

The Reform Scheme and the All-India Muslim League: An Evaluation of Its Performance (1907-1909)

Javed Haider Syed

Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad

ABSTRACT

In many ways, the advent of twentieth century was much significant for the Muslims of South Asia as a number of epoch-making events took place during this period that not only changed the Muslim political culture but also the whole political scenario of the sub-continent. This century was marked by a political awakening of the Muslims to the real or perceived idea that the British policies in the subcontinent were hostile towards their interests. Therefore, even those stalwarts of Aligarh who had been preaching their co-religionists to keep aloof from politics, now turned to advise the students of Aligarh College (in March 1903) to participate in politics. This change took place because of a host of issues such as the attack on Urdu (1900), the partition of Bengal (1905) and the Hindu reaction to that, the victory of the pro-Hindu Labour Party in the U.K., an end of Curzon era and start of Minto's viceroyalty attempting to win over the lost confidence of the Indian public opinion which had emboldened the Indian National Congress (hereafter Congress) and multiplied the Muslim sufferings. The crux of the Muslim collective response to the situation was the formation of the Reform Scheme of Government, the formation of the Muslim Deputation and finally the founding of the All-India Muslim League (hereafter AIML). With these developments began the struggle of Muslims in bracing the above-mentioned challenges. This voyage started from Dacca in 1906 and culminated in 1909 at Amritsar.

The AIML achieved substantial gains for the Muslims in implementation of the Reform Scheme under Minto-Morley Reforms. Achieving as much as double of the initially offered four seats to the Muslims by the Secretary of State's dispatch of May 1907, was a remarkable victory of AIML within a couple of years. There was no foreign element in the League, i.e. the British supporters unlike the Congress, hence it worked well and succeeded finally winning even more; eight out of twenty eight elected seats of the Imperial Legislative Council. The target achieved was twenty eight per cent whereas the Muslim population in British-India was twenty three percent at that time after deliberations at Karachi (1907) and Amritsar (1909), located far from the center, remote and backward in literacy rates i.e., the Punjab and Sindh. How did these areas achieve for those Muslims who felt threatened in their own constituencies? Whether it was impossible or difficult for them to pursue their agenda in their own strongholds? These are few important points which will be elaborated in this paper. The paper would examine how the AIML formulated policy and tried successfully to put a pressure on the government in reforming the Indian Reform Scheme launched by the British government. Furthermore, performing the basic duty of a researcher, the wrong doings of certain elements commanding this mother political organization would also be taken into account. The period under study is from 1907 to 1909 when most of the energy and attention of the AIML was absorbed in this direction to win its goal.

It is usually projected that Muslims were uneducated and untrained in the field of politics but in reality they were the pioneer in political party formation. One can quote the example of such an effort put in May 1855 at Calcutta (Aziz, 1993)¹, the capital under the British East India Company Government. Bengal was an ideal example of transformation of Muslims from rulers into mere subjects, challenged in every walk of life, their religion, culture, language, share in services at the joint hands of Hindu coordinators and the British administration. The Hindus unlike Muslims charged with their demographic majority were never concerned about preservation of their rights, whereas the Muslims were suffering the joint threat of British administration and Hindu majority in eliminating them from services and their representation in the public forums.

The famous challenge response theory was visible here and the period of their suffering was even a century more as compared to the rest of South Asia i.e., starting from the fall of Bengal at Plassey in 1757, till the final fall of the whole of South Asia in 1857 to the hands of the British. Consequently, loyalty to the British was rarely found in Bengal as compared to the other parts of the subcontinent because of their bitter memories of the eighteenth and nineteenth century of British tyranny and exploitation. This situation prompted them to adopt armed as well as constitutional struggle.

