

Dr. Muhammad Ajmal

ON SCIENTIFIC CULTURE

During a Group discussion among the research scientists about the "linkages and relationships between scientists and support services staff, the problems of the support services" authoritarianism emerged as an important issue to be analysed. One of the scientists themselves become authoritarian when they are assigned administrative duties. He said that it was the absence of "Scientific Culture" among the scientists which make them worse administrators than the permanent administrators. What is the scientific culture that he talked about? He was obviously referring to the presence of culture among the scientists.

There are certain intrinsic values which compose a culture. These values are truth, beauty, goodness and justice. The value which occupies a supreme position is love. These values are implied in all moral behaviour. They are specially present in all scientific pursuits.

I acted as Director of Education (Lahore Region) for sometime. I noted that the teachers who were on deputation to the Directorate, hated their previous colleagues with contempt and disdain and kept their files with them for a longer period than was absolutely necessary. I discovered to my despair that the lecturers who

the press—like myself. I was then *Press Trust of India* correspondent.

On arrival at the airport, Liaquat, puffing at his cigarette would head straight for Altaf, give a broad smile to the journalists, ignore the Cabinet Ministers and board the plane. On one occasion, after the plane had taken off, I saw Altaf tell one of the Cabinet Ministers: come and look me up later on today in my office. So that was Altaf, the all powerful editor of *Dawn*.

Since I have touched on Jinnah and Pakistan, let me bring in Indira Gandhi which has a Jinnah connection. Jaiboy says he was 'stunned' on receiving a personal note from Indira Gandhi on the passing away of PJ in Bangalore in 1972. Jaiboy says he had been harbouring a feeling that following PJ's association with Jinnah, PJ's relations with the Nehru family had been obscured and eclipsed and even completely destroyed. Jaiboy says that when PJ died, Indira telephoned a cousin of his – who was then working in the Indian Foreign Office in New Delhi—and asked about the whereabouts of PJ's children and got Jaiboy's address. That was Indira Gandhi – the greatness of hers.

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Jaiboy recalls coming across a long, hand-written, letter addressed to PJ by one of Jinnah's 'fanatic admirers'. The letter pointedly told PJ that even though he was paid a fabulous salary – rupees three thousand per month – PJ did not refer to 'Jinnah Sahib' as 'Quaid-e-Azam'. PJ used to refer to him as 'Mister Jinnah'. PJ passed on the letter to Jinnah and Jinnah returned it to PJ with the remark: 'Ignore it'.

Jaiboy also recalls that when Gandhiji went on a fast. PJ through the editorial columns of the *Dawn*, demanded Gandhiji's release. This went against the grain of some of the Muslim Leaguers but Jinnah let PJ exercise his editorial prerogative.

When I asked Jaiboy if PJ wielded influence by virtue of the fact that he was the editor of *Dawn*, he said: People thought so, but that was not true.

At this point, let me interject my personal experience of Altaf Hussain, who succeeded PJ as the editor of *Dawn*.

I knew Altaf, in Karachi, in the early fifties and I dare say: Altaf was a strong man in Pakistan.

Here is a typical scene. Pakistan Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan flying out from the Karachi airport to Rawalpindi for a brief visit.

Gathered at the airport, to see off Liaquat, would be Altaf Hussain, Pakistan Cabinet ministers, and members of

because there was a limit beyond which he could not stretch his logic about Partition of India or the creation of Pakistan.

Jaiboy recalls his father telling him that once there was a 'heated discussion' between Jinnah and himself and when he asked Jinnah whether Pakistan was a feasible proposition, Jinnah paused for a moment and then said: Joseph, do you think the British are really going to leave India in a hurry?

Before joining *Dawn*, PJ had been the editor of the *Hindustan Times* which was later edited by Mahatma Gandhi's son Devadas Gandhi. When Mahatma Gandhi learnt of PJ joining the *Dawn*, Gandhiji sent a note to PJ reading:

Dear Pothan,

I understand you have joined Jinnah's *Dawn*. Please send me a copy. You know I am a poor man.

Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi.

When I asked Jaiboy how he interpreted that note of Gandhiji, he said he was not sure but he did feel that Gandhiji was being sarcastic to PJ because PJ had all along championed nationalistic causes.

And when I queried Jaiboy as to how could Jinnah have a non-Muslim – PJ was a Kerala Christian – as the editor of his official journal? Jaiboy said Jinnah was not a fanatic and he gave PJ full editorial freedom.

pull them up for their cowardice, they shouted him down and told him that surely he did not expect them to bear the lathis for a payment of a mere eight annas per head.

The next day, we the journalists, met Jinnah...

I had forgotten about all this until the other day – almost 40 years later – when my columnist friend Jaiboy Joseph and I happened to be touring in eastern India and we got to reminiscing about Pakistan. The Pakistan connection was:

- a) Jaiboy's father, the celebrated journalist Pothan Joseph (PJ), was the first editor, in the early 40s of Jinnah's *Dawn*, the official English daily of the Muslim League and then published from Delhi and
- b) I had been posted to Karachi, the capital of newly-created Pakistan, as a *Press Trust of India* correspondent following the Nehru-Liaquat Pact of 1950.

I had always harboured the feeling that Jinnah was not too hot on Pakistan and Jaiboy confirmed this – through the medium of his father.

I dug into Jaiboy and he has yielded interesting sidelights into Jinnah and Pakistan. Here is a sampling.

In fact, when PJ resigned as the editor of *Dawn*, in 1944, he sent a note to Jinnah stating he was quitting

Hiro Shroff

IN PRAISE OF JINNAH

Sahib, ath anna men kiya karega? That was my first brush with Pakistan—or rather, the advent of Pakistan.

That was way back around 1946 and the location was Karachi. I was s' "I a student in Karachi and a freelance journalist.

Jinnah was on a visit to Karachi and the local Muslim League leader thought he would organize a demonstration in favour of the demand for Pakistan on the lines of the Congress demonstrations calling for independence of India from the British.

The Sind Legislative Assembly was on and the local Muslim league leader and a handful of his so-called supporters had gathered inside the Assembly compound. They were raising pro-Pakistan slogans but when a police van arrived and even before the lathiwielding policemen could alight from the van, the mob, dead scared, had fled. This was in sharp contrast to the Congress, where, its demonstrators, faced the lathis and the bullets.

Crestfallen, the local Muslim league leader walked across to the nearby residences of his so-called demonstrators. And here I witnessed what might he called attack is the best form of defence. Before the leader could