**Muslim League Reorganized:**

Thus, the task that awaited Jinnah was anything but easy. The Muslim League was dormant: even its provincial organizations were, for the most part, ineﬀective and only nominally under the control of the central organization. Nor did the central body have any coherent policy of its own till the Bombay session (1936), which Jinnah organized. To make matters worse, the provincial scene presented a sort of a jigsaw puzzle: in the Punjab, Bengal, Sindh, the North West Frontier, Assam, Bihar and the United Provinces, various Muslim leaders had set up their own provincial parties to serve their personal ends. Extremely frustrating as the situation was, the only consolation Jinnah had at this juncture was in Allama Iqbal (1877-1938), the poet-philosopher, who stood steadfast by him and helped to chart the course of Indian politics from behind the scene.

Undismayed by this bleak situation, Jinnah devoted himself to the sole purpose of organizing the Muslims on one platform. He embarked upon country-wide tours. He pleaded with provincial Muslim leaders to sink their diﬀerences and make common cause with the League. He exhorted the Muslim masses to organize themselves and join the League. He gave coherence and direction to Muslim sentiments on the Government of India Act, 1935. He advocated that the Federal Scheme should be scrapped as it was subversive of India's cherished goal of complete responsible Government, while the provincial scheme, which conceded provincial autonomy for the ﬁrst time, should be worked for what it was worth, despite its certain objectionable features. He also formulated a viable League manifesto for the election scheduled for early 1937. He was, it seemed, struggling against time to make Muslim India a power to be reckoned with.

Despite all the manifold odds stacked against it, the Muslim League won some 108 (about 23 per cent) seats out of a total of 485 Muslim seats in the various legislatures. Though not very impressive in itself, the League's partial success assumed added signiﬁcance in view of the fact that the League won the largest number of Muslim seats and that it was the only all-India party of the Muslims in the country. Thus, the elections represented the ﬁrst milestone on the long road to putting Muslim India on the map of the subcontinent. Congress in power with the year 1937 opened the most momentous decade in modern Indian history. In that year came into force the provincial part of the Government of India Act, 1935, granting autonomy to Indians for the ﬁrst time, in the provinces.

The Congress, having become the dominant party in Indian politics, came to power in seven provinces exclusively, spurning the League's oﬀer of cooperation, turning its back ﬁnally on the coalition idea and excluding Muslims as a political entity from the portals of power. In that year, also, the Muslim League, under Jinnah's dynamic leadership, was reorganized de novo, transformed into a mass organization, and made the spokesman of Indian Muslims as never before. Above all, in that momentous year were initiated certain trends in Indian politics, the crystallization of which in subsequent years made the partition of the subcontinent inevitable. The practical manifestation of the policy of the Congress which took oﬃce in July, 1937, in seven out of eleven provinces, convinced Muslims that, in the Congress scheme of things, they could live only on suﬀerance of Hindus and as "second class" citizens. The Congress provincial governments, it may be remembered, had embarked upon a policy and launched a programme in which Muslims felt that their religion, language and culture were not safe. This blatantly aggressive Congress policy was seized upon by Jinnah to awaken the Muslims to a new consciousness, organize them on all-India platform, and make them a power to be reckoned with. He also gave coherence, direction and articulation to their innermost, yet vague, urges and aspirations. Above all, he ﬁlled them with his indomitable will, his own unﬂinching faith in their destiny.

**The New Awakening:**

As a result of Jinnah's ceaseless eﬀorts, the Muslims awakened from what Professor Baker calls (their) "unreﬂective silence" (in which they had so complacently basked for long decades), and to "the spiritual essence of nationality" that had existed among them for a pretty long time. Roused by the impact of successive Congress hammerings, the Muslims, as Ambedkar (principal author of independent India's Constitution) says, "searched their social consciousness in a desperate attempt to ﬁnd coherent and meaningful articulation to their cherished yearnings. To their great relief, they discovered that their sentiments of nationality had ﬂamed into nationalism". In addition, not only had they developed" the will to live as a "nation", had also endowed them with a territory which they could occupy and make a State as well as a cultural home for the newly discovered nation. These two pre-requisites provided the Muslims with the intellectual justiﬁcation for claiming a distinct nationalism (apart from Indian or Hindu nationalism) for themselves. So that when, after their long pause, the Muslims gave expression to their innermost yearnings, these turned out to be in favour of a separate Muslim nationhood and of a separate Muslim state.

[**Next Page**](Cripps%20Scheme.docx.htm)[**Previous Page**](Quaid%20e%20Azam.docs%202.htm)