After the War of Independence (1857) and their sufferings for a couple of decades, the Muslims of Bengal were again assembled by a remarkable but less acknowledged reformer Syed Ameer Ali who necessitated for pursuance of politics unlike his contemporaries, Sir Syed Ahmed and Nawab Abdul Latif who insisted upon the educational uplift of their co-religionist before putting them on a political course. Syed Ameer Ali succeeded in the formation of a political party in 1877 on all-India basis. But the achievements of Muslims during the nineteenth century in the political field were certainly not commensurate with their political plight. The main reason being non-cooperative of certain ultra-loyal figures with the politically minded Syed Ameer Ali, retarded the political process which could only be started thirty years later, in 1906. Syed Ameer Ali also presented a Muslim deputation to the British authorities demanding the preservation of their rights as early as 1881, even twenty five years before the much projected Simla Deputation (1906), the work of Aligarh leaders. However, the harsh memories of the Muslim failure in the field of politics during the nineteenth century are given by a nationalist Muslim historian as under:

‘They lost much more than they had gained; for instance they demanded the abolition of competitive examinations; the Royal Commission recommended their continuance. They asked for the retention of the Statuary Services; the Royal Commission strongly urged their abolition. They pleaded against popular representation in local boards and municipalities; the British Government sanctioned their introduction. They prayed for official support for Urdu; the

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British Government gave an impetus to Hindi. They petitioned Parliament against the establishment of any kind of parliamentary institutions in India; the Councils Act of 1892 encouraged the emergence of such institutions. They prayed for the continuance of the partition of Bengal and the retention of Fuller as the Lt. Governor; the British Government reunited the presidency and recalled Fuller in response to the Hindu protest. Lastly they asked for separate electorates; these were not only opposed by several Provincial Governments in India but also by many members of Parliament, including Morley, despite his assurances to the contrary. In the end, Muslims were, no doubt, given separate electorates but their seats were much fewer than they had demanded' (Zakria, 1970: 33-35).

So starting from a scratch, the Muslims had to begin their struggle at the very advent of the twentieth century. The proportion of Muslims in government service fell from just over two third to just one third (Robinson, 1974: 344-45)². The linguistic threat had forced the Aligarh leaders towards taking the path of politics (*Ibid*: 133-35)³. Furthermore, the exclusion of the Muslims of UP from the Legislature of the province (not a single Muslim could be elected to it from 1893-1906), necessitated them to turn to the political ground, which their older generation had been preaching to avoid. It was only after the death of Sir Syed that the forbidden land i.e., Bengal was selected for convening of the session of Muslim Educational Conference held in Calcutta in 1899. The main threat being the opposition of the British authorities at Aligarh, in their own province, UP that the sons of soil now looked towards other areas, especially the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal, the Punjab and Sindh's involvement and hospitality.

It was this realization that led the Muslim majority lands to host the much threatened and scared Aligarh politicians. In return, however, they showed thankless behaviour, warding off the due representation of their areas and demands at certain forums, i.e., presenting the Bengali concerns in the Simla Deputation (Rehman, 1970: 22-27)⁴, the continuation of the partition of Bengal and the forced resignation of pro-Muslim Lt. Governor of East Bengal, Sir J.Bampfylde Fuller (Robinson, 2007: 145)⁵.

The coming two years were of much importance when the Reform Scheme was launched by the British Government. Initially, the Scheme was started with pro-Congress flavour. But finally with constant and decisive Muslim efforts, the Scheme was concluded into pro-Muslim Minto-Morley Reforms. When Minto arrived in India as Viceroy in November 1905, the political situation was very tense. Morley, the Secretary of State for India, was sympathetic towards Indian aspirations but was reluctant in the beginning about the Congress aims as it increased representation in the Indian administration (Robert, 1958: 359)⁶. Minto soon convinced Morley that the moderate Congress was 'an important factor', and

