

# ALLAMA IQBAL AND THE YOUNG GENERATION

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Dr. Muhmmad Rafiuddin, in his book *First Principles Of Education*, states:

"Every ideology has its own system of education which is designed to foster the love of that ideology in the growing generations of the community of its lovers and to create in them that special type of knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes which is relevant to that ideology and which they need in order to be able to love and serve the ideology whole-heartedly. Every ideology has, moreover, its own philosophers of education who, by their reasoning, justify their own ideology as the only true and sound basis of education and every ideology has its own practical educators who exert themselves to put into practice the educational thought of its philosophers. It is clear, there-fore, that the educational system of one ideological community can never serve properly the educational needs of another community."

Allama Iqbal, both as a philosopher of education and as an educator knew what system of education his community, i.e. the Muslims, were in need of. British imperialists had imposed a system of education in the Sub-Continent which served their purpose. They needed petty officials and clerks. The educational institutions like factories, produced that commodity in plenty. How could a Muslim student grow into a genuine believer and a person of character through the education he or she got in such schools, colleges and universities. Allama Iqbal aptly deplored that sorry phenomenon thus,

Masters of education have strangulated you. How can you then proclaim "No god but the God"-<sup>66</sup>

The education which Muslim children were getting could not mould them into good Muslims. For Allama Iqbal a good Muslim meant a person who- had one integrated personality, possesses fidelity and a developed acute sense of responsibility. As is obvious, teaching is of two kinds. One is conducted in words, expressions, lectures, books etc. and is called "instruction". The other deals with spiritual upbringing, character-building, etc., and is called "education". Generally speaking one is related to letters and the other with actions. But the tragedy is that in the contemporary era almost all over the world, "instruction" stands for "education". Hence the aim of character-building is being universally neglected. This is why individuals without humaneness come out of "instruction centres" miscalled "educational centres". Allama Iqbal saw this and bemoaned over it.

Dr. M. Rafiuddin in his book, mentioned above quotes Professor Clarke who maintains:

"For whatever else education may mean it must mean primarily the self-perpetuation of an accepted culture — a culture which is the life of a determined society."

If a growing generation is not brought up to inherit the culture of the nation or society to which it belonged, then the link with the past breaks up, hence that particular culture cannot continue to develop and flow on. Allama Iqbal in 'Jawab-i-Shikwa', written in 1913, had stressed the same point:

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<sup>66</sup> *Kulliyat-e-iqbal* (Urdu), Lahore, 1984, p. 338.

باہ کا علم نہ بیٹے کو اگر ازر ہو پھر پر قابل میراج پر کیونکر ہو

"if a son is not Well-versed in the knowledge his father possessed then the son cannot be deemed entitled to inherit what his father bequeathed."<sup>67</sup>

In a short poem entitled نتائج تعلیم اور اس کے نتائج (Education and its Results) Allama Iqbal referring to the young generation states:

خوش ت وہیں ہم بھی جوانوں کی ترقی سے مگر اب خنداں سے نکل جاتی ہے فریاد بھی ساتھ  
ہم سمجھتے تھے کہ لائے گی فراغت تعلیم کیا خبر تھی کہ چلا آئے گا الحاد بھی ساتھ

"We too are pleased over the progress our youngmen are making but our laughing lips do utter a lament also. We conceived that education would bring in prosperity but we did not visualise that atheism would also be coming alongwith it."<sup>68</sup>

Dr. Robert Briffault in his renowned book *The Making of Humanity* lays down as under:

"If an English baby were put to nurse with a Central African tribe in exchange for a nigger baby, and the latter very carefully brought up in England, the nigger baby, when he grew up, would be a civilized man substantially in possession of the fruits of European evolution, and the English baby would be a savage."

Like geographical surroundings, mind also has its own surroundings and the latter also have their impact on the person carrying that mind.

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

For example, Arabs became masters of Spain and settled down there. The geographical and climatic conditions of Spain are quite different from those of desert regions which is real Arabia. Yet the Arabic odes composed in Spain by Arab poets who had not seen Arabia even once in their life contained almost -the same patterns, themes and especially the beginnings which invariably portrayed the camels, the caravans, far-flung places of encampment, pools surrounded by sand dunes, pastures, pieces of strings, stones blackened by the fire while they served as hearth, etc. Even the Christian's of Spain who wrote poetry in Arabic took to the same path. Through Persian and directly too, Arabic poetry has influenced Urdu to a considerable extent. Just take one example of Mirza Ghalib. (مرزا غالب) He was born in Agra and died in Delhi. He had never seen vast waterless tracts interspersed with huge sand-dunes. He had never lived in wool-tents nor had he loved any woman who belonged to tent-dwelling tribes, encamping in a desert. Yet he says,

کہاں تک رووں اس نیچے کے پیچھے قیامت ہے      مری قسمت میں یا رب کیا نہ تھی دیوار پتھر کی

"How long should I weep and bewail behind the tent of my beloved? O God! could there be no stone-wall for me" (so that I could dash my head against it and get rid of the pangs of separation).

