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### THE LONDON AHMADIYYA MISSION AND THE KASHMIR MOVEMENT

**Naseer A. Habib***Archive Department Ahmadiyya Jama'at International, London, United Kingdom.**\*Corresponding Author Email ID: naseerhabib@yahoo.com*

#### ABSTRACT

The Muslim community of the Indo-Pak Subcontinent began to show the signs of centripetal trend facing the challenge of imperialism and the Hindu domination in Colonial India. We find glimpses of an inclusive approach in the formation of the All-India Kashmir Committee in 1931. The London Ahmadiyya Mission was a Centre of Ahmadiyya Jam'at. The movement of Kashmiri Muslims for political rights emerged as a result of indigenous conditions and the All-India Kashmir Committee came into being. The London Ahmadiyya Mission contributed to the work of this Committee by highlighting its case in Great Britain. It came to defend the cause of the Kashmiri Muslims. The London Ahmadiyya Mission served the important job of fine-tuning the lobbying work. The Congress considered it a British-backed movement (Qureshi, 1998:319). Having adopted the technique of thick description, we found the inclusive trend working behind the emergence of the All-India Kashmir Committee.

**Keywords:** Kashmir movement, Inclusive approach, centripetal trend, The All-India Kashmir Committee.

#### INTRODUCTION

##### The London Ahmadiyya Mission

To understand the context of the foundation of the London Ahmadiyya Mission in London, we have to keep in view the fact that since the dawn of the modern era, the Muslim world had been confronting the challenge of the West (Toynbee, 1948: 187). Modern Muslims wanted to rehabilitate their history (Smith, 1957: 41). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Jam'at, was of the opinion that Islam does not need the sword for the rehabilitation of Islamic history (Khan, 2004: 325). The Ahmadiyya Jam'at had established missionary centres throughout the world in order to convey this message and to rehabilitate Islamic history in this way. Under the guidance of The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Jam'at, the LAM performed preaching activities. Apart from that they also gave help to solve the political problems of Indian Muslims.

This was the background of the London Ahmadiyya Mission. Chaudhary Fateh Muhammad, the first Ahmadiyya missionary, reached London on July 25, 1913. Having spent a few days in London, he moved to

Woking to assist Khawaja Kamal ud Din, but they fell out when Khawaja Kamal ud Din did not take an oath of allegiance to Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad, the Khalifatul Masih II, (Geaves, 2018:113). Having taken an oath of allegiance to the Khalifatul Masih II, Chaudhary Fateh Muhammad, moved to London and converted Mr Corio, a journalist, to Islam (Ismael, n.d.: 16). Until his return to India which took place in March 1915, he was able to convert a dozen more Englishmen to Islam. He used to deliver lectures to various societies and clubs in order to convey the message of Islam. The missionaries of the London mission used to convey the message of Islam by writing letters, holding meetings, delivering lectures in the open air, or in gardens, writing letters to newspapers, distributing literature and inviting people at home (Ismael, n.d.:25). In January 1920, the idea was launched to construct a purpose-built mosque in London. Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad, the Khalifatul Masih, asked the members of Ahmadiyya Jam'at to give donations for this noble cause. The Khalifatul Masih instructed Chaudhary Fateh Muhammad to purchase a piece of land for the mosque

(Ismael, n.d.: :18). Until February 21, 1920, the members of Ahmadiyya Jam'at donated 64650.00 rupees and the amount was sent to England through the National Bank of India (Ismael, n.d.: 33). Chaudhary Fateh Muhammad bought a piece of land along with a house at Putney Southfield for £2223.00 on August 1920 (Ismael, n.d.: 33). The name of the mosque was suggested as Fazl Mosque. The Ahmadiyya Mission became an important centre for the organization of religious and political activities of the Indian Muslims. In 1924 William Loftus suggested that a religious conference should be held in conjunction with the Wembley Exhibition. According to his suggestion, religious representatives of the religions of the British Empire were invited to express the principles of their religions. *The Times* reported, 'A notable feature of the afternoon will be an account of the Ahmadiyya movement by the son of the founder, and the present head, Bashir-ed-Din Mahmud Ahmad, who has travelled from Punjab, with 12 oriental scholars, for the conference, and will arrive in London next week. The movement takes its name from its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Khan, who died in 1908 and claimed to be the Messiah and the Mahdi (The Times, (The Times, 1924: 6).' On this occasion, the Khalifatul Masih laid the foundation stone of the London mosque (The Times, 1924: 15). Amir Feisal, the Saudi viceroy of Mecca, was expected to perform the opening ceremony of the London mosque on October 3, 1926, according to his commitment and announcement, but at the eleventh hour, the foreign secretary to Prince Feisal called upon Imam A R Dard to inform him that he would not perform the opening ceremony (The Times, 1926: 11). In the absence of the Emir, the choice fell upon Sir Abdul Qadir, Barrister of Law and former minister of the Punjab Government and member of the Indian delegation at the League of Nations (The Times, 1926: 11). Sir Abdul Qadir shared his memories of his younger days when he stayed in England, 'The feature of our life in this country that appealed to me most was that we regarded ourselves here as Indians and not as Hindus, Moslems or Christians and similarly that Moslems here were simply Moslems and not Shias, Sunnis or Ahmedis' (The Review of Religions, 1926: 10).' The Maharaja of Burdwan also joined this ceremony and said, 'A great deal is made in the paper in England of the difference between Hindus and Moslems in India. But one thing they do forget, either in their desire to make mischief or to confuse the British mind, that when there is a difference, it is over

