman, *Towards Pakistan*, *op.cit.*, p.62.
22. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.461.
23. *Ibid*, p.462.
24. Mohamed Ali to M. A. Jinnah, 16 January, 1930, Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.160.

25. Paul R. Brass, *Language Religion and Politics in North India*, Delhi, 1975, p.171.
26. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.466.
27. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.382.
28. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.474.
29. *Ibid*, p.474.
30. *Ibid*, p.475.
31. Iqbal, *Life and Times, op.cit.*, p.384.
32. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.476; Moin Shakir, *Khilafat to Partition, op.cit.*, p. 88.
33. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.476.
34. *Ibid*, pp.476-477.
35. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p. 95 ; Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.478.
36. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p.95.
37. *Ibid*, p. 95 ; Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.478.
38. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p. 96.
39. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.479.
40. *Ibid*, p.479.
41. *Ibid*.
42. Hasan, (ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends, op.cit.*, p. 96.
43. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.465.
44. *Ibid*, pp.465-466.
45. *Ibid*, p.481.
46. *Ibid*, p.482.
47. *Ibid*, p.483.
48. *Ibid*, pp.479-480.
49. *Ibid*, p.481.
50. *Ibid*, p.483.
51. *Ibid*, p.480.

52. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, p.298 ; Uma Karu, *Indian Nationalism, op.cit.*, p. 65.
53. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.480.
54. *Ibid*, p.483.
55. *Ibid*, p.481.
56. *Ibid*, p.255.
57. The first of these conditions was that Muslim representation in the Bengal and Punjab Legislative Councils would be in proportion to their population, the second was that Muslims would be allowed one-third of the seats in the Council Legislature. And last two conditions were that Sind be separated from Bombay Presidency constituting an independent province and reforms be introduced in the North-West Frontier Province. Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics, op.cit.*, pp.266-267.
58. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches, op.cit.*, p.483.
59. *Ibid*, p.478 ;
- The purpose of the reform was however, not to train the Indians in self-government, but simply ‘to enable Government the better to realise the wants, the sentiments, of the governed, and on the other hand, to give the governed a better chance of understanding as occasion arises, the case for the Government against the misrepresentations of ignorance and malice’ Speaking on the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the house of Lords on February 23, 1909, Morley remarked that the effect of his reforms had been, was being and would be to persuade those who hoped for ‘autonomy or self-government of the colonial species or pattern’ in India to give up their dream and be content with admission to co-operation with the British administration. Philips, (ed), *Politic and Society in India, op.cit.*, pp.73-74.
60. *Ibid*, p.483.
61. *Ibid*, p.484.
62. *Ibid*, p.483.
63. *Ibid*, pp.483-484.
64. *Ibid*, p.484.

65. *Ibid*, pp.477-478.
66. M. Raisur Rahman 'we can leave neither': *Mohamed Ali, Islam and nationalism in colonial India*, South Asian History and Culture, vol.3, no: 2, April 2012, Department of History, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC, USA, p.265.
67. I.H.Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.298.
68. Mohamed Ali to the Earl of Halifax 11 September, 1930, Hasan, *Ideology and Politics*, *op.cit.*, p. 165.
69. Iqbal (ed.), *Writings and Speeches*, *op.cit.*, p.466.
70. *Ibid*, p.473.

CHAPTER-VIII

Mohamed Ali's Colleagues and Co-Workers in Indian Politics: His involvements and reactions

Mohamed Ali had a chequered life. After completion of his study at home and abroad he started his career as a civil servant. But his heart was never at ease with his profession. For his thoughts were absorbed with the affairs of the wellbeing of his community and country as well. Moreover, he took keen interest in journalism and politics. When in 1906 the All India Muslim League was born he attended in its founding session. Beside this he also kept contributing writings to different Indian journals. But when he found that bureaucratic restrictions impeded his desire, he left the job and launched his frail bark *The Comrade* an English weekly on the turbulent sea of journalism.¹ Since Mohamed Ali's initiation as a journalist in 1911 until his demise in 1931 there occurred in India many significant events on account of the policies and actions pursued by the British government to which Mohamed Ali was actively involved with other Indian leaders Hindus and Muslims alike. The present study deals with Mohamed Ali's mutual relationship with the leaders he was associated with during the period under review in the light of contemporary political events.

While still serving as a Civil Servant Mohamed Ali kept himself in the public eye by attending Conferences and writing articles in various Indian newspapers and journals. His mastery over the language, bold and brilliant analytical approach and his high administrative position captivated the attention of the Aligarh leaders who selected him as a delegate from Gujrat to attend the All India Muslim Educational

Conference in 1906.² He actively participated in the activities to the founding session of the All India Muslim League. When Nawab Sir Salimullah moved the first resolution defining the aims and objectives of the League, some amendments were suggested to which Mohamed Ali provided the necessary clarifications. Consequently, the amendments were withdrawn and the original resolution passed unanimously.³ This action of Mohamed Ali convinced the elders about his potentials, he was included in the Provincial constitutional committee of the League and at the suggestion of Nawab Mohsinul Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk he was also entrusted with the important task of compiling the proceedings of the All India Muslim League.⁴ Mohamed Ali thus came in close touch with the top brass Muslim leadership and his name was associated with as one of the most important representative of the younger generation of the Muslim League.⁵ Being an active member of the League he was also found settling dispute over the affiliation of the two branches of the Provincial League of the Punjab. One was founded by Fazl-i-Husain in February, 1906, and the other by Mian Mohammad Saifi in December 1907. Mohamed Ali was able to persuade Fazl-i-Husain his old friend of London days to withdraw his claim, which eventually resulted in the merger of the two bodies.⁶ Mohamed Ali thus continued to participate in the programmes of the Muslim League. But his pre-occupation with his official duties restricted his political desire. So he made up his mind to plunge into journalism and politics. In 1911 Mohamed Ali launched *The Comrade*, a weekly English newspaper. In this venture he received the financial assistance of the Aga Khan and Ali Imam the two high ranking leaders of the Muslim League who had cordial relations with him and was well aware of his talents.⁷ The publication of *The Comrade* acquainted Mohamed Ali in the political and official circles. For until