Allama Iqbal saw and vividly so, that in his nation there were growing youngmen who biologically belonged to the Pak-India Sub-Continent but mentally and culturally they lived in Europe, in particular, England. They were Anglophile. If they heard or read the word "river," they did not visualise the Indus or the Ganges. They visualised the Thames. The link of such persons with their own culture had thinned down extremely.

Allama Iqbal was admittedly a great supporter of the onward march of human societies to progress, scientific as well as intellectual. He was himself a

'modernist' who could not reconcile himself to numerous fossilized notions, whether they related to religion or society at large. Nevertheless he could not see eye to eye with the secular and materialistic temper of the modern age. He had made his modernism manifest but with a rider;

کھلے ہیں سب کے لیے غریبوں کے میخانے  
علم تازہ کی سرمستیاں سناہ نہیں!  
اسی سرور میں پوشیدہ موت بھی ہے تری  
ترے بدن میں اگر سوز لالہ نہیں

"Western taverns are open for every body. The rapture of modern knowledge is no sin.

Your death also lies hidden in this rapture if your frame has no fire of faith in one God in it.<sup>69</sup>

Being a serious student of Western philosophy Allama Iqbal could very easily understand that the dominant theme of Western civilization was secularism — which had its genesis in Greek Philosophy. The impact of Greek Philosophy on Western societies has been so deep that even the Christianization of the whole Europe could not destroy its secular character. Christianity did produce philosophers like St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas who utilized philosophy to serve the cause of religion but in the eyes of their successors they were mere theologians.

No doubt the philosophy of a nation governs almost all the departments of its life including religion. Education is no exception. Rather it is the educational system of a nation which generally interprets the mind and goal of the nation concerned.

"A Dialogue in Paradise" (فردوس میں مکالمہ) is a poem which deals with the modern education and its consequent impact on the minds of Muslim youth.

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

In this poem we find the Sheikh of Shiraz i.e. Sa'di, talking to Maulana Hali. Allama Iqbal chose Sa'di and Hali because each one of them was a reformer of his age, especially in respect of education. We find the former asking the latter:

کچھ کیفیت مسلم ہندی تو بیاں کر  
دلمانہ منزل ہے کہ مصروف ننگ و تاز  
مذہب کی حرمت بھی ہے کچھ اس کی رگوں میں  
تھی جس کی فلک سوز کبھی گرمی آواز

"Please tell me something about the condition of Indian Muslim.

Is he still struggling hard to reach the destination, or has he been left behind like an exhausted way-farer?"

"Is there any measure of religions fervor still left in his veins?"

There was a time when he could melt the firmament with the warmth of his cry."<sup>70</sup>

Hali replied as follows, in a strain of despondency:

جب پیر فلک نے ورق ایام کا الٹا  
آیا مگر اس سے عقیدوں میں تزلزل  
اُئی یہ صدا، پاؤ گے تعلیم سے اعزاز!  
دنیا تو ملی، طائر دیں کر گیا پرواز  
فطرت ہے جوانوں کی زمیں گیرہ زمیں ہز  
دیں ہو تو مقاصد بھی پیدا ہو بلندی

"When the ancient firmament (like an old priest with a book) turned over the leaves of days, it was heard, "education would grant you honour".

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p. 245.

"Of course it has conferred material benefits on the people, it has at the same, dealt a fatal blow to spiritual values."

"With religion hopes soar high, but (now bereft of religion) our young men have become earth-rooted and low-spirited."<sup>71</sup>

Hall's statement does not come to an end here. It goes on gaining in pathos. At the end it is really touching. Hali observes:

پانی نہ ملا زمزم ملت سے جو اس کو  
یہ ذکر حضور شہ یثرب میں نہ کرنا  
پیدا ہیں نئی پود میں الحاد کے انداز  
سمجھیں نہ کہیں ہند کے مسلم مجھے غماز

"As the young generation could not be nourished on the perennial, Life-giving founts of Islamic learning, atheistic trends are visible in them."

