

Rashid A. Jullndhri

**Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam
Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Kashmir**

On November 9, 1931, Muslim members of Indian delegation in Round Table Conference held a meeting with the Under-Secretary of State and discussed the question of Kashmir. Sir Shafi explained in detail the sad state of affairs, prevailing in Kashmir. He said that the Muslims of Kashmir had been subject to every kind of oppression and wrong. Their divine book, places of worship, and women had been dishonoured by the police. The demonstrations, made by the Muslims, were not against the Maharaja. This situation is going on since 25 years, but the British Government did not intervene in Kashmir. On this Point, Dr. Iqbal said: If the Maharaja has been allowing this state of affairs to go on, he is responsible, why do not you say so? At this time, Ch. Zafarullah Khan said that the Maharaja, it seems, did not know the present situation through which Muslims are passing. It was therefore, decided that Iqbal and Zualfiqar Ali should see the Maharaja, but the latter was not inclined to see them. Again on the advise of the Viceroy, we tried to see to Maharaja but in vain. There was an impassion in official circle to the effect that the Government was thinking to intervene in Kashmir but it refrained from doing so, because India

office asked it not to do so. It is responsibility of the British Government to take the Kashmir Affairs into consideration, since it sold Kashmir to Gulab Singh.

After hearing these speeches, Dr. Iqbal expressed his concern about Kashmir and said: all the facts are now before you. I do not want to add anything more, except to say that children in the streets of Srinagar have been mercilessly killed. They have been fired upon and in almost all the streets of Srinagar women have been dishonoured by the Dogra Police. As to this, we have the evidence of persons belonging to three different European nations. This evidence is already in the papers. Therefore the Mussalmans of the Punjab as well the Mussalmans of Kashmir, as a matter of fact, the Mussalmans throughout the whole of India are now far more keen on inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Dogra army than on inquiry into the demands of the Mussalmans of Kashmir and accordingly I beg you to convey to the Secretary of State our desire that he should immediately order an inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Kashmir Military. If the people are blame, then the people should be punished or condemned but if the Maharaja and his administration are to blame then the Maharaja ought to be deposed. I want the deposition of Maharaja if he is to blame and if his administration is to blame.

We do not care at all if the Mussalmans of Kashmir do not find any employment under the state, we do not care at all if they are not educated, we do not care at all if military education is not given to them, we do not care at all if they pay heavy taxes, although in fact they have been paying for the last sixty years 2 rupees 7 annas as compared with 3 annas per year which is paid by the Hindus. We do not care about all these things, but we do care and we want you to care about justice being done to the people of Kashmir, to the women and to the children and to the young and old men who have mercilessly killed by the military of Kashmir. We want you to inquire into the matter immediately and to depose the Maharaja, if necessary. That is what our demand is and I want to put it to you, Sir as plainly as possible and also before the Secretary of State for India and before the British people. I think I shall have opportunities to speak on this subject in the near future and I want to bring the whole affairs before the British Public, because these things have been allowed to go on at least one hundred years.

Perhaps the British people do not know anything about Kashmir. They sold the country for 75 lakhs of rupees - about 50,000 Pounds. It is a sale which no modern jurisprudence would recognise and a sale which no modern conscience would recognise.

Two years after the sale, the then Governor General of India declared that this transaction would not be made the instrument of injustice. Well we see it is now being made and has been made for the last one hundred years an instrument of the greatest injustice, and therefore I appeal to your noble traditions of justice and fair-play to see that justice is done to the people of Kashmir and that the Maharaja if he is to blame has his rule brought to an end, we do not want him at all. If people of Kashmir are in the wrong, they have at any rate been mercilessly killed, men and women and children. If, as a result of the inquiry, it is found that the Maharaja is to blame, he should be deposed, as a matter of fact, we know he is to blame to this extent, that he is ultimately responsible for his administration, and therefore, we ought to get rid of him. If this is not done, I can tell you that there are some members present in this Delegation who feel they cannot honestly co-operate with the British, if the demands of the people of Kashmir are not met and if at the same time an inquiry into the atrocities, committed by the Dogra army is not undertaken (pp.13-15).

MR. SHOKAT ALI

I am of those who are personal friends of His Highness the Maharaja, and I think he is a good man.

IOBAL

He is not. Do not bring in your private relations, you are here to represent the Mussalmans of India.

SHOKAT ALI

I did not interfere with what Sir Muhammad Iqbal said, and I hope he will not interfere with my own remarks.

IOBAL

It is not a question of interference. You are not here to represent yourself but to represent the Mussalmans of India.

SHOKAT ALI

I admire Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He was on the spot when all this happened, whereas I was away. He comes from Kashmir and I appreciate his warmth but I hope he will let me state my case in my own way. I should be the last person to come to you and ask you to interfere in the internal affairs of an Indian state. I have a great belief in the Indian states, because in the future constitution that we are drafting here, but I want to tell you if these things are not remedied and the name of the British Government is

being brought in very frequently now -- the peace of which a great number of us who want peace are working will be difficult to attain. I am afraid there are mischief makers in our own country who are going to make further differences between the Mussalmans and yourselves and who will seek to embroil you with the Mussalmans we want to avoid that difficulty as far as possible, and with all the strength at my command I urge you and the Secretary of State and the British People to see that something is done at once, so that these grievances may disappear. (.17)

JINNAH.

Could you tell us, sir, exactly what is the constitutional position in Kashmir of the British at the present moment.

STEWART.

I have not the Treaty with Kashmir here, and it would be difficult to describe it off hand.

JINNAH.

I was not thinking of the Treaty. I understand that the British have taken possession of