recently there was not a single organ of Muslim public opinion which could claim wide circulation or considerable influence with the public or the ruling bureaucracy.⁸ Mohamed Ali filled this void. His contribution to Muslim journalism was duly acclaimed by Maulvi Badruddin Haidar Chairman of the Reception Committee of the fifth session of the Muslim League for his valuable services to his community and country.⁹ The appearance of *The Comrade* was soon followed by *The Hamdard* an Urdu daily, which also drew the attention of the readers. In his journalistic venture Mohamed Ali was inspired and supported by his elder brother Shaukat Ali, and also received the co-operation of some of the Old Boys' of Aligarh. Prominent among them were Raja Ghulam Husain who served as sub-editor of *The Comrade* from 1911 to 1914 and Ziauddin Ahmed Barni, sub-editor of *The Hamdard* who served for twenty five months. Beside them Syed Jalib Dehlavi and Qazi Abdul Gaffar, Shuaib Qureshi and Abdur Rahman Siddique also served as members of Mohamed Ali's editorial team. The labour invested by these men contributed a lot to the success of Mohamed Ali's enterprise.¹⁰ The annulment of the partition of Bengal brought Mohamed Ali in disagreement with the old leaders for their endorsement of all action of the government. The Aga Khan supported the annulment of the partition of Bengal and considered it beneficial to Muslims.¹¹ Mohamed Ali contrasted with this view and he criticised the veteran leader in a respectful manner. Subsequently he also welcomed the Aga Khan on his re-election as president of the Muslim League.¹² But the rift that surfaced between Mohamed Ali and the older leaders gradually widened.

The years following the revocation of the partition of Bengal turned out to be restive. The aggressive attitude of the European powers

towards Turkey and the Muslim world caused great uneasiness and resentment in the minds of the Indian Muslims towards the government. The diffuse sentiment that aroused against policies pursued by the government found expression in the journalistic enterprise and leadership activities of Mohamed Ali. His weekly newspaper *The Comrade* which was later joined by *The Hamdard* in Urdu gave wide coverage of the Turkish affairs and received unprecedented popularity.¹³ About this time there were others who shared Mohamed Ali's concern for Turkey. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was one of them who published *Al-Hilal* from Calcutta. Started some 18 months later than *The Comrade*, Azad tried to emulate its standard.¹⁴ He was a leading critic of the British government and favoured communal amity.¹⁵ His discussion on religious reforms and the elaborate discussions of Middle Eastern news brought great popularity to *Al-Hilal*.¹⁶ Another person Zafar Ali Khan, a class mate of Shaukat Ali at Aligarh, published *Zamindar* from Lahore, which also received a wide circulation for its emphasis in the world of Islam.¹⁷ Zafar Ali Khan was profoundly anti-British and was influenced by the editor of *Al-Hilal*.¹⁸ Although these newspapers were published from different places, there were an alliance among them on issues of common concern, which exerted remarkable influence in the Muslim community.¹⁹

Mohamed Ali at this time was a mass-appeal man. His two schemes the Red Crescent medical mission and the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba* stirred the heart of the Muslims which demonstrated the extent of his influence. The medical mission was led by Dr. M. A. Ansari a reputed physician and surgeon and a devoted follower of Mohamed Ali, with whose inspiration he was drawn into the vortex of public life and developed an interest in the troubled affairs of the

Muslim community.²⁰ The mission also included some of the old boys of the Aligarh College. Prominent among them were Abdur Rahman Siddiqui, Shuaib Qureshi, Aziz Ansari and Khaliquzzaman. All were closely associated with Mohamed Ali and Ansari.²¹

The mission left Bombay on 15 December, 1912, carrying the message to Muslims in Turkey of deep sympathy and goodwill from their co-religionists in India.²² During the visit Ansari corresponded Mohamed Ali at regular interval and kept him informed about the development of activities of the mission.²³ After carrying out its assignment successfully the mission returned to India on July, 1913.

Mohamed Ali's other scheme to voice his concern was the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaába* (Society of the Servants of the *Kaába*) founded with the aid of Maulana Abdul Bari head of the *Firingi Mahal*, Lucknow. Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali was introduced to Maulana Abdul Bari by Mushir Husain Qidwai, his former Quran student. Maulana Abdul Bari expressed his willingness to cooperate the Ali brothers for the cause of preserving the honour of the *Kaába* and other Holy places of Islam because of the unsettled condition in the Middle East on account of western invasion. So he suggested to form an association, seek the membership of Indian Muslims and thereby unite them in the service of Islam. Maulana Abdul Bari's exposition impressed the Ali brothers in their cherished political aspiration of uniting the Indian Muslims for a popular cause. The *Anjuman* thus established in May 1913 with Maulana Abdul Bari as its President and Mushir Hasan Qidwai and Shaukat Ali as general secretaries. Among the prominent members, the *Anjuman* included Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk former Secretary of Aligarh College. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also endorsed the foundation of the

Anjuman.²⁴ In subsequent years the Ali brothers, Dr. Ansari and Hasrat Mohani became the religious disciples of Maulana Abdul Bari.²⁵ The *Anjuman* was nevertheless a significant step for it drew the ulama and men of professional class to work in close co-operation and Mohamed Ali's relationship with these leaders became more closer which proved instrumental for future operations.²⁶

During the Cawnpore mosque incident when the Muslim leaders failed to persuade the Lieutenant governor of UP to solve the problem they decided to send a delegation to London to place Muslim views directly before the government under Mohamed Ali's lead. The delegation also included Wazir Hasan the Secretary of the All India Muslim League, who was an alumnus of Aligarh College and had acquaintance with Mohamed Ali.²⁷ The delegation also received the endorsement of the League.²⁸ While the delegation was in London there occurred an untoward confrontation which brought forth the differences of opinion between the old Muslim Leaders and men of younger generation. Syed Ameer Ali, who was the president of the London branch of the Muslim League felt that the younger men were trying to usurp his position as the representative of Indian Muslim opinion in London. He demanded that the Indian League should vest on him more flexibility in financial and policy matters.²⁹ He also refused to accept the guidance of younger leaders and intend to lead the delegation. But since the London League was a branch of the parent League it must work on line of policy laid down in India.³⁰ This led Mohamed Ali to argue that since the Secretary of the parent body was present the responsibility rests on him to lead the delegation. The contention became so acute that the Aga Khan had to use his good offices to bring about a rapprochement.³¹ Despite such discordant situation all the

senior leaders were not against the younger group, and the efforts of the delegation received the support, recognition and acclamation from the veteran Muslim leader Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk who knew Mohamed Ali well since the foundation days of the organisation.³² The visit of the delegation was significant for yet another reason, and that was, Mohamed Ali and Wazir Hasan succeeded in persuading M. A. Jinnah, who was then in London to join the All India Muslim League. The delegates acceded to Jinnah's condition that his loyalty to the League would not imply any shift to his loyalty 'to the larger national cause.'³³ It is worthwhile to mention that before Jinnah became the member of the League he had acquaintance with Mohamed Ali and Wazir Hasan and had attended the council meeting of the League in December, 1912, where he helped maneuvering a resolution with them in favour of suitable self-government for India.³⁴ The resolution paved the way for the Lucknow Pact with the Congress in 1916. Although Mohamed Ali was in prison during the growing Congress-League co-operation in 1915-1916, he supported Jinnah's effort leading up to the Lucknow Pact and commented that though Jinnah was "too spick and span and he has never worked with his people..." he was on the right track and those who opposed the co-operation were acting as handmade of the government.³⁵