religion and nothing of a mundane nature. Even then, it should not be forgotten that the better class of Moslems and Hindus know their duty to each other, and that is taking place in India is a passing phase. For the hearts of the true Hindus and true Moslems is sound (The Review of Religions, 1926: 13).' Imam A. R. Dard in his address said that mosque was built for fostering the spirit of love and mutual amity,' The Ahmadiyya movement was willing to make sacrifices until the time when all racial and political wars were ended and love reigned supreme (The Review of Religions (The Review of Religions, 1926: 8).'

#### **THE LONDON FAZL MOSQUE AS A CENTRE OF MUSLIM POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

The London Fazl Mosque emerged as an important centre as a place for the study of Eastern Culture (The Review of Religions, 1927: 11). It emerged as a centre of representational space for Muslims. Usually, on the occasion of the Id Festival, people of all shades of opinion including members of the British parliament, ambassadors of different countries, bureaucrats, and Hindu and Muslim public figures were given the opportunity to express their opinion on the issues related to India and the Muslim world. The London Ahmadiyya Mission performed its role not only in strengthening the cause of the Muslim world but also for the protection of world peace.

#### **INDIAN POLITICS BETWEEN THE WAR**

After the First World War, two important events affected the political future of Indian Muslims. The introduction of the 1919 Government of India Act promised new institutions of self-government in the future. At the same time, Muslims of India began to worry about the fate of an important symbolic rallying point that provided them with comfort since the debacle of 1857: The Ottoman Caliph. The rise of the Khalifat movement that sought to protect the nominal figurehead of the worldwide Muslim community against British machination put the political prominence of older Muslim political parties like the Muslim League on the back foot. With the abolition of the Caliphate by the Turkish republic in 1924, Muslims of India became increasingly vulnerable and sought reassurances for their political future. The promises made in the Lucknow Pact of 1916 became meaningless over the course of the 1920s. Under the pressure of the Hindu Mahasabha, Congress demanded a system of joint

electorates that senior Muslim League figures were prepared to consider for some time. But as negotiations between the Indian parties broke down, the British convened a series of Round Table Conferences in London to determine the constitutional future of India. In all these debates, Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad, the Khalifatul Masih and leader of the Ahmadiyya community, made important interventions. In particular, he saw the importance to pursue political lobbying at the heart of the Empire, in London. He entrusted this uphill task to the London Ahmadiyya Mission (LAM), which had been set up for missionary work some decades earlier.

### **AHMADIYYA LONDON MISSION AND THE BRITISH POLITICS BETWEEN THE WAR**

Members of political parties were frequent visitors to events at the London Ahmadiyya Mission. The Conservative and Labour Party both had their roots in tradition. As far as the Conservative Party was concerned, 'In the 1920s, even young MPs on the party's left-wing had no hesitation in asserting that we can govern many races better than they can govern themselves and should therefore ignore any whines and whimpers about self-determination (Ball, 2013: 33). The Labour Party appeared close to the Congress and adopted many resolutions towards India, 'but according to the thinking of the Right-wing Labour Leadership, these resolutions were the only expression of goodwill and nothing else' (Narayana, 1973: 11). But the left-wing Labour Party stood closer to the Congress. When Ramsay Macdonald nominated two Labour representatives in the Indian statutory commission which excluded Indians from the commission, the left-wing Labourites lodged their protest. Motilal Nehru, an important leader of the Congress and author of the Nehru Report, and Lala Lajpat Rai, the Indian writer and nationalist leader who died on November 17, 1928, in Lahore as a result of injuries received during Police Lathi-charge, wrote to George Lansbury, the British politician who led the Labour Party from 1932 to 1935, and Josiah Wedgwood, British Liberal and Labour politician who served in government under Ramsay MacDonald, asking them not to support the constitution of the parliamentary commission. In Response to Lajpat Rai, Wedgwood, 'described the official policy as so deadly and stupid (Narayana, 1973: 143-144).' Muslim leaders were aware of the close

cooperation between Congress and left-wing Labourites. Apart from that, 'The Congress had its ideological position which limited its capacity to deal effectively with the League (Robinson, 2003: 225).' This was the context when the London Ahmadiyya Mission came to the help of Indian Muslims to present their point of view before the British political circle.