that these demands for the increased representation in Indian administration should be considered sympathetically⁷. On the other hand, the Congress demand had grown from increased representation to the attainment of Sawaraj. The AIML desired separate representation as it distrusted the Hindu majority. Minto and Morley were to work out a balanced policy that would be acceptable to both the parties (Robert, 2004: 569-70)⁸. The correspondence between these two shows that Minto had more courage and persistence than Morley. Lord Attlee (the Prime Minister of UK, 1945-51), has also observed this in his Foreword to Razi Wasti's book (Wasti, 1964). Minto, it was he who would have faced the real storm of Anglo-Indian opposition in India against this proposal for an Indian member. In England the Conservative forces, House of Lords, the Anglo-Indians and even the King opposed the appointment of an Indian member to that high office till the last minute; all of them were against such a step (Magnus, 1964: 425)⁹.

Minto started by accepting the Congress for the first time as 'an important factor' (Wasti, 1964: VII), whereas his predecessor was ignoring it. Minto invited a Congress Deputation as early as April 1906 (within six months of his appointment), but due to the latter's lack of interest, it did not take a proper shape and later on it was because of Muslim efforts that the Simla Deputation of October 1906 was formulated. It was after a full year of Muslim efforts that Minto's sympathies and attention was turned towards them.

The years 1907-1909 witnessed the discussion of Reforms Scheme. The British government sent the proposal to the Viceroy for suggestions. At official level, Minto finalized the suggestions and sent it back to the Secretary of State in March 1907. Morley received the dispatch in April 1907 and after his approval, the Reforms Scheme was circulated amongst the provincial governments for their reviews, which they approved unanimously. The Scheme was released to the press in October 1907 setting March 1908 as the final date to receive comments from the public (Ahmad, 1989: 98). The proposals of separate representation for the Muslims pleased the Muslims and satisfied them and they expressed their delight (Hamid, 1967: 82)¹⁰. But later on Morley changed his mind under the influence of Lord MacDonald (Secretary of Labour Party, 1900-1912) and some Hindu pressure. Morley completely departed from Minto's proposal for separate electorates to which he had earlier agreed in principle (Wasti, 1964: 169-70).

When the dispatch of Morley was published on December 17, 1908, the new scheme was not welcomed by the Muslims and even by the government of India. There was a sharp controversy between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy on the Muslim reaction to the Reform Scheme. The Viceroy thought that the Muslim reaction and objections to the scheme were sound. He admitted, "Though the Mohammedan is silent, he is strong" (*Ibid*: 174). Morley did not like Minto's admission of the just claims of Muslims. He boasted, "Your language to the Islamite's about their just claims to something more than numerical strength was perhaps a trifle less-guarded than it might have been if you will allow me to say

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so" (*Ibid*). Minto in response differed with the Secretary of State and declared Morley's scheme as, "absolutely impossible, mad and distinctly contrary to pledges I had given to the Mohammedans and of which the Government of India approved" (*Ibid*).

It resulted in a major controversy. The Muslim protested in India (Robinson, 2007: 158-59)¹¹ as well as in England (*Ibid*: 158-60), against this scheme. The Muslim press in India took it as their political abandonment in favour of the Hindus. These sentiments were expressed in the Muslim press¹². Mian Muhammad Shafi while writing a series of letters to the Viceroy's Private Secretary, Dunlop Smith, conveyed the Muslim concern over Morley's scheme "being contrary to the promises made by Minto" (Wasti, 1964: 172). He also, in capacity of Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, worked to make certain forceful resolutions from the party forum in support of the Muslim cause. The party also sent numerous telegrams to the Secretary of State (Rizvi: 118)¹³. During April-May 1909 protest meetings were held all over India by the AIML (Ahmad, 1989: 110-11). The similar views were expressed by Syed Ameer Ali and Sir Agha Khan and it resulted in dropping the idea and instead a diluted scheme of restricted communal representation was granted (Rehman, 1970: 148)¹⁴ but at the same time Morley became weary of the Muslim pressure (Zakaria, 1970: 358).