As a member of the Muslim League Mohamed Ali developed closer relationship and co-operation with its members this was evident at the seventh session of the Muslim League in December, 1913 when both Jinnah and Mazhar-ul-Haque supported Mohamed Ali's amendment for the 'Consideration of question of communal representation in self-governing bodies should be postponed for a

year'.³⁶ It generated a heated debate but lost when put to vote, because the majority were still skeptical about the Congress.³⁷

During the First World War when Mohamed Ali was incarcerated under the Defence of India Act, it was condemned by Mazhar-ul-Haque, President of the eighth session of the All India Muslim League at Bombay in December, 1915. He also deplored Mohamed Ali's absence in the meeting.³⁸ Mohamed Ali's internment did not affect his position in the League and his importance was duly recognised by his Muslim League Colleagues. On the third sitting of the same session M. A. Jinnah in his resolution considering a scheme of reform, framed a committee of representatives of different provinces in which he included Mohamed Ali's name from Delhi along with Dr. Ansari and Hakim Ajmal Khan.³⁹ Mohamed Ali was held in such a high esteem by his League Colleagues that despite his absence he was elected President of the tenth session (December, 1917-January, 1918) of the Muslim League held in Calcutta.⁴⁰ From this time the affairs of the Holy Places of Islam and *Khilafat* had emerged into prominence.

Mohamed Ali was released from prison on 28 December, 1919. Soon after his release he joined the *Khilafat* movement which had started before his release with M. K. Gandhi's assistance. Mohamed Ali's participation in the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement brought him closer to Gandhi. Gandhi first met Mohamed Ali in Aligarh in 1915.⁴¹ The reason which impressed him about Gandhi's views was his address to Calcutta students in March 1915 in which he had said that, "Politics cannot be divorced from religion".⁴² This led Mohamed Ali to believe that Gandhi being a Hindu leader might give a sympathetic hearing to Muslims religious grievances and with whose assistance it would be possible to link religious and political appeal to

the masses.⁴³ He used to write long letters to Gandhi from imprisonment whenever he was permitted to do so.⁴⁴ Gandhi also attached much importance to his relation with Mohamed Ali in advancing Hindu-Muslim relation in the interest of *Swaraj*. Because to Him *Swaraj* meant not just political Home Rule but a state of communal harmony and the realisation which needed the support of man like Mohamed Ali to cement a communal alliance.⁴⁵ So he became an active campaigner for the release of Mohamed Ali and his elder brother Shaukat Ali. The question of their release brought Gandhi into contact with Maulana Abdul Bari the brother's religious mentor of Lucknow and one of the chief organiser of the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba*. Gandhi first met Abdul Bari in Delhi in March, 1918, in relation to the release of the Ali brothers.⁴⁶ During the *Khilafat* Movement they met more frequently which consolidated their relationship. Gandhi's efforts bore fruit and Mohamed Ali joined hands with Gandhi by endorsing the non-violent programme after his release.⁴⁷ Together with Gandhi Mohamed Ali travelled different parts of India addressing *Khilafat* meetings and promoting Non-cooperation campaign among the masses organising disciplined support for the programme. In the Nagpur Congress session Mohamed Ali along with his brother Shaukat Ali wielded their influence to secure a large majority for Gandhi's scheme for Non-cooperation.⁴⁸ Being impressed by Gandhi's mass mobilisation Skill Mohamed Ali acceded to his leadership, because he comprehended that, to achieve the *Khilafat* aim and to win the freedom of India it was essential to bring about a unity between the Hindus and the Muslims and Gandhi was the ablest person in this regard.⁴⁹ Therefore, to enlist Gandhi's support Mohamed Ali accepted his non-violent programme.⁵⁰ This view was expressed by Mohamed Ali in December, 1923, he wrote that, "I have agreed to work with Mahatma Gandhi, and our compact is that so long

as I am associated with him I shall not resort to the use of force even for the purpose of self-defence”.⁵¹

During the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement there were such other leaders with whom Mohamed Ali had acquaintance, who shared his religious and cultural view on Islam and *Khilafat* and participated in the movement in its different stages. Prominent among these leaders were Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abul Kalam Azad, M.A. Jinnah, Hasrat Mohani and others.

M. A. Jinnah seceded from the movement at the Nagpur Congress session on account of his disagreement with M. K. Gandhi and Mohamed Ali, on the question of Non-cooperation resolution. Jinnah was not opposed to agitation in support of India's claim,⁵² but he disliked the 'pseudo-religious approach to politics'. So he resigned from the Congress never to return.⁵³ But the departure of Jinnah from the Congress did not affect his relation with Mohamed Ali, as will be seen later that both Mohamed Ali and M. A. Jinnah working together for the cause of the Indian Muslims.

Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Abdul Bari were among the few fortunate leaders who escaped internment during the war and got the opportunity to remain politically active. They were also instrumental in persuading M. K. Gandhi in campaigning for the release of the Muslim detainees.⁵⁴ Although Mohamed Ali was in internment he continued to be a source of inspiration to his followers. In 1917 there was a general agreement on Mohamed Ali's election as president of the Muslim League, Dr. Ansari supported the decision by declaring him as the 'only person fit for the honour'. Dr. Ansari also issued a circular with Mazharul Haque asserting Mohamed Ali's 'noble services rendered at the most psychological moment in the history of the Muslim

community...'.⁵⁵ While Mohamed Ali was in prison Dr. Ansari and Ajmal Khan tried to work up a demonstration of popular sympathy for the *Khilafat* cause to which Mohamed Ali was committed to, before the peace conference which had begun its deliberations at Paris.⁵⁶ At the subjects committee meeting of the Muslim League in December, 1918, Dr. Ansari in his address as chairman of the Reception Committee not only criticised the British government for its anti-Turkish policy, but also condemned the government of India for its alleged ill treatment of the Indian Muslims including the internment of Mohamed Ali and other leaders, gagging of the press and slow pace of constitutional reforms.⁵⁷ The content of the proceedings disturbed the more conscious Muslim League leaders who opposed this posture.⁵⁸ But utilising the Muslim religious feeling and mollifying the ulama by converting the Muslim League aim from protecting political rights of Indian Muslims to protecting the religious interests as well as both inside and outside India,⁵⁹ Ansari, Ajmal Khan and others carried the majority with them.⁶⁰