### **KASHMIR MOVEMENT**

#### **Background**

After the end of the first Anglo-Sikh war, Kashmir was sold for 75 Lack Nanikshahi Rupees to Raja Gulab Sing Dogra. His rule unleashed a period of extreme repression for the people of Kashmir. According to the census of 1891, the Kashmir valley had a 93 percent Muslim population (Lone, 2013: 12). But, according to Ian Copland (1981: 233), 'The Muslims were a community without wealth or influence. At the policy-making level, power was shared between the dynastic ruler Maharaja Hari Singh and a four-man executive council.' According to A. Durand (1899: 34), an official visiting the state at the time, 'The sepoys and officials of all classes are almost to a man Dogras and other Hindus who have no sympathy with the Kashmiri(...)' My coolies said they were never paid when employed on Government work, and that they generally had to supply their rations.' Apart from this heavy taxation system, the Dogra state introduced the system of unpaid labour (begar). This system meant that the peasants were compelled to do work for the state without any payment (Lone, 2013: 10). Many deaths were reported as a result of forced labour (Lone, 2013: 11).

The Maharaja of Kashmir was ruling in an autocratic manner because most Indian states were well known for their backwardness and semi-feudal conditions and devoid of competence or benevolence (Nehru, 1941: 101). The rulers of state were encouraged when Lord Irwin addressed the Princes as Joint workers and brother builders (Lone, 2017: 184). 'The congress embraced a paradoxical policy of counting the states as an integral part of India but at the same time staying clear of any conflict with the Princes. Not only that it also discouraged the people of the states from launching any movements in their states in the name of the Congress' (Lone, 2017: 184).

The Muslim League did not get involved in the Kashmir issue either because it feared possible repercussions for politics in the largest Muslim-run Princely State of

Hyderabad (Copland, 1991: 45). However, some changes took place which helped the oppressed Kashmiri people to vent their grievances. In 1877 severe famine struck Kashmir. According to historian Prem Nath Bazaz (1954: 132), 'It was said that in order to save the expense of feeding his people during the famine the Maharaja actually drowned his poor Muslim subjects by boat-loads in Vular Lake.' Some unknown Kashmiris submitted a memorandum to the British Viceroy at Delhi making accusations against Maharaja Rambir Singh (Bazaz, 1954: 127). The People of Kashmir felt the breath of fresh air when the All-India Muslim Kashmiri Conference was formed in 1896 with the support of many Kashmiri Muslims, who had settled in Punjab (Schofield, 1996: 92). The All-India Kashmiri conference would offer help to Kashmiri Muslim students by offering scholarships for them to study in British India (Schofield, 1996: 92). Mian Kareem Bakhsh and his son Mina Shams Uddin, Mian Nizam Uddin, Mian Jalal Uddin, Maulavi Ahmad Din, Khawaja Raheem Bakhsh, and Dr Muhammad Iqbal were among the founding members (Shahid, 2007: 370). Another important development took place when a college was set up in Srinagar with the help of Annie Besant in 1905. Similarly, another college was set up in Jammu (Schofield, 1996: 92). This development left an indelible mark on the outlook of the youth. According to Bazaz, 'They imbibed the spirit of the new age. Their minds were full of ideas of the onrushing tide of democracy in the west. They read with emotion about the political movement of Turkey, Ireland, Egypt, and other countries as also the part young men played in these movements. They saw what, near home, young Bengal did to defeat the plan of Lord Curzon (Bazaz, 1954: 136).' As a result, popular sentiment began to penetrate Jammu and Kashmir in early 1907. According to the official reports the mood in Kashmir turned against the government because of the awareness of what was going on in neighbouring regions.

Over the following decade and a half, the Khilafat Movement and the incidence of Jallianwala Bagh likewise left their impact on the people of Kashmir (Lone, 2013: 22). A Khilafat Committee was formed in Srinagar in 1920 and it received directions from the much better organised Khilafat Committee in Lahore (Lone, 2013: 30). Another important event that took place was the protest of silk factory workers. This industry generated 33 percent of the state revenue and