At the other hand, the Congress favoured the Reforms Scheme in its Madras session but Gokhale being more realistic, admitted that there were acute differences. He was of the view that in order to alleviate the "unjust fear of Muslims that they would be swamped by the Hindus, they should be allowed to elect their own representatives themselves" (Wasti, 1964: 173). He saw no justification in insisting on its introduction in the face of Muslim opposition.

In the mean time, the Muslims presented a Deputation led by Syed Ameer Ali before Morley in London on January 27, 1909. They demanded that the interests of the Hindus and Muslims should be coordinated. They also argued for the introduction of the principle of separate representation of the Muslims by the Muslims. Morley's reply to the deputation was without any pledge. He did not want to "drop the Hindu parcels, while picking the Muslims" (Zakaria, 1970: 358). The Muslims were not satisfied with Morley's reply to their Deputation. The British press especially, the *Times* supported the Muslim point of view. Due to Muslim agitation and the opposition of the British press, Morley finally had to change his hard line (Singh, 1950: 211)¹⁵. He made a pledge during the second reading of the Indian Council Bill, "Wherever elections are found possible they shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mohammedan community" (Ahmad, 1989: 112). These pledges pacified the Muslims but at the same time the Hindu hardliners were annoyed to the changed situation and some of them like Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and S. Banerjea criticized especially the principle of class representation on the ground that "it created a distinction

between the different classes of the community and made the fusion of their interests impossible” (Mukherji, 1918: 336-37).

The British policy was not “divide and rule”- the division was already there: it was only to use Curzon’s classic phrase, “to hold the scales even between the Hindus and Muslims” (Zakaria, 1970: 354). Naturally in doing so, preference was given, sometimes to one community and some times to the other, depending on the ruler’s requirements and the exigencies of the situation with the result that communal rivalries and jealousies, instead of being minimized, were still more aggravated. The Muslim protest was thought that “like most people they were asking for more”. Morley put blame on Minto for starting, “the Muslims hare”. Minto was “The real father of communal electorates” (Dodwell, 1958: 618). Morley yielded to a pressure and it was Morley who was responsible for turning the Muslims from a loyal, slow moving, politically immature community into an agitating one. Hindus viewed the Muslim agitation as an Anglo-Indian move which had been supported by Anglo-Indian press. It was emphasized that the Muslims were being used. At this point, working of the Reform Scheme and the performance of the AIML during the period seems to be worth evaluating.

The first session of the AIML, like its Dacca inaugural Session, was held after the conclusion of the meeting of the Muslim Educational Conference, as the leaders could not afford the luxury of having political meetings separately and at different times, nor could now they divorce the educational programme from political deliberations. At Dacca, a committee was constituted to frame the draft constitution of the League. The committee was empowered to coop other members and hold a general meeting of the Muslims at a convenient time and place for the final adoption and acceptance of its rules and regulations (Robinson, 2007: 149)¹⁶. Such a meeting actually took place at Karachi on December 29, 1907.

Interestingly, the ensuing period witnessed the use of much projected backward Muslim majority area like Sindh for augmentation of the aims and objectives of the AIML. Karachi was selected for convening the first regular session of the AIML and as a matter of fact it was of much importance in that political scenario. As a preliminary meeting, the Karachi session did not witness much party deliberation except the delivery of speeches from the President Adamjee Peerbhoy (1845-1913) and an address of welcome by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Ali Mohammad Khan Dehlvi from Hyderabad (the only member of AIML representing Sindh), and the Secretary of Sind Provincial Muslim League. The Presidential address was a moderately worded practical one. It highlighted the future policy of the party and the expected response of the Muslims. He urged the Muslims “to be united in ourselves, to be of one mind and one purpose.” He warned that though, “we recognize the difficulties of the Government in adjusting conflicting claims, we must be as fearless as we are honest in our criticism, whoever and whatever they may affect” (Ahmad, 1989: 102-04)¹⁷.