"I beseech you not to bring it to the notice of the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him) lest the Indian Muslims take me for a tale-bearer."<sup>72</sup>

The last couplet in Persian is Sa'di's to whom the answer is addressed.

خرماتواں یافت ازاں خار کہ کشتیم  
دیانتواں بافت ازاں پشم کہ ریشتم

"We cannot get palms out of the thorns we have sown. We cannot weave fine silk out of the coarse woollen threads we have spun.

From the perusal of this poem it becomes obvious that Allama Iqbal's foremost concern was to see the youth of Muslim community advancing on

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p. 245.

the pathway to progress remaining at the same time strong believers in Islam. He wished they retained their link with the positive and glorious aspects of their culture. If they lacked belief in Allah then their advancement could do no good to world Muslim Community i.e. the Muslim *Ummah*.

Allama Iqbal has addressed the youth of the *Ummah* several times, directly as well as indirectly. We see that *laved Nama* begins with a prayer to Allah. And that prayer ends thus:

من کہ نومیدم ز پیران کسں      دارام از روزے کہ می آید، سخن!  
برجواناں سہل کن حرف مرا      بہر شاں پایاب کن ثوف مرا

"I am utterly despaired of the old generation hence I address myself to the day which is yet to dawn. (By that day he means new generations who had yet to appear on the surface of earth.)

"(My Prayer is) that Almighty Allah make my words for younger generation easy to understand. Make my deep sea fordable for them (i.e. meanings of my verses become clear to them without much effort).<sup>73</sup>

And the last poem in *laved Nama* is addressed to Javed Iqbal and through him to the New Generations. This is a long poem containing about one hundred and thirty verses. First of all belief in Allah is stressed. None else is worthy of worship. One who believes in the One and shuns all other gods and Idols can become capable of conquering the Elements and hence can rise to celestial heights. Translation of some verses from this poem being given below. The who has the whole *laved Noma* translator is Sufi A. Q. Niaz into English.

<sup>73</sup> *Kulliyat-e-Iqbal*, (Persian), Lahore, 1985, p. 599.

"Dost thou say 'Laa Ilaah? Then say it with all thy soul, That from thy body should flow the fragrance of the soul."

"The two brief words are not merely an expression; For Laa Ilaah is nothing but a powerful sword."

"To be a true Believer, but to put on the girdle of service before others:

To be called a Believer, but to behave as a traitor to be destitute, beggarly or guilty of hypocrisy—"

"To betray the interests of the Precious Faith for a paltry copper coin,

Is to burn to an ash all the wealth in one's home, and to burn one's own self along with everything else!" -

"And when the soul had flown out of his Prayer and Fasting,

The individual became rough, and disagreeable; and the leadership and discipline of the nation fell into disorder."

"That those who have the Qur'an for guide should have no urge for asking, no taste for a yearning, for the fulfilment of a Desire.

It is strange and very unfortunate — it is very strange indeed."

"If Allah be pleased to make thee a Man of Vision Give careful thought to the times that are coming."

"Reason grown impertinent; no warmth, no fire in the hearts

No sense of modesty in the eyes; drowned in a sense of worldliness —  
superficial, profane."

"Knowledge and the Arts, Religion and Politics Reason and the human  
heart

All in pairs intent on devoting themselves entirely to acquirement of only  
the material means."

"To the spirit of my own times I have addressed a few 'words

And in this I have reduced the vastness of the seas to the capacity of a  
couple of jugs."

"The younger generations are intensely thirsty but their cups are empty;

Civilized in gait dark of soul, but they have illumined

brains."

"They are short sighted, convictionless, in dark despair,

In the whole world their eyes fail to see anything worth while."

"Unless knowledge received a fire and a burning from life. The heart can  
derive no joy from experience."

"Well thou mayest study a hundred books with the experts;

But the best lesson for thee is the one thine own eyes  
would teach."

"In the eyes of the Mullah the denier of God is a Kafir; But in my eyes the  
real Kafir is one who denies himself."

"Take firm hold of a perfect sincerity in thy ways;  
And wash thyself clean of the fear of Rulers and Rich."

"Both in moments of anger, and of pleasure, Take care never to fall short  
of justice."

"For a proper protection of Soul is needed *Zikr* and *Fikr* without measure  
For a protection of the Body the needed thing is self control and  
discipline in youth."

"Authority and the right to rule over others, both in the higher and the  
lower worlds,

Never comes to hand except after a proper protection of the Body and  
Soul has been fully achieved."