provided employment to 80,000.00 people as workers (Lone, 2013: 32). In the 1920s, their wages were very little no higher than 8 annas per day (Lone, 2013: 33). Under these circumstances, the workers became compelled to strike in July 1924. They came out to make their demands accepted (Lone, 2013: 33). The troops were called to disperse the mob. The troops took action which left ten persons killed and twenty injured. The entire city was handed over to the military (Chargotra & Chandel, 2016: 588). According to Sheikh Abdullah, this incident left a deep impact on him (Abdullah, 1986: 32). The oppressed Kashmiri Muslims, groaning under the atrocities of the state, found a ray of hope when Lord Reading, Viceroy of India, came to visit Kashmir in 1924. They submitted him a memorandum signed by Khawaja Saad-ud-Din Shawl, Khawaja Hassan Shah Naqshbandi, Mirwaiz Kashmir Maulvi Ahmadullah Hamdani, Agha Syed Hussain Jalali and Mufti Sharif-ud-Din (Abdullah, 1986: 33). The memorandum mentioned, 'that out of the total number of gazetted posts in the Valley... Muslims were occupying just 55 posts (11.55 per cent of the total) and drawing a salary of Rs. 1,47,852 (8.22% of the total)' (Lone, 2013: 37). The Viceroy forwarded the memorandum to the Maharaja who appointed a commission to investigate the matter, but the commission dismissed the complaints as unfounded (Bazaz, 1954: 138). Some of the petitioners were banished and their landed property was confiscated. The State deprived two Mir Waizes of their privileges (Bazaz, 1954: 133). In 1929, Sir Albion Bannerji, who had been serving as a foreign and political Minister of the state for over two years, offered his resignation and savagely condemned misrule under his erstwhile employer: 'Jammu and Kashmir state is labouring under many disadvantages, with a large Mohammedan population absolutely illiterate labouring under poverty and very low economic conditions of living in the villages and practically governed like dumb driven cattle' (Bazaz, 1954: 133, 137-138). This statement left a deep impact on the People of Kashmir. According to *Inqilab*, 'The voice of truth raised by Sir Albion Bannerji has performed such work in one day which cannot be done by five hundred articles of Islamic Newspapers...Although some Hindu officials with the help of some Muslim narcissists tried to hush up the voice of common Muslims and they also tried to rebut the statement of Sir, Albion Bannerji but all the Kashmiri Muslims irrespective of their weakness, poverty and

helplessness raised their voice against these people with full vigour and they told these narcissists<sup>1</sup> as traitors to Islam' (*Inqilab*, 1929: 3).<sup>2</sup> At this juncture, the Ahmadiyya community entered the scene. According to Sheikh Abdullah (1986: 54), 'The members of Ahmadiyya sect were ahead in awareness. They played a leading role in infusing the spirit of communal awareness.' Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad (Khalifatul Masih) had been visiting Kashmir since 1909 before he was elected as Khalifatul Masih. He was deeply moved by the plight of the people of Kashmir during his visit. He was moved to tears when he was told by an official of the ministry of Poonch that, 'Once I was in need of porters. I wrote to the authorized officer. He sent some porters. Later I came to know that none of them was a porter. They were all members of a marriage party and bride-groom was included in them' (Al-Fazl, 1931a). Elected as the Khalifatul Masih II in 1914 Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad, started making effort to give stipends to Kashmiri students. On June 15, 1929, He went to Kashmir, for the third time and began issuing advice to local Kashmiris (Shahid, 2007: 387). His activities for the cause of Kashmir came to the notice of Hindu circles. One newspaper *Milap* of Lahore commented, 'The state of Kashmir should make sure that Khalifa Jamat (Khalifatul Masih) may not sow the thorns among the Muslim population of the Kashmir by preaching his sermons' (Al-Fazl, 1929: 3). In 1930 All Kashmir Muslim Social Uplift Association came into being. Khawaja Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, An Ahmadi youth, was elected its president (Abdullah, 1986: 388). The formation of political organisation was not allowed in Kashmir therefore it was decided to form a Reading Room Party in order to promote propaganda for the cause of Kashmiri people on May 9, 1930. Sheikh Abdullah was elected as president of the Reading Room Party and Ghulam Nabi Gilkar its secretary (Abdullah, 1986: 389). Some incidents took place in different parts of the state which left their dangerous marks on the political scene. The Holy Quran was disrespected. On Id day, a maulvi was interrupted when he was delivering Id sermon. The Muslims of village Digore were not permitted to offer prayer on a certain piece of land (Bazaz, 1954: 152). These incidents provoked Kashmiri Muslims. Having observed the determination of Kashmiri Muslims, Mr, Wakefield<sup>3</sup> (Prime Minister of the state) advised Muslims to send a few representatives to Srinagar where they would be given an opportunity to