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The Karachi Session of the AIML also considered the question of affiliation of the provincial branch in the Punjab, where two Leagues were established (Hussain, 1946: 97)¹⁸. One of the most important achievements of the Karachi session was the formation and the adoption of the League constitution. However, the fundamental principles were not different from those of the resolutions passed at the Dacca session. The Karachi session of the League, like its Dacca session, was also held after the conclusion of the Muslim Educational Conference meeting. Another important feature of the Karachi session was the imposition of a constitution ensuring the control of the 'men of property and influence' over the party (Rehman, 1970: 52-60). The other main issues for the Karachi session were the formation of rules and regulation of the nascent AIML and to determine the Muslim response to the Reform Scheme of the government. The response from the League to the Reform Scheme came in the form of, "Suggestions on the Council Reform Scheme of the Government of India by the AIML" (Ahmad, 1989: 102-04). These indicated that there was a visible gap between the government plan and the thinking of the League i.e., the party was of the view that the Advisory Council should not consist of only the ruling Princes and territorial chiefs but it should also include some of those "recognized representatives of interests in the country such as Industry, Commerce and learned professions, contrary to the official offer of two elective seats on the Imperial legislative Council. The League also demanded ten seats, one from each province including Central North West Frontier and Burma and one for the Trustees of the Muslim College of Aligarh" (*Ibid*). These suggestions were placed before the general session of the AIML held at Aligarh on March 18-19, 1908 under chairmanship of Muhammad Shah Din from the Punjab. The Aligarh Session of the League was, in many ways, a continuation of the Karachi Session 1907.

On December 30, 1908, the AIML met at Amritsar with K.B. Yousaf as the Chairman of the Reception Committee and Syed Ali Imam from Patna as the President. This session was important as it formally adopted the constitution of the AIML. By now the Government of India's reform proposals and the Secretary of State's reply had become public and from now onwards the AIML was to embark upon an incessant campaign for achieving the system of separate electorates which had been promised by the Viceroy. Secretary of State's suggestion had two major weaknesses: firstly, it failed to recognize the positions of the Muslim community as politically important one and therefore failed to recommend extra seats for them and secondly, it failed to recognize the principle of separate electorate for the Muslims. These shortcomings were taken into full consideration by Sir Ali Imam. But he was totally unaware of the government scheme until December 30, 1908. It seems that Sir Ali Imam received the copy of scheme too late and could not reflect upon it in his Presidential Address. In the morning, he read out his printed address and in the afternoon session, he announced the details of the government scheme and his response, in two ways, firstly, in a resolution and secondly in his

comments in support of the resolutions. The resolution was drafted by Ali Imam himself. It pointed out regretfully that the “Secretary of State failed to confirm in his Dispatch the just pronouncement of the Viceroy, in reply to the address presented by a deputation of the Musalmans in October 1906” (*Ibid*: 102-07).

Syed Ali Imam denounced the Reforms Scheme as dangerous to the vital interests of the Muslims and contrary to the suggestions made by Minto, who as the man on the spot, knew the situation better than Morley. He further urged the Muslims to protest strongly against Morley’s scheme. The League viewed the Electoral College Scheme mark the first breakdown of that implicit faith which Muslims had for so long placed in the care and solicitude of the Government (Robinson, 2007: 158)¹⁹.

In view of the utterances of Congress leaders and its resolution against the partition of Bengal at the Madras session in 1907, the AIML felt necessary to inform the Government and the public of the Muslim point of view in the matter in a strongly worded resolution moved by Syed Nawab Ali Choudhary (Ahmad, 1989: 106). In the following months, numerous protest meetings were held by the Muslims throughout India and finally the Muslims were able to prove their worth in attainment of their goal (Robinson, 2007: 161-62)²⁰. It was the foundation stone of the future Islamic state of Pakistan.