Soon after Mohamed Ali's release a *Khilafat* deputation met the Viceroy on 19 January, 1920. The deputation constituted of both Hindus and Muslims was led by M. A. Ansari and Mohamed Ali drafted the petition. The deputation included among Mohamed Ali's colleagues were Shaukat Ali his elder brother, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Azad, Maulana Abdul Bari, Mohamed Ali's religious preceptor, Hasrat Mohani, M. K. Gandhi, and others.⁶¹ The deputation requested the Viceroy to use his jurisdiction to persuade the British government to preserve the temporal authority of the *Khalifah*, which was essential to Islam. The Viceroy was sympathetic to the demands of the deputations but did not give any assurance about the fate of Turkey.⁶² The

deputationists were dissatisfied with the reply of the Viceroy and maintained that if the terms of peace were ominous to Muslim religious sentiments they would withdraw the loyalty the Viceroy had anticipated for.⁶³

The university incident was another development which upset Mohamed Ali and his colleagues. The Muslim University Foundation Committee's proposal of affiliating colleges outside Aligarh was refused by the government. This decision disappointed Mohamed Ali and his colleagues Messrs Abul Kalam Azad, Mazharul Haque, the Raja of Mahmudabad and other promoters of the college bitterly. The terms of government for the university was consequently repudiated by the Foundation Committee in July, 1913.⁶⁴

The project was revived again in late 1915. Mohamed Ali was then in prison. The Aligarh Trustees and patrons decided in a meeting to accept government's conditions for the Muslim University, since the Banaras Hindu University had agreed to similar conditions and so it became futile for Muslims to hold out any longer. In this circumstance Mohamed Ali's aide Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. M. A. Ansari objected to this decision and suggested that such a step should be deferred until the war ends, but it was of no avail.⁶⁵ Hence the Raja of Mahmudabad requested Mohamed Ali to accept the decision to which Mohamed Ali replied that, "For the present, at least, we are incapable of controlling even a college, let alone the university which we once dreamt of controlling".⁶⁶ When the Muslim University Bill was finally approved in September 1920, it immediately became the target of Mohamed Ali who by then was released from prison and considered the decision a sellout.⁶⁷ During the Non-cooperation movement Mohamed Ali arrived at Aligarh on October 12, 1920 with M.K. Gandhi and addressed a

meeting of students to persuade them to join the Non-cooperation programme.⁶⁸ On 23 instant Mohamed Ali along with Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari and others attended a meeting at the college mosque. In that meeting Mohamed Ali expressed his desire to free the education from bondage, and also presented a design of a National College offering himself as the Principal. Dr. Ansari conversely recommended Abul Kalam Azad as the Dean of the college, Hakim Ajmal Khan also spoke on the occasion encouraging the students for participating in the movement.⁶⁹ Mohamed Ali along with Shaukat Ali, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and others warned the Board of Trustees to give up receiving any kind of government financial assistance. But in the Meeting of the Trustees held on October 27 they failed to secure the consent of the majority members who decided to follow the old loyalist policy.⁷⁰ This led to the emergence of a completely new Muslim National university entitled the *Jamia Millia Islamia* on 29 October, 1920.⁷¹ Mohamed Ali acted as its first Vice-Chancellor (*Shaikh-ul-Jamia*).⁷²

In September, 1920 after the decision on Non-cooperation at the Calcutta Congress session Mohamed Ali and his colleagues became most active in evolving methods of mass mobilisation. Mohamed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Maulana Abdul Bari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad all responded to Gandhi's call to steer the movement.⁷³ There followed a period of intensive touring to enlist support of the masses for the Non-cooperation programme. M. K. Gandhi embarked on a countrywide tour. He was often accompanied by Mohamed Ali, Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali.⁷⁴

At the height of the propagation of the gospel of *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation Mohamed Ali was arrested in 1921 for his alleged

resolution at the Karachi *Khilafat* Conference which called on soldiers and police to resign from government service. Hence his colleagues and co-workers deem it necessary to continue the campaign to promote the cause for which Mohamed Ali had sacrificed his freedom. A manifesto was issued in support of Mohamed Ali's Karachi resolution which was signed by M.K. Gandhi, Abdul Bari, Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasarat Mohani, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and others.⁷⁵

The suspension of Non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement and the arrest of Gandhi in 1922 transformed the communal unity of the Non-cooperation days into mutual bickering, which was revealed in the communal disturbances in various parts of the country.

Mohamed Ali was released from confinement in August 1923. By then the political perspective had changed. There were divisions at Gaya sessions of the Congress on the question of taking part in the new legislative councils introduced by the Montague-Chelmsford reform. One section under Raja Gopalachari was against council entry and the other under C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru who formed the *Swarajist* Party consented in favour. Mohamed Ali was also against council entry. But later he changed his decision to redress the factional differences. At the special session of the Delhi Congress held in September, 1923. Mohamed Ali's initiative was facilitated by his colleagues Dr. Ansari who hosted the session and Abul Kalam Azad who presided. In his presidential address Abul Kalam Azad emphasised on the necessity of a joint course of action and suggested both faction to exhibit tolerance and recognise each other's tactics to achieve national independence.⁷⁶ Ansari though continued to favour the no-change party worked to prevent party divisions and pleaded for unity in the Congress camp.⁷⁷ Mohamed Ali

moved the compromise resolution in this session allowing the Congressmen to stand as candidates at the forthcoming elections. The Congress therefore suspends all propaganda against entering councils and gave the *Swarajists* Permission to contest the council elections.⁷⁸

At the annual session of the Congress in Cocanada in December that year Mohamed Ali was chosen as president. In his long discourse Mohamed Ali devoted to Hindu-Muslim relations, lamented the current state of affairs. When Gandhi was released from prison in February 1924, Mohamed Ali went to him for the salvation of healing the communal wounds. But Gandhi was annoyed at the developments of the Congress sessions in Delhi and Cocanada for allowing the *Swarajists* with council entry. He voluntarily withdrew himself from active politics, showed reluctance to Mohamed Ali's appeal and resorted to hand spinning and weaving which disappointed Mohamed Ali.⁷⁹ His relationship with Gandhi was further strained after the Kohat riot which occurred in September, 1924. The reason was that the incident was investigated jointly by Gandhi and Shaukat Ali. But their findings differed and Mohamed Ali supported Shaukat's version. The political development within the Congress was also responsible for Mohamed Ali's estrangement with Gandhi.