present their demands before Maharaja (Bazaz, 1954: 152). In order to elect representatives, the Reading Room Party convened a public meeting at Khanqah-i-Mulla Srinagar on June 21, 1931 (Bazaz, 1954: 152). On this occasion, an outsider named Abdul Qadir gave a fiery speech, and he was arrested. In July 1931, Kashmir erupted into full revolt. The demonstration was staged outside the gates of Srinagar Jail in support of Abdul Qadir. The jail guards fired shots at the crowd leaving nine dead and injuring many others (Copland, 1981: 231). After this incident, the Kashmir government arrested all the important Kashmiri leaders. Having observed these events, the Khalifatul Masih came to the conclusion that it was time to launch a movement for the rights of the Kashmiri people. He wrote an article that was published in *Inqilab* on June 16, 1931. He wrote, 'I have been studying the situation of Kashmiri people for many years. After long deliberation, I have reached the conclusion that if the Muslims are not prepared to offer all kinds of sacrifices, they will not be able to find this fertile land comfortable for them (...) it is necessary to make the state of Kashmir and the Government realize fully that all the Muslims, whether great or little, are united in support of Kashmiri Muslims(...) we cannot find a better opportunity than we have now... According to my suggestion, a conference should be held in Lahore or Sialkot or Rawalpindi. The representatives from Jammu and Kashmir should be invited. The leaders of Punjab and other parts of India, if possible, should also be invited. We should get the report of the situation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir from its representatives and then chalk out the future line of action' (Ahmad, 1931a: 2). Having read the article of the Khalifatul Masih, the editor of newspaper *Siyasat* wrote an article in support of his views and supported the idea of holding a conference on Kashmir. Khawaja Hassan Nizami Dehlivi (Sufi saint and divine in the hierarchy of Nizamuddin Auliya's silsila) wrote a letter to Khalifatul Masih that the holding of a conference on Kashmir should not be further delayed. The third important response came from Syed Mohsin Shah, general secretary of the Muslim Kashmiri Conference, giving full support to the views of Khalifatul Masih. Syed Mohsin Shah suggested that an independent organisation comprising all Muslims should be beneficial and he also praised him for his altruistic efforts to strengthen the cause of Kashmiri People. The latter sent a telegram to Viceroy India, Lord Willingdon, on July 13, 1931. He wrote, 'your excellency; you are not

unaware of the deplorable condition of the Kashmiri people. Inhuman and barbaric acts of savagery have been perpetrated upon the Muslims. According to the associated press 9 Muslims were killed and many injured on July 9. However, according to private sources, hundreds of Muslims were killed and injured. Censorship has been placed on the news in the state (...) The Muslims of Punjab, like the Muslims of other provinces, cannot tolerate this oppression which is being perpetrated upon the Kashmiri Muslims' (Ahmad, 1931b: 1). After this, the Khalifatul Masih wrote a letter to the leading Muslims of Punjab and other parts of India and invited them to hold a meeting at Simla on July 25, 1931, in order to take stock of the situation (Shahid, 2007: 413). Along with it, Khalifatul Masih took three steps; he wrote to the London Mission to register their protest against the situation in Kashmir. He instructed his community's Urdu mouthpiece *Al-Fazl* newspaper to raise its voice against the atrocities being committed against the Kashmiris. He instructed all the members of Jam'at to gird up their lion to make efforts for the cause of Kashmir freedom (Shahid, 2007: 414). The Khalifatul Masih called the meeting of prominent Muslim leaders to view the situation of Kashmir on July 25, 1931 at "Fair View", the residence of Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan in Simla. A meeting of leading Muslim leaders took place (Shahid, 2007:416). This led to the foundation of the Kashmir Committee (subsequently known as the All-India Kashmir Committee) in Simla which claimed to speak on behalf of Kashmiri Muslims.

'Many notable dignitaries were present, including Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Sir Mian Fazl-i-Husain, the Nawab of Malerkotla (Sir Muhammad Zulfiqar 'Ali Khan), (Shams al-Ulama) Khwaja Hassan Nizami of Delhi, Khan Bahadur Shaykh Rahim Bakhsh, as well as several other Nawabs, a Deobandi professor, and high-ranking administrators from both the *Siyāsāt* and *The Muslim Outlook* newspapers' (Khan, 2012: 1409).

Maulavi Mirak Shah, former Deobandi Professor, and Allah Rakha Saghir took part as representatives of Jammu and Kashmir (Shahid, 2007: 416). The effort was made to maintain the inclusive character of the committee by including the leading Muslims of all shades of opinion. Even Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni, who later attempted to debar Ahmadis from membership in November 1944, gave a statement on that occasion that, 'As the issue of Kashmir is related to all Muslims, therefore, we are ready to work with Ahmadis' (Jalal,