Conclusion

Assessing and comparing both the Congress and the AIML, one observes very interesting features about both the parties’ performance during these years, 1907-9, reflecting the behaviours of both the Hindus and the Muslims. Having a comparison with the earlier the more politically experienced and seasoned, the later stood united and successful throughout these years of struggle whereas the former had to go through a severe crisis at the same time when it experienced a split at Surat in 1907. Without any foreign element i.e., the British supporters unlike Congress, AIML worked well and succeeded in finally winning even more than it had stipulated, eight out of twenty eight elected seats of the Imperial Legislative Council. The target achieved was twenty eight percent whereas the Muslim population in British India was twenty three percent. It also negates the famous thesis of Rafiq Zakria and at the same time it approves the analyses of G.N.Singh (both quoted earlier). How this remarkable achievement was sought, we had briefly gone through the working of the AIML during these years of trial and destiny; 1907 to 1909, a marathon from Karachi to Amritsar.

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Notes

1. The earliest Muslim party in India, the Muhammadan Association was formed on May 6, 1855.
2. He further observes that the Aligarh College and the AIML were founded to preserve a strong proportion, not to improve a weak one.
3. Robinson is of the view that, "the understanding between the Aligarh leaders and the government began to change between 1900-9". Furthermore, he points out the biased policy of the UP Lt. Governor towards the Muslims was responsible for this entire changed situation, "MacDonnell felt that the Muslims were too hostile and potentially too dangerous to be encouraged. One of the first aim of his administrative policy was to shift the basis of government support from Muslims more towards Hindus".
4. At Lucknow discussion (1906), Nawab Salimullah of Dacca and Nawab Ali Choudhary insisted that the memorial should beg assurance that the partition of Bengal would be maintained, but they were ignored by the Muslims of North India. Nawab Salimullah emerging after his defeat at Lucknow and the exclusion of Bengal problem from the memorial decided to go a head independently. (He did not join the Simla Deputation on having a cataract operation, which might have been rearranged). Robinson in *Separatism*, pp. 147-8, is of the view that "Salimullah circulated a suggestion of an All India Political Association, which was strongly opposed by Aga Khan and Mohsinul Mulk who saw a threat in this Bengali inspired plan to Aligarh leadership".
5. The memorial claimed to represent the fears of the all Indian Muslims, but it did not. The greater part of memorial, however, was devoted to securing for the Muslims as strong a position as possible in the new power structure revolving around legislative councils.
6. It is indeed interesting that the viceroyalty of Lord Minto and Morley's rule at the India Office should be closely associated. They were appointed with a few weeks of one another. Lord Morley resigned in Oct. 1910 and Minto left India a month later. Both in their cooperation depended less than most of their predecessors on the expert guidance and accumulated experience of their permanent officials and without prejudging the question of gain or loss to the country.
7. Interestingly Minto had no match to his predecessor's knowledge about the Indian affairs who was himself author of certain valuable writings on the topic and had extensively toured the East throughout. Both the team of Viceroy and the Secretary of State were dependant on their advisors.
8. Lord Morley believed that the best way to draw the teeth of the extremists was to win the support of the moderate party by granting a real measure of reforms. It is certainly true that the famous Morley-Minto Reforms were in the main the outcome of an exchange of views between two statesmen whose knowledge of India was obviously limited. Morley and Minto were honestly desirous of taking some decided steps in the direction of liberalization of the Indian institutions, though the manifesto even of the moderate party was regarded by them as embodying a distant ideal at present quite unattainable. They had already begun to formulate reforms. They decided not to flinch in the course they had marked out.
9. The King Edward VII, also found the reforms distasteful and vigorously opposed the appointment of the first Indian member of the Executive Council.
10. Morley declared in the second reading of the Indian Bill in the House of Lords, wherein he declared that the Muslims demand was to be met in full. He further asserted, Let us not forget the differences between Hinduism and Mohammedanism is nor mere difference of articles of belief, that constitute a

community. Do not let us forget that, in talking of Hindus and Mohammedans, we are dealing with, and are brought face to face with vast historic issues. We are dealing with the very mightiest forces that through all the centuries have moulded the fortunes of great states.