In the 1923 elections the *Swarajists* achieved spectacular success. But their triumph did not last long. The sudden demise of C. R. Das created schism among the *Swarajists*. When Motilal Nehru took over the charge of the *Swarajist* Party disagreement broke out between him his Maharashtrian adherents who did not like the pro-Muslim policy of the *Swaraj* party or the Congress and threw themselves into the fold of the Mahasabha. The result of this change over was evident in the 1926 elections in which the Hindu Mahasabha out maneuvered the Congress.

The Congress leadership was alarmed and drew closer to the Hindu Mahasabha. Mohamed Ali became concerned about these developments and blamed Gandhi for allowing the Hindu Mahasabha playing upper hand over the Congress by his voluntary retirement from politics.⁸⁰

After the abolition of *Khilafat* in 1924 a new problem ensued in Hejaz which impaired the relation between Mohamed Ali and his religious mentor Abdul Bari. Ibn Saud of Nejd defeated Sherif Husain and captured Hejaz. Maulana Abdul Bari already became suspicious of Ibn Saud a follower of Abdul Wahhab who destroyed many tombs of the heroes of early Islam and a number shrines of saints in the holy city. He discussed with Mohamed Ali in this regard. But Mohamed Ali supported Ibn Saud for he saw it as an opportunity to rid Hejaz of British influence and secure its divine status.⁸¹ This shattered the religious-political alliance between Abdul Bari and Mohamed Ali which begun in 1912. In January 13, 1926 Mohamed Ali finally renounced his allegiance publicly in *The Hamdard* to his religious mentor. Abdul Bari could not bear the shock of his disciple's harsh decision. A few days later Abdul Bari suffered a stroke and died on 19 January. Mohamed Ali hastened to Lucknow. But by then it was too late.⁸²

Following the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation fiasco Mohamed Ali still relied upon the existing Muslim body the *Khilafat* organisation for the furtherance of Muslim interests in India and abroad. In contrast to Mohamed Ali's policy his erstwhile colleagues and co-workers Dr. M.A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Abul kalam Azad felt that trying to change the course of events in Turkey was futile and that they should divert their attention towards the political future of the Muslims in India.⁸³ In this regard they viewed the role of the Congress in a favourable light and so they parted company with the *Khilafat*

organisation and accepted the general political philosophy of Gandhi and the Congress.⁸⁴ This turnabout was evident from Dr. Ansari's support and eulogy for the Nehru scheme as chairman of the All Parties conference.⁸⁵ Similarly Abul Kalam Azad was also seen carrying out Motilal Nehru's instruction for enlisting the support in favour of his scheme of the Muslims in Bengal.⁸⁶ Mohamed Ali and his brother Shaukat Ali both condemned them for their association with the Congress and for betraying the *Khilafat* movement. Articulating annoyance to their stance Shaukat Ali wrote to Dr. Ansari that, "In your blind adherence to Motilal Nehru and other Hindus, you betrayed Muslims and your friends and co-workers and we both are free now to take over lines of action".⁸⁷ Thus the rift between Mohamed Ali and his former allies became conspicuous and their differences widened.

On the other hand the relationship between Gandhi and Mohamed Ali which began to weaken since the Kohat incident was further estranged after Gandhi's abstention from active politics and self-imposed silence on the communal and political affairs of the country. Mohamed Ali began to feel that Gandhi in particular and Congress in general was soft on the Hindu Mahasabha and its leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai who with their communal orientation and outlook opposed any fair or just agreement with the Muslims. In other words, the silent response of the Congress high command and Gandhi to the growth of Hindu communalism made Mohamed Ali uncomfortable.⁸⁸ In this situation Mohamed Ali joined M. A. Jinnah's initiative in securing the interests of the Indian Muslims.

On 20 March, 1927 Mohamed Ali attended a Conference of leading Muslim politicians at Delhi led by M. A. Jinnah, in response to the declaration of the Secretary of State for India's appointment of a

Parliamentary Commission. The Conference agreed to forego separate electorates in return for statutory Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal legislature, separation of Sind from Bombay, reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and a one-third Muslim representation in the central legislature.⁸⁹ The scheme known as the Delhi proposals was accepted by the Congress in two different resolutions passed in May and December, 1927 which unfold the prospect for a reconciliation with leading Muslim politicians.⁹⁰ But the Hindu Mahasabha completely rejected this agreement.

At the All Parties Conference in 1928 the question of Sind faced serious difficulties. The Mahasabha leaders demanded the review of the issue. But Jinnah supported by Mohamed Ali and Hasrat Mohani refused to agree.⁹¹ To defuse the political stalemate the conference appointed a committee under Motilal Nehru. Motilal prepared the draft taking the Mahasabha sentiment into consideration. Consequently the demands made by the Muslims in the Delhi proposal which was also accepted by the Congress was ignored. This enraged the Muslims. At the Calcutta Convention of the All Parties Conference M. A. Jinnah accompanied by Mohamed Ali moved their amendments to bring the Nehru Report in harmony with the Delhi proposals but it was lost in the Mahasabha dominated forum.⁹² The Hindu Mahasabha was jubilant at this success, even M. K. Gandhi who could have command greater control openly eulogised it as a great performance and congratulated Motilal Nehru.⁹³ It is interesting to note that Gandhi who had kept the issue of separate electorates dormant during the *Khilafat* movement for larger interests, now began to speak against it and announced determinedly that he was contemplating to do away with separate electorates.⁹⁴ Perhaps he had given Motilal Nehru a freehand in deciding

these matters. Gandhi's attitude forced out response from Mohamed Ali. He condemned Gandhi for his inconsistency and abandoning Muslims and his fervent canvassing of the report. He also reprimanded Motilal Nehru for nullifying not only the Delhi Proposals of 20 March 1927 but also the resolutions of the Madras Congress of December of the same year under the pressure of the Hindu Mahasabha.⁹⁵ Thus by the end of 1928 Mohamed Ali was disillusioned with the Congress and his estrangement with M. K. Gandhi which began in 1924 was now complete. After the attempts of a compromise was defeated Mohamed Ali concentrated to restore unity among the Muslims and joined the Muslim All-Parties Conference in Delhi. On 24 March, 1929 Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali in association with M. A. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders issued a Manifesto containing Muslim desires and aspirations. The Conference also entreated the Muslims to dissociate themselves from all Congress activities.⁹⁶ When the Simon Commission published its report in May 1930 M. K. Gandhi started a civil disobedience campaign for implementation of the Nehru constitution.⁹⁷ But Mohamed Ali strongly objected and refused to join hands with him. He now began to think Gandhi his erstwhile close ally with whom he had 'worked for ten years through thick and thin'⁹⁸ and had a very cordial and harmonious relationship during the *Khilafat* days as a leader of the Hindus.⁹⁹ Thus the cleavage that appeared between Gandhi and the Congress with Mohamed Ali was never redressed and they were separated in their bid to attain freedom of India from British domination.