2000: 447; Badayuni, 1931: 3). At the beginning of the discussion, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Sir Mian Fazl-i-Husain suggested that the Khalifatul Masih should see the viceroy in order to ask him as to what extent he could interfere in the matter of Kashmir and then the demand should be made accordingly (Shahid, 2007: 416). The Khalifatul Masih disagreed with them and said, 'It is not the right way to ask the question to the Viceroy as to what extent he can interfere. First of all, we should ask the question to the people of Kashmir about their demand and then we should place their demands before the Government with full vigour' (Shahid, 2007: 416). At last, it was decided that an All-India Kashmir Committee should be formed, and the struggle should be carried on till the Kashmiris achieved their rights (*Inqilab*, 1931a: 1). The Khalifatul Masih himself was elected as the president of this Kashmir committee. Dr Iqbal proposed his name and Khawaja Hassan Nizami supported his proposal (Shahid, 2007: 416). The Khalifatul Masih made it clear to all members that the activities of the committee would be carried out in accordance with the law and constitution (Shahid, 2007: 431). The Indian Government started holding the All-India Kashmir Committee and its head the Khalifatul Masih responsible for the trouble the Government of India had to deal with. According to Ian Copland, 'The Ahmadiyya role in Kashmir cost them much official sympathy' (Copland, 1981: 254). From time to time the British authorities expressed their reservation against their involvement in the matter of Kashmir. On August 1, 1931, the Khalifatul Masih met with Viceroy Lord Willingdon to bring the matter of Kashmir to his notice. Lord Willingdon asked him, 'Are you interested in the affairs of Kashmir? You are a religious person and what concern can a religious person have regarding these matters?' (Ahmad, 2008: 584). The Punjab Governor did not like Ahmadiyya Jam'at's activities in Kashmir. Maulvi Farzand Ali Khan brought to the notice of B J Glancy that the Governor of Punjab advised the members of the Ahmadiyya community not to meddle in the Kashmir affairs. In response to this B J Glancy reported, 'Maulvi Sahib on my questioning him said that H.E the Governor of Punjab had advised him that the Ahmadiyya Community should refrain from any participation in Kashmir affairs. I said that I thought that this advice was extremely sound; there were many inflammable elements in Kashmir, and it seemed to be prudent that the Mirza Sahib and his followers should avoid the accusation of starting a

conflagration (India Office Record).’

The Khalifatul Masih appointed Syed Waliullah Shah (Zainulabidin) to serve in Kashmir as a representative of the Kashmir committee. He was ousted from Kashmir along with Sheikh Bashir Ahmad because British officials were annoyed at them due to their activities in Kashmir (Mirza: 63). The accounts of Syed Waliullah Shah (Zainulabidin) seem to have been corroborated by the telegram sent by the Resident of Kashmir to Simla on June 28, 1933 (India Office Record). The Khalifatul Masih instructed Syed Waliullah (Zainulabidin) to see Mr. B J Glancy, Political Secretary of the Government of India, at Simla to raise the matter with him (Mirza: 63). Syed Zainulabidin went to see Mr. Glancy at Simla along with Maulvi Farzand Ali Khan, former Imam of the London Mosque, but Mr. Glancy turned them away. Mr. Glancy became offended by the remarks of Zainulabidin. He gave a report, ‘Maulvi Farzand Ali came to see me yesterday on behalf of the Mirza Sahib of Qadian and brought with him Mr. Zainulabidin against whom an order has recently been passed prohibiting him from entering the Jammu & Kashmir state (....) Mr. Zainulabidin’s last contribution to the conversation was that if the Govt. of India would not intercede on his behalf, then the British Govt. must have been wrong in intervening recently in Russian affairs when certain British Subjects were being tried on the charge of espionage, etc. Mr. Zainulabidin did not impress me at all favourably (India Office Record).’ Syed Zainulabidin Shah made a mention of this incidence. According to him when he spoke these words to B J Glancy, he became offended and he said to Maulvi Farzand Ali, ‘well Manulvi Sahib, the gentleman is reflecting [reproaching] on the British. He rang the bell and sent us away’ (Mirza: 64). According to Shah Waliullah (Zainulabidin), their entry into Kashmir was possible when the issue of their deportation from Kashmir was raised in the Parliament (Mirza: 64, 65).

On July 10, 1933, the question was raised in the British Parliament ‘Lieutenant –Colonel Applin – To ask The Secretary of State for India, whether he is aware that S Zainul Abidin, representative of the Ahmadiyya community, who went to Kashmir to see Prime Minister on their behalf, has been extended from the state; and if he can state what were the circumstances that led to this action. Mr. Butler: I have no information as to the externment of S Zainul Abidin from the state. Lieut. Colonel Applin; Will the hon. Gentleman makes inquiries as to this matter and if he has any further information,

will he communicate it in due course? Mr. Butler: If I have any information, I shall be glad to impart it to my hon. and gallant friend’ (Applin & Butler, 1933: 732). Apart from that the Punjab Government also did like the newspaper *Inqilab* to give support to strengthen the cause of Kashmiri Muslim.

