

Letter from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Sir Richard Stafford Cripps (New Delhi, 9 February 1946)

Caption: On 9 February 1946, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League, sends a letter to Sir Richard Stafford Cripps, special envoy of the British government to India, in which he asks the British to make a clear declaration of their policy in India. Muhammad Ali Jinnah does not see any reason for establishing a provisional government and rejects any idea of an independent unitary state, instead calling for the creation of a Muslim state, Pakistan.

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10 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

9th February, 1946.

My dear Stafford Cripps,

I have received your letter dated 19th December, 1945, and I thank you for it. Yes, I have had free and frank talks with the members of Parliament, who visited India and I have left no doubt in their minds as to the position of Muslim India and the Muslim League. I agree with what you said in your statement, which you made immediately after the breakdown of the Simla Conference, given to the Press on the 15th of July, that the major issue i.e. Pakistan must be immediately dealt with. The Government should, without any further delay, make a clear declaration of its policy accepting Pakistan as the only solution of India's constitutional problem and I am hopeful that once the principle has been accepted the details can be adjusted.

There is no reason or ground for talking about 'interim arrangement' now that the war is over. Besides, it goes against the fundamental principle which we have repeatedly declared, that we cannot agree to any arrangement which postulates an all-India government whether interim or permanent. Our position was solemnly accepted by the British Government in Parliament, by its declaration made in August, 1940 and we were repeatedly assured by the pronouncements made by the Secretary of State for India and other responsible leaders of Great Britain from time to time. The only exception that we were prepared to make was the exigency of the war and its prosecution successfully as in that case the entire attention would have been rivetted to the war effort and all domestic controversies and differences would have been, by common consent, kept in abeyance. A caretaker Government already exists under the framework
p.t.o.

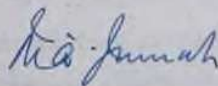
of the present Constitution viz. the Governor-General's Executive Council, and there is no need to tinker with it under the n phraseology of "political Executive Council". Equally, the idea of a single Constitution-making body is fundamentally opposed to the basic principles that the Muslim League has declared times out of number. It will be perfectly futile to force such a measure upon Muslim India, as it must result in disaster, not to say that it will be a breach of the solemn declaration of August, 1940 and the repeated assurances of His Majesty's Government to that effect, given from time to time.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of my statement that I issued after the pronouncement made by Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, with regard to the visit of the members of the Parliament to India together with a copy of the address of the Viceroy to the Central Assembly on 28th January and my reaction to it.

I hope you are keeping well and with very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sir Stafford Cripps,
3, Whitehall Court,
LONDON S.W.1



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