The foregoing discussion entails that at the initial stage of Mohamed Ali's political career he had cordial relations with senior Muslim leaders like Nawab Sir Salimullah, Nawab Mohsinul Mulk and Viqar-ul-Mulk who duly recognised his brilliance and accommodate

him to work with them in the interest of the community. He also received financial assistance in appreciation of his capacity from eminent Muslim leaders like the Aga Khan and Ali Imam for publishing his English weekly *The Comrade* and later *The Hamdard* an Urdu daily. His journalistic venture was rightfully hailed by Maulvi Badruddin Haidar who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the fifth session of the Muslim League for articulating the concern of the Muslim public opinion. Mohamed Ali was also in good terms with the Old Boys' of Aligarh some of whom assisted him in his journalistic undertaking and made his efforts a success. Although Mohamed Ali had amicable relations with the older leaders there appeared dissensions on expressing reactions over government policies, one such instance was the annulment of the partition of Bengal which the Aga Khan supported and considered beneficial to Muslims, but Mohamed Ali opposed and respectfully censured this view of the veteran leader.

During the Tripolitan and Balkan wars Mohamed Ali made common concern through news coverage with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, editor of *Al-Hilal* and Zafar Ali Khan, editor of the *Zamindar* relating to the aggressive attitude of the European powers towards the Muslim world which created a sensation among the Muslims of India. His sympathy towards wounded Turkish soldiers of the Balkan war brought him in close co-operation with Dr. M. A. Ansari a reputed physician and surgeon who led the medical mission with the assistance of some of the Old Boys' of the Aligarh College, closely associated with him and Mohamed Ali.

At the same time in order to safeguard the Holy places of Islam from Western invasion Mohamed Ali along with his elder brother Shaukat Ali established rapport with Abdul Bari head of the *Firingi*

Mahal, Lucknow by accepting his pupilage and formed the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba* society in 1913. Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk former Secretary of Aligarh College also enrolled themselves as its member. The *Anjuman* also received the support of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The foundation of the *Anjuman* developed a close relationship with Mohamed Ali and these leaders to work concertedly in future campaign.

In 1913 Mohamed Ali's relation with the old guard leaders of the Muslim League further deteriorated when to resolve the Cawnpore mosque incident a delegation was sent to London with Mohamed Ali's lead along with Wazir Hasan Secretary of the All India Muslim League, to place Muslim views before the government. This brought him indirect confrontation with the president of the London branch of the Muslim League Syed Ameer Ali on the affairs of leading the delegation and representing of Indian Muslim opinion in London. The dispute was however resolved at the arbitration of the Aga Khan. Mohamed Ali's tour of England was important from another aspect, he succeeded in persuading M.A. Jinnah to enroll in the Muslim League. This was a significant affair in the succeeding course of events. Mohamed Ali's relationship with the leaders of the Muslim League also deepened further, he was revered so highly that even after his interment he was elected President of the tenth session of the Muslim League held in Calcutta.¹⁰⁰

After Mohamed Ali's release from internment his association with M. K. Gandhi developed in the course of *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement. Mohamed Ali accepted Gandhi's non-violent programme with the aim of winning freedom of India under joint Hindu-Muslim initiative. At this time M.A Jinnah dissented with Gandhi's

Non-cooperation programme endorsed at the Nagpur Congress session and severed connection with the Indian National Congress, although his relation with Mohamed Ali remained unchanged.

The *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement also witnessed effective participation of Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Abul Kalam Azad, Hasrat Mohani and others in its various phases. They became very active in devising the technics of mass mobilisation and tried to work up demonstration to draw popular sympathy for the *Khilafat* cause to which Mohamed Ali was earnestly devoted. After Mohamed Ali's release from internment there appeared dissensions at the Gaya session of the Congress on the question of taking part in the new legislative councils Dr. M. A. Ansari and Abul Kalam Azad co-operated with Mohamed Ali to resolve the differences.

But Mohamed Ali's relationship with Dr. M. A. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Abul Kalam Azad shifted after the debacle of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement on account of their decision on future course of action. Mohamed Ali was not prepared to relinquish the *Khilafat* cause, while the formers were interested entirely on Indian affairs. This estranged them from Mohamed Ali and they expressed their unanimity with Gandhi and the policy of the Congress. Mohamed Ali's relationship with his religious preceptor Maulana Abdul Bari also deteriorated owing to their distension on the political affairs of *Jazirat al- Arab* and at one stage Mohamed Ali renounce his allegiance towards his religious mentor a shock which was too heavy for Maulana Abdul Bari to bear, he expired and this incident upset Mohamed Ali very much.

Mohamed Ali's alliance with Gandhi also suffered a setback after the collapse of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement. In the face

of deteriorating communal relations Mohamed Ali sought Gandhi's interference in the matter. But Gandhi was apathetic towards Mohamed Ali's call and resorted to temporary self-recluse from politics. The political atmosphere also contributed to the alienation between Mohamed Ali, Gandhi and the Congress leaders. After the landslide victory of the Hindu Mahasabha in the council elections of 1926 the Congress went under the fold of Mahasabha politics, for which Mohamed Ali blamed Gandhi for his deliberate silence. He began to perceive that the tacit response of Gandhi and the high level Congress leaders pampered the growth of Hindu communalism which impede any reconciliation with the Muslims. This led him to align with M.A. Jinnah in securing the interests of his own community. The Delhi Proposal which was the manifestation of their effort though approved by the Congress was discarded by the extremist Hindu faction the Hindu Mahasabha. At the All Parties Conference in 1928 Motilal Nehru surrendered to the Mahasabha desire ignoring the amendments made by Jinnah and Mohamed Ali. Gandhi also supported the Nehru Report contrary to exercising his influence to reduce political tension. This marks the final breakup of Gandhi Mohamed Ali relations and parting of the ways in their journey towards achieving India's independence.

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100. Pirzada,(ed.), *Foundations of Pakistan*, vol.I, *op.cit.*,p. 400.