### **INTERNATIONAL PROPAGANDA AND THE LONDON AHMADIYYA MISSION**

In order to mount pressure upon the state of Kashmir, the Khalifatul Masih made arrangements for launching an international propaganda campaign for the rights of the Kashmiri people. According to *Inqilab* (1931: 1), ‘It was also decided that a book should be written in English to make people of the civilized World aware of the condition of Kashmiri Muslims, which was similar to slavery, and it was also recommended that this book should be distributed in England.’ In this connection, special consideration was given to the British Government, the press and public opinion. The Khalifatul Masih gave special instructions to the Imam of London Fazl Mosque Maulavi Farzand Ali Khan. The latter published a pamphlet entitled “Kashmir Past and Present” in order to highlight the situation in Kashmir. In the beginning, the opinion of the British press had not been in favour of the Kashmir movement. *The Times* wrote, ‘There is no reason, however, to take too gloomy a view of the situation in Kashmir... but zeal which the Maharajah has shown for public health and for improvement of his capital, and his evident desire to obtain the assistance and unprejudiced advice of the Government of India encouraged the hope that peace will soon return to loveliest of Indian states... Nor should it be forgotten in asserting the responsibility for these troubles that there are politicians and agitators in British India who have every interest in fomenting them’ (The Times, 1931a: 13). Farzand Ali Khan made contact with the British press and tried to project the case of the oppressed Kashmiri people. He sent a telegram to *Al-Fazl* on November 5, 1931, ‘I have passed on the telegram of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, II to the Muslim representatives. Dr. Sir. Muhammad Iqbal, Maulana Shafi Dawoodi, and Chaudhary Zafrulla Khan met with secretary of State for India. They explained to him the Kashmir problem in detail. The secretary of state for India listened attentively to every detail and gave them assurance sympathetically’ (Al-Fazl, 1931b: 2). As a result of his efforts, the British press began to change its

opinion in favour of the Kashmiri people. The Khalifatul Masih told a public meeting in September 1931, that he had ordered further lobbying of British ministers and members of Parliament (Al-Fazl, 1931a: 6). Farzand Ali Khan was able to make MPs to raise questions in the Parliament. The *London Times* reported on September 29, 1931, 'Sir S Hoare, answering Colonel Howard -Bury (Chelmsford, U) and Lieut. Com. Kenworthy (Hull, central. Lab), said; the facts of the recent regrettable disturbance in Kashmir have been reported in the press. I understand that the situation was somewhat eased by the peaceable dispersion of the large crowd which had collected on Thursday evening. A further outbreak entailing loss of life is reported to have occurred on Sunday at Shupian, 30 miles south of Srinagar. The Government of India is of course, in close touch with the situation. Colonel Howard-Bury asked whether an impartial inquiry would be held, under the authority of the viceroy, to inquire into the serious and long-standing grievances of the Kashmir Moslems. Sir S. Hoare: but I can assure him that the situation is being followed with very close attention (The Times, 1931b: 7).

Apart from that Maulavi Ghulam Rasul Mehr who was in London as a representative of newspaper *Inqilab* on the occasion of the Round Table Conference sent his letter which was published in *Inqilab* on November 19, 1931. He wrote, 'the attitude of the British newspaper towards Kashmiri Muslim is now better as compared to the past. No doubt, Maulavi Farzand Ali Imam London Mosque has played a predominant role in this regard. From the beginning, He has been making efforts in relation to Kashmir and another Islamic issue. Apart from the news which has been published in the newspaper, the copies of many telegrams received from Mirza Bashir Uddin Mehmud Ahmad (Khalifatul Masih) are sent to every member of the delegation' (Inqilab, 1931b: 3). Having given his comments on this news, Abdul Majid Salik, co-editor and owner of *Inqilab*, wrote, "The services of All India Kashmir committee rendered in Britain were more valuable as compared to the services which is performed in India. ...in the beginning, the attitude of the British was not positive but the telegram of the president of All India Kashmir committee and perseverant efforts of Maulvi Farzand Ali..., have made the situation better and the attitude of the English Newspapers have become sympathetic. The members of All India Kashmir committee, who had come to attend the Round Table conference... met with the Secretary of State for India on

different occasions and they got the assurance from the Secretary of State that... the oppressed people would be helped' (Inqilab, 1931: 3). It had of course been the Khalifatul Masih, who had given special instruction to the imam of London Mission to raise awareness of the Kashmir problem through the Round Table Conference (Shahid, 2007: 462). Having performed this task, imam of London Mission sent this telegram to *Al-Fazl*, 'His Highness Sir, the Agha Khan, Sir Mian Muhammad Shafi, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and Chaudhary Zafrulla Khan met with the Secretary of State for India separately in order to draw his attention towards the Kashmir Problem. It will lead to good result' (Al-Fazl, 1931c: 1). When Zafrulla Khan met with the Secretary of State for India, he (Secretary of State) made a promise that he would give attention to this matter and would also instruct the Indian Government to address this issue (Al-Fazl, 1931d). In response to his telegram, the Khalifatul Masih received a message from the private secretary of the Viceroy reassuring him that the matter was now taken up with the Kashmir State authorities (Al-Fazl, 1931d). The London Ahmadiyya Mission performed an important role to highlight the Kashmir cause.