"The sustenance of the raven and the vulture lies in the carcasses  
consigned to the dust;

But the sustenance of food of the eagle lies in the Sun and the Moon."

"The secret of Religion is truthfulness in speech; and that thou partake of  
nothing except what is lawful, duly earned,

And both in private and in public to concentrate one's gaze on the Eternal  
Excellence."

"The worth of a flower lies in its colour and fragrance; And where a man is alien to discipline and reverence he has neither colour nor fragrance."

"When I see a youngman with no sense of reverence and discipline,  
It pains me to such an extent that the light of day for me turns into the  
darkness of night."

"The essence of humanity is respect for man,  
And thou shall do well to make careful note of this important point."

"For blessings and boons look only to the Almighty God: never look  
Nor these things to any earthly potentate."

"Abundance of wealth deprives the heart of its melting quality;  
It takes humility away, and places there an overbearing pride instead."

"If thou fail to find the companionship of some man of real knowledge,  
Then take thou from me what I have received from my ancestors."

"As long as the heart continues to burn in the fire of greed and worldly  
griefs,

"The soul never feels the urge to dance."

"And remember, O ye of the younger Generation,  
that to be overcome by grief is prematurely to grow old."

"Dost thou realise that at the present day it is greed which masquerades as  
*Faqr*:

And as for me I bend my knee to him who has the fullest control over his  
baser self!"

"O thou the only comfort of my impatient soul —

Only if thou too, could manage to take a share of this Dance of the Soul!"

"To thee I have revealed the whole *Secret* of the Religion of Mustafa;

And even when I am in my grave I shall be sending up this prayer for  
thee."

What we get from this poem is that a human being can rise to the heights of real manhood only if he believes in Allah the One Lord Almighty Who created the whole universe and breathed into man's frame the essence of His attributes. Without sincere belief in Allah man falls to the level of animality. Man must unfold his hidden potentialities by hard work and by putting trust in Allah. He who depends on others and is bereft of self-confidence is worse than one who rejects faith in Allah. To soar high is possible only if the aims and ideals to be achieved are spiritual. If ideals are

based on mundane lust only then the person concerned is a greedy animal who grows in callousness along with his materialistic achievements. West stood for material gains only hence a Muslim had to be careful in following it. A Muslim could get true guidance only from the Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet. A genuine Man could not be but truthful, sincere, reliable and steadfast in respect of all which is positive.. Such a Man can never play a traitor to his society and nation. He wants to lead a soulful life. His pleasure lies in the dance of his soul, not in the dance of his body. Such a dance of the soul can be performed by those persons only who bestow discipline on their instinctive lusts, ambitions and desires in accordance with the *Shari 'at*. Such a conqueror is a real *Darvish* and *Faqir*. *Darvish* or a *Faqir* is not one who forsakes the world and leads a secluded life at a monastery or in the *hujra* (side room) of a mosque. *A Faqir*, according to Allama Iqbal is a person who works hard, earns with the sweat of his brow, makes sacrifices for others, never stoops to begging, rejects all what is unlawful and prohibited and can never be a slave to his wealth, can never be possessed by his possessions. In him mental and spiritual go together, spiritual having the upper hand. Such a person will be an earnestly free person who would never bow, on account of greed, before any ruler or potentate nor would he be afraid of materially big persons.

Allama Iqbal wanted the younger generation to consist of free persons according to his description of them. *We know laved Nama* was published in 1930. *Bal-i-Jibril* came out in 1935. In *Bal-i-Jibril* too, there is a poem entitled "Javed Ke Nam" consisting of five verses only, but containing the same strain. Here also Javed Iqbal is advised to create his own world for him and should never look up to others for help. The fifth and last verse of the said poem is

خودی نہ تچ، غریبی میں نام پیدا کر  
 مرا طریق امیری نہیں فقیری ہے

"My way of life is that of a Darvish and not that of an aristocrat,

Do not give away your self (in exchange for riches) Try to become celebrity while living in poverty."<sup>74</sup>

Allama Iqbal in yet another poem "To Javed" has again stressed the same points. The poem begins with verses as under:

نارت مگر دیں ہے یہ زمانہ ہے اس کی نہاد کا فرمانہ  
درطار شمشلی سے خوشتر مردان خدا کا آستانہ!

"Contemporary era is out to do away with religion because it is based on atheism and denial of God."