Conclusion

Maulana Mohamed Ali's was an extraordinarily multifaceted life. Brought up in a Muslim family with traditional Islamic values and educated in the modern environment of the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College and then at Oxford university, he was a pivotal figure in Muslim and national politics at the turn of the twentieth century.¹ Mohamed Ali began his professional career as a civil servant serving in various capacities in the princely states of Rampur and Baroda. But the restricted domain of service did not satisfy his interest and so he left the job and chose journalism in the hope of serving his country and community through promoting their lawful rights and demands. With this aim in view Mohamed Ali published his English weekly *The Comrade* to acquaint the ruling class about the desire and sentiment of his community and to equip the Muslims to ensure their proper share in the prevalent political reality of the country. Alongside this Mohamed Ali also maneuvered his journalistic aptitude to consolidate communal amity by promoting confidence between the Hindus and the Muslims. As a guide to public sentiment he also dealt with the common interest of all communities for the advancement of the country. But since *The Comrade* was published in English language its appeal as an educator of the people was restricted. Therefore, in order to create a wide spectrum of readers Mohamed Ali brought out an Urdu daily *The Hamdard*. As a journalist he was devoted, dedicated, morally fair and never deviated from his professional principles even in the face of danger. His involvement with journalism developed his enthusiasm for politics.

Mohamed Ali's political career began with his active participation in the founding session of the All India Muslim league in 1906. He took part in its different sessions and expressed his deliberate opinion with

regard to the interest of his community. At the same time he also sought to develop relations with the Hindus by eradicating their anxiety generated by the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909. He appealed to the Hindus for communal amity because he considered it as an essential element for the growth of national integrity and advancement of the country. His effort brought the Muslim League and the Congress closer to one another which reached its climax through the conclusion of the Lucknow Pact in 1916.

At the initial stage of his public career Mohamed Ali's sense of attachment to his community was not based on religious feeling. As he puts it, "our communal consciousness was far more secular than religious".² His attitude towards the British ruling class in the beginning was also conciliatory. He considered their affiliation as beneficent for the interest of the Indian Muslims. From this perception he endeavoured to bridge the gulf with the rulers by developing relations through his writings. The attempt was also reciprocated by acclamation of the British officials. In 1905 after attending the founding session of the All India Muslim League Mohamed Ali advocated in favour of promoting loyalty to the British government. He was found expressing satisfaction to the British government when it incorporated the clause of separate representation for protecting the rights and interests of the Muslim minority as against the overwhelming Hindu majority in the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909. His emergence as a journalist drew him closer to the English and he enjoyed the grace of the official surroundings. But Britain's policy in India and her silence on the European aggression against the Muslim world since 1911 slowly but gradually changed Mohamed Ali's view towards the British government. He now began to express his concern over those issues in his newspaper *The Comrade*,

causing inconvenience to the government. His relation with the British officials deteriorated further when he was debarred from meeting the Secretary of State and other members of the British parliament at the time of his London visit in relation to the cause of the Cawnpore mosque incident. The consequence of this embittered relation finally resulted in his arrest during the First World War in 1915. His internment brought about a change in his attitude towards the British ruling class and in his thought, it turned him towards religion, converted him into anti-British and convinced him that agitation was the only method for the redress of grievances.

During this time, he delved into the study of Islam and was imbibed with the essence of religion which became his guiding principle ever since in every activity. His new religious orientation made him sympathetic towards the Muslims of the world and the Sultan of Turkey who was the custodian and protector of the Holy places of Islam. His open enmity with the British government began when the Holy places of Islam were attacked in the First World War and threatened the existence of the Turkish *Khilafat*. In this situation Mohamed Ali felt religiously obliged to participate in the movement for the preservation of the Turkish *Khilafat* which had started prior to his release. The movement received fresh impetus when M. K. Gandhi joined in it. Gandhi wanted to utilise the bruised feelings of the Muslims and drew their support for the attainment of *Swaraj* or self-government for India through the Non-cooperation programme. With the coordinated efforts of M. K. Gandhi and Mohamed Ali the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement assumed an All India character and anti-British posture which shook the foundation of the British rule in India. Mohamed Ali's

new religious orientation thus inspired him in the national cause and made him an exponent of Indian independence.

Throughout Mohamed Ali's political career his relation with his colleagues and co-workers went through ebb and flow. At the inception he had amicable relation with the senior Muslim leaders. In fact it was they who drew him into active politics by inviting him at the founding session of the Muslim League in 1906. He also received their financial support and acclamation in launching his newspapers. But when the annulment of Bengal partition was commended as beneficial for the Muslims by the Aga Khan Mohamed Ali did not hesitate to express his disagreement with him on the matter. Subsequently he entered into open confrontation on the Cawnpore mosque affairs representing the Indian Muslim cause with Ameer Ali who was then president of the London branch of the Muslim League. The discord was however resolved at the intervention of the Aga Khan. Mohamed Ali played an important role during his London visit by enlisting M.A. Jinnah as a member of the All India Muslim League which had far reaching effect in the subsequent political developments. During this period he made common cause through the news coverage of Tripolitan and Balkan war with Abul Kalam Azad, editor of *Al Hilal* of Calcutta and Zafar Ali Khan, editor of *Zamindar* of Lahore which created among them a unanimity of views that stirred the sentiment of Indian Muslims. His sympathy towards the Turks also made Dr. M.A Ansari a close aide of him. Mohamed Ali's compassion for Turkey grew out of the concern for the safety of the Holy places of Islam. This apprehension led him to forge relation with Maulana Abdul Bari of *Firingi Mahal* Lucknow to establish the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba* society. The society enrolled Dr. Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Viqar-ul-Mulk former Secretary of Aligarh College

as its member. The *Anjuman* also received the support of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Thus Mohamed Ali's close connection with these leaders paved his way for working unitedly in the subsequent enterprises. When Mohamed Ali was released from prison he soon came in touch with M. K. Gandhi with regard to the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement. The fusion of these two minds strengthened their bond and created a unique communal harmony setting the whole country politically ablaze. But Gandhi's decision to suspend non-cooperation and the abolition of the *Khilafat* had completely altered the situation. Communal animosity reappeared affecting Gandhi-Mohamed Ali relationship. Although Mohamed Ali served as the president of the Indian National Congress the rift between them widened as a result of communal situation. Similarly Mohamed Ali's relation with his erstwhile colleagues also deteriorated on the question of future course of action after the collapse of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement. But Mohamed Ali was not to be blamed for the contrast in his attitude, because his actions were guided mostly by contexts and circumstances. He did what he believed and did not hesitate to end up relationship with anybody no matter how near and dear he was to him rather than putting his ideals in jeopardy or should be compromised³.