11. League members worked up a Muslim agitation as never witnessed before. Western-educated and orthodox, Shia and Sunni, landlord, professional man, shopkeeper and priest all joined their voices to protest. Organisations, public meetings and individuals delivered memorials to government.
12. The London League was furious. They did not see how it was possible to reconcile Minto's reply to the Simla Deputation, Morley's reply to the London Muslim League deputation with the present policy of the government of India. Through May 1909 the London League presented its case energetically to the India Office and the British public." He further notes, "The Aga Khan, Ameer Ali and the London League whipped up considerable parliamentary and public support. Morley cracked. With out the league support, he feared, the bill would get through parliament.
13. Especially the Punjab Muslim press was quite vocal in this respect, i.e., *the Paisa Akhbar*, Lahore, December 25, 1908 & February 13, 15, 27, 1909, the *Watan*, Lahore, January 8, 1909, the *Zamindar*, Karamabad, January 8, 1909, and the *Observer*, Lahore December 23, 1908 & April 14, 1909.
14. The Agha Khan accepted a compromise in which the number of seats reserved for Muslims on Imperial Council was raised from six to eight, and undertook to persuade the league to agree to it. Ameer Ali did not compromise but kept quiet. The League submitted reluctantly.
15. The author is surprised, that, "a sapling of hardly two years should have succeeded in browbeating one of the most powerful and experienced among the modern Secretaries of State."
16. The foundation resolution was proposed by Nawab Salimullah. This was both the beginning and end of Salimullah and Bengal in the All India Muslim League. By capturing the Secretaryship at Dacca, the Aligarh leaders were able to style the organization in their own fashion.
17. It was estimated that Adamjee Peerbhoy's public charities amounted to no less than Rs. 50 lakhs. Only in 1906 he donated a sum of Rs.1, 10,000 for the establishment of a Science College at Aligarh. His son Mohammad Bhai, read out his Presidential Address.
18. One party was formed by Mian Fazl-i-Hussain in February 1906 and the other by Mian Mohammad Shafi on December 4, 1906. Eventually after discussion, Mian Fazl-i-Hussain withdrew his claims and it was decided to merge the two bodies into one with Mian Shah Din as its President, Mian Shafi as the General Secretary, and Fazl-i-Hussain as the Joint Secretary. Although he surrendered but at the same time he lost interest in the party affairs.
19. But later on, Ali Imam moved away from the AIML policy as enunciated at the Amirtsar session and committed himself to the government policy. He was attacked as the traitor to the community.
20. The author has beautifully drawn a table at p.161, showing how between the first tentative proposals of 1907/8 and the passing of the Indian Council Act in 1909, the League won four additional Muslim seats in the Imperial Legislative Council. He further elaborates;

The provisions for nomination disappeared and the Muslims voted in separate electorates for their reserved seats, the only exception being the Punjab where, because the Muslims formed 'the bulk of the population' and because 'the great majority of seats... [were to] be filled by nomination', it was felt that there was little chance of

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Muslim interests not being secured. In the UP, Madras and Imperial Legislative Councils, the Muslims had representation that exceeded their proportion of the population. In every council election Muslims could also vote in the mixed electorates; so they had, in fact, two votes. The full extent of Muslim gains was not revealed until after the first elections under the 1909 Councils Act when, in six out of seven councils, the Muslims gained representation that went way beyond their proportion of the population: in the Imperial Legislative Council the Muslims gained eleven or 39% of the elected seats, in Bombay eight or 38%, in Madras three or 15%, in the UP six or 28.5%, in Bengal six or 24%, in the Punjab three or 60% and only in East Bengal and Assam did they slip below their proportion of the population with six or 35%.

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Biographical Note

Dr. Javed Haider Syed is working as Assistant Professor in the Department of History, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.