The Pakistan Plant takes firm root . . .

“A deed without a name . . .”

“It’s better to have a thousand enemies outside of the tent than one inside the tent.”

Hi, Everyone! In 1943, this is how the position stands:

“In 1939, when the war broke out, Jinnah could claim only a nominal hold on the Punjab. But by this time all the other provinces which he claimed for Pakistan, namely Assam, Sind, Bengal, and the North-West Frontier Province, had come under the control of League ministries.”[1]

Jinnah and the Muslim League were in a very strong position, both with the British and the Muslims in India.

On an aside, I want to mention that Savarkar, too, had against all odds developed the Hindu Mahasabha into a party of some standing. I shall post on Savarkar separately at a later date.

The Congress was not in a very good position politically. It is at this time Nehru was indiscreet enough to record his frustrations in his diary.

Nehru wrote in his jail diary on December 28, 1943: "Instinctively I think it is better to have Pakistan or almost nothing if only to keep Jinnah far away and not allow his muddled and arrogant head from (sic) interfering continually in India's progress"[2]

Yes, most certainly, the Pakistan scheme had become most attractive to the Congress High Command!

Rajgopalachari (Rajaji) had been heavily promoting the Pakistan scheme everywhere. He had been corresponding with Jinnah over it too.

“It should be noted here that Rajgopalachari met Gandhi in the Aga Khan palace during his fast and he [Gandhi] blessed the scheme adopted by Rajagopalachari. Soon after Rajagopalachari offered it to Jinnah who did not pay much attention to it at this stage, in April 1943. . . .

The crafty politician, Rajagopalachari, kept Gandhi’s approval of his scheme a secret. Neither did the Mahatma reveal it to anybody. He was conceiving Pakistan.”[3]

How shocking that the Mahatma of the Indians who publicly swore the vivisection of India was a sin, should secretly plot to commit this sin himself . . . ! How very many of the Mahatma’s lofty principles are sacrificed in this one act.

By 1944, the whole ugly story was spilled out into the open by all three main participants: Gandhi, Rajaji, and Jinnah.

“‘In one of his telegrams sent to Mr. Jinnah and now released to the press, Rajaji said, ‘Mr. Gandhi, though not vested with representative or special capacity in this matter, definitely approved of my proposals and authorized me to approach you on that basis. The weight of his opinion would most probably secure Congress acceptance.’

Mark the secret promise of the truth-seeker, Gandhi, who abhorred secrecy in any matter. Read this further confession of Rajaji in his statement of July 16, 1944, issued from Panchgani in which he said: ‘It is now two years since I started work, even though I had secured Gandhi’s unqualified support to the scheme and it conceded all that the Muslim League had ever demanded in its resolution of 1940.’ Mark the words ‘two years.’”[4]

That would make it 1942 as the year this secret pact was made between Gandhi and Rajaji—the year that Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement.

In 1944, the Congress desperation to gain control in India—and not getting anywhere with either Jinnah or the Viceroy—led Gandhi to come right out in the open. The duped Indians should not have remained duped anymore!

What were Gandhi's concessions to Jinnah and the Viceroy? Read on:

"Gandhi gave an interview in the first week of July to Stuart Gelder of the News Chronicle, London . . . the interview was published in The Times of India of July 11. On the previous day The Times of India had published a statement issued by Rajagopalachari in which he had said: 'The public will note from the correspondence now published that I had secured Gandhiji's personal approval even during his fast in February-March last year for the formula I am releasing.'. . .

In his interviews Gandhi told Stuart Gelder that he had no intention of offering civil disobedience. It was his purpose not to hinder but help the war effort. . . . He would be satisfied with a national Government in full control of the civil administration . . . He also said he had approved the proposals submitted to Jinnah by Rajagopalachari, if the Muslim League would endorse the demand for independence.

He further said that he regarded the Rajaji formula as being consistent with national integrity and his own opinion with the spirit of the Congress resolution. . . .

Commenting on this, 'Candidus' observed in The Times of India: 'The past week also witnessed the revelation that Mr. Gandhi, who a couple of years ago was stoutly opposed to a division of the country, is now agreeable to the principle of Pakistan. It is a reversal of his original approach that partition of India would be a 'sin'. He now concedes the principle of Pakistan, division of India.'"[5]

This bold move on the part of Gandhi was a shock to the Congress members, but quite in keeping with Gandhi's frequent claims of "carrying the Congress with himself," they did nothing to oppose.

"When the scheme was out, there was a flutter for a while among the Congress circles and press; but they were stunned to see that their holy father Gandhi was acting as the Godfather to the unholy scheme of portioning their Motherland and thereafter they culpably kept silent on the nefarious move."[6]

Gandhi's next move was to actually have long "talks" with Jinnah to concede Pakistan to him.

More on that tomorrow.

Anurupa

[1] Transfer of Power, V. P. Menon, page 148.

[2] Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru; First Series; Vol.13; page 324.

[3] Mahatma Gandhi, Keer, page 716.

[4] Veer Savarkar, Keer, 352-353

[5]Mahatma Gandhi, Keer, pages 723-724.

[6]Ibid, 353.