The contemporary trends in Indian politics during the period under review reveals that the inception of twentieth century marks the beginning of a change in Muslim attitude in the Indian political arena. They felt the need to create a platform to defend their interests against the Hindu opposition that drag Mohamed Ali into the vortex of Muslim League politics which was essentially loyal in nature. Muslims expressed their satisfaction with the British government when Bengal was partitioned which brought beneficial effect on the community. But

in the face of stiff Hindu opposition the government backed down from its decision in 1911 which caused a rude shock to the Bengali Muslims in particular and Indian Muslims in general. Subsequently events like the University affairs, the Cawnpore mosque incident and Britain's anti Turkish bias necessitated the Muslims to reconsider their stance towards the British government. Mohamed Ali also felt disconcerted by these developments and gradually began to expose his feeling through his pen which became a cause of concern for the government and was finally incarcerated during the First World war in 1915 for writing a sharp rejoinder entitled "The Choice of the Turks" which the government regarded as detrimental to the interest of the Empire. His release after the War coincided with the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement launched under the leadership of M.K. Gandhi. Mohamed Ali accepted Gandhi's leadership in anticipation of protecting the Turkish *khilafat* and freeing India from British domination, but was arrested again in 1921 for creating incitement among the masses. Gandhi was also interned in 1922 for his involvement in the movement. The subsequent course of events witnessed distrust and suspicion between the two communities. After the failure of *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement communal situation declined and the amity which prevailed during that period also evaporated. Mohamed Ali tried wholeheartedly to persuade M.K. Gandhi utilising his influence to restore communal harmony. But Gandhi showed indifference to Mohamed Ali's appeal on the matter and withdrew himself from active politics. Perhaps he was waiting to see as to what direction the situation was to turn. This opportunity was seized by the extremist Hindu organisation the Hindu Mahasabha to extend their sphere of influence in politics. The result was distinctly manifested in the election of 1926 where the Indian National Congress was completely outwitted by the Hindu Mahasabha

candidates. This was a significant event in the course of India's political development. For it had frightened the Congress leadership and drove them into the fold of the Mahasabha politics. Henceforth Congress leadership was seen working in congruence with the Hindu Mahasabha policies. Mohamed Ali blamed Gandhi for his silence which encouraged and facilitated the growth of Hindu communalism and thwarted the scope of communal reconciliation. Hence he sided with M.A. Jinnah to protect the interest of the Muslims in the prevalent political situation. The shift in Congress policy was manifested in 1928 when a conference was convened by all Indian parties in response to the Simon commission that was appointed by the British government to enquire into the working of the Indian Councils Act of 1919 and the future of the Indian constitution. The conference appointed a committee under Motilal Nehru to draft a new constitution for India. The draft constitution which was presented by the Nehru Committee at the All Parties Conference in 1928 was renounced by the Muslims Under the leadership of M. A. Jinnah and Mohamed Ali for it ignored the demand made by the Muslims to safeguard their interests. Consequently, Mohamed Ali left the Congress in anguish and advised his coreligionists to distance themselves from that organisation. Thus losing confidence on M. K. Gandhi and Motilal Nehru on the one hand and the Congress on the other Mohamed Ali accepted the invitation of the British government to the Round Table Conference for the solution of the constitutional problem of India.

Mohamed Ali's participation in the Round Table Conference was significant because it was in this Conference that he propounded a formula for independent India in the light of the experience gained through his sustained and struggling political career.

According to him, India was a conglomerate nation of diverse communities, denomination and sects where religious differences were a deterrent in the way of an inter-communal settlement. And for this reason he laid great stress on a federal type of government for India as it would counterbalance the Hindu majority rule which India had never experienced before. His main concern was to ensure safeguards for the Muslims. To settle this question he proposed that in the provinces of Punjab, Bengal, Sind, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Provinces where Muslims formed a majority should enjoy full power as the Hindus had everywhere else and granted protection to the Muslims where they constituted a minority, he also suggested to pursue the same maxim for the Hindus. In his scheme Mohamed Ali a fervent champion of Separate Electorate system had agreed to accept mixed territorial electorate on certain conditions, but did not consider it suitable to introduce English territorial electorate system in India. In his design an aspiring candidate had to secure a certain percentage of votes from both the communities to prove his standing and worthiness, and in case where no candidate from a constituency satisfies the minimum criteria, in such situation the candidate who secured the highest votes of the community for which the seat was reserved would be declared elected and for this reason Mohamed Ali suggested that only that portion of separate electorates should be spared in the new national constitution. He stressed that without these provision minorities would not get their real representatives, and that the Muslims would not accept mixed electorates.

In the end it can be said that Mohamed Ali wanted that India would be a federal state with residuary powers vested on the provinces, where Muslims would enjoy their just right and fair participation in the

administration of the country. For the preservation of Muslim interest they should be allowed to exercise complete authority over those provinces where they constituted a majority. He was equally prepared to offer the same prerogatives to the Hindus. On the whole Mohamed Ali intended to create an equilibrium in the sphere of the exercise of political power which would dispel the fear of majoritarianism and shun the possibilities of contravention of interests by both the communities and thereby convince all the parties that after the departure of the British, the government of India would not be confined to a few communities but it would be comprised of “all Indians irrespective of creed and caste”.⁴ But neither Motilal Nehru nor Gandhi could ever fully realise the graveness of Maulana Mohamed Ali’s apprehension about Hindu domination in future independent India, or could ever perceive the nature of his vision of India’s independence.

Thus Maulana Mohamed Ali’s dream that represented the spirit of Indian independence in the form of anti-colonialism remained unfulfilled because he died in the midst of the Round Table Conference on 4 January 1931. But the scheme of communal settlement that he put forth in the Round Table Conference for attaining the freedom of India was significant. Because the political development after the fiasco of the *Khilafat* and Non-cooperation movement, and the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha dominated Congress following the National Convention of 1928 led him to believe that after the departure of the British from India, Muslims would be deprived of the due share that they deserve in the governance of the country he was convinced that the demand for self-government and democracy by the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha would bring into play the principle of majority rule which would inevitably lead to permanent Hindu domination and therefore to a bleak

future for Muslims in a free and united India since they could not expect a fair and equal treatment from the permanent Hindu majority.⁵ And quite obviously he wanted to ensure and safeguard the interest of the Indian Muslims right in presence of British rule in India. His apprehension was not unfounded because it was seen in the subsequent course of events that the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha leaders were intransigent against any compromise with the Muslims on the question of sharing of political power. This communal wrangling persisted even in the nineteen thirties and forties culminating in the partition of the Indian Sub-continent in 1947.

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