The campaign gained further momentum in the British press. On February 16, 1932, the Imam of London Fazl Mosque sent another telegram to *Al-Fazl*, 'Many esteemed Newspapers, *Morning Post*, *Sunday Times* and *Telegraph* published sympathetic articles in favour of Kashmir cause. In these articles, the demand was made for the removal of the prime minister of the state and implementation of the reforms. *The London Times* has revealed that the Hindu press has been publishing baseless news regarding Kashmir. It has also made a demand for the appointment of a British officer as a prime minister of the state and the paper has laid further stress that the Muslims should be taken into confidence. It has also suggested that the Muslims should show moderation and should not despatch bands in Kashmir' (Al-Fazl, 1932: 1). *The London Times*, February 16, 1932, seems to corroborate the contents of the telegram published in *Al-Fazl* on February 21, 1932.

*The Times* wrote, 'It is well to note that the stories of widespread atrocities and devastation put about by Hindu Propagandists appear to have little or no foundation in fact (...) the trouble is said to have had an agrarian as well as a religious background. At the same time, the Maharajah's appointment and retention of a Brahmin prime Minister (...) has aroused misgivings



(...)What is most needed in Kashmir is the growth of confidence on the part of Moslems, who form nearly nine-tenths of the population. They have not fared so well under Brahmin oligarchy (...) Fresh attempts by invading bands from Punjab to bring pressure on the Government of Kashmir would merely complicate and envenom the situation' (The Times, 1932: 13). Maharaja Kashmir got perturbed due to this propaganda. He tried to influence the British press by spending money through Diwan Chaman Lall. *Al-Fazl* reported that the Maharaja Kashmir appointed Diwan Chaman Lall to make propaganda in London in the favour of the state. Diwan Chaman Lall offered £50 per month to a lady journalist for making the propaganda in the press in favour of Kashmir state. He sent his offer by telegram. A copy of this telegram was sent to the Khalifatul Masih by someone. The Khalifatul Masih sent his representative to that lady. The lady made a promise that she would not write anything in favour of the state. The Khalifatul Masih also wrote to Sir Zafurulla Khan to bring this matter to the notice of Sir Samuel Hoare that a member of the Round Table Conference was making Propaganda in favour of Maharaja Kashmir. Sir Zafrulla Khan brought this matter to the notice of Sir Samuel Hoare, who admonished this member (Ahmad, 1954: 4). It seems that that battle for the rights of Kashmiri people was fought in London. The role of the London Mission for the Kashmir cause came to the notice of many prominent Muslim leaders. Khawaja Hassan Nizami wrote in his diary on October 24, 1931, 'Every sect and school of thought of Muslim community worked for the Kashmir cause (...) but the most effective role was performed by the propaganda of All India Kashmir committee launched in England' (Al-Fazl, 1931b: 11). Having accepted the role of Kashmir committee, Ghulam Abbas (1951: 111, 112) famous Kashmiri leader writes in his autobiography *Kashmakash*, 'with the help of Kashmir committee's foreign propaganda, our complaints reached Muslims living abroad and became known to everyone. In view of the critical situation, it became difficult for the Kashmir Government to ignore our complaints and to crush the movement with impunity. The Persistent insistence of the Kashmir Committee made the interference of the Government of India inevitable (...) in the last days of November 1931; the Government of Kashmir became compelled to appoint an independent commission to make an inquiry into the complaints of Kashmiri Muslims. It is certain

that the Government of India played a key role in the appointment of this commission (Shahid, 2007: 463).

### CONCLUSION

The storm was brewing under the hot weather of state repression. The graduates who returned from British India directed the course of the storm outside of the state. The All-India Kashmir Committee was formed. The All-India Kashmir Committee shifted its direction towards London. The London Ahmadiyya Mission changed its course towards the higher echelon of power where its impact was felt. In this way, the building of the demands of Kashmiri Muslims was made. Changes occurred in favour of Kashmiri Muslims. It was to the credit of the London Ahmadiyya Mission which served the important job of fine-tuning the lobbying work.

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<sup>1</sup> This word was not translation. It was an exact word mentioned in the newspaper Inqilab.

<sup>2</sup> My own translation from its original Urdu.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Wakefield was an Anglo-Indian civil servant who served as Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir between 1929-31.

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