"The threshold of Godly persons is much better than the courts of emperors."<sup>75</sup>

Here Javed has been instructed to stick to his belief in one God and strengthen his self (ego). It has been made clear that the potentialities of human beings are boundless but hard work is the precondition for these possibilities to unfold.

وہ بحر ہے آدمی کہ جس کا ہر قطرہ ہے بحر نیکرانہ  
دہقان اگر نہ ہو تن آساں ہر دانہ ہے صد ہزار دانہ

"Man is such an ocean that every drop of it is a limitless sea in itself."

<sup>74</sup> *Kulliyat-e-Iqbal*, (Urdu), Lahore, 1984, p. 439.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, p.548.

"If the farmer be not given to ease and comfort then one seed of grain is to grow into one hundred thousand seeds."<sup>76</sup>

And then, proceeding further Allama Iqbal brings home to Javed, a point of great import

اللہ کی دین ہے جسے دے	میراث نہیں	بلندی	نامی
اپنے نور نظر سے کیا خوب	فرماتے ہیں	حضرت	نظامیؒ
جائے کم بزرگ بایت بود	من	ندارت	سودا!

"It is the Grace of God and He bestows it on whom He desires. Fame is not something given in heritage."

"What a fine thing it was that Nizami (renowned poet of Persian language) made manifest to his beloved son."

"Where you wish greatness be yours, there the fact of being my son is not going to pay you any dividends." (You will not become famous only because you are my son)<sup>77</sup>

*And* then Allama Iqbal again comes to *Faqr* (to lead a Darvish-like life) and explains its meanings for Javed;

ہمت ہو اگر تو ڈھونڈ وہ فقر	جس فقر کی اصل ہے مجازی
اس فقر سے آدمی میں پیدا	اللہ کی شان بے نیازی
یہ فقر غیور جس نے پایا	بے تیغ و سناں ہے مرد غازی
مومن کی اسی میں ہے امیری	اللہ سے مانگ یہ فقیری!

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p.549.

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p. 550.

"If you can forbear then search for the *Faqr* which originated in Hijaz."

"That *Faqr* creates in man the Godly virtue of being free

from all wants."

"Whosoever is in possession of this self-honouring *Faqr* is a Ghazi without a sword and a spear."

"In it lies the real wealth of the faithful. Beseech the Lord to grant you this *Faqr*."<sup>78</sup>

Hope had not to come from outside, it had to surge out from within. A state of constant challenge adds to the power of determination and strengthens resolution. Allama Iqbal generalised the meanings of tension and eulogised all kinds of challenges focussed<sup>on</sup> self-conscious and resolute persons. He relates the story of a youth from Merv ( ) who had come to Sayyed Al<sub>i</sub> Hujwairi (Data Ganjbaksh) and complained of high-handedness of his enemies. In Sheikh Hujwairi's reply lies the point Allama Iqbal wished to make;

هستی او رونق بازار تست	راست می گویم عدویم یار تست
فضل حق داند اگر دشمن قوی است	هر که دانائے مقامات خودی است
قطع منزل امتحان تیغ عزم	سنگ ره گرد و فساں تیغ عزم
توچه پنداری فراق جان و تن	چیسست مردن از خودی غافل شدن

"I tell you the truth, your enemy too is your friend. His existence adds to your glory."

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<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, p.550.

"Whosoever knows the stations of the self considers a powerful enemy to be a blessing from Allah."

"The sword of resolution is whetted by the stones that block the path.

Traversing stage after stage is the test of the sword of resolution."

"What is death? — it is to be oblivious to the self. Do you imagine it is parting of soul and body?"<sup>79</sup>

Through this story the message is broadcast to all youngmen who are alive in the real sense of the word. This significance of tension created by various challenges of life is explained by Allama Iqbal while writing to Professor R. A. Nicholson on the meaning of the self and his philosophy aimed at it:

"In man the centre of life becomes an Ego or Person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained relaxation will ensure. Since personality or the state of tension, is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value: it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens is bad."

This being his creed about good and evil, made him naturally feel disgusted, rather distressed if he found a youth given to comfort and easy living which inevitably had to result in weakening the ego and then personality.

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<sup>79</sup> *Kulliyat-e-Iqbal*, (Persian), Lahore, 1985, p. 53.

ترے صوفے ہیں افرنگی، ترے قالین ہیں ایرانی  
 لہو مجھ کو رلاتی ہے جوانوں کی تن آسانی!

"Your sofas come from Europe and your rugs are Persian.

I shed tears of blood when I find youngmen ease-loving."<sup>80</sup>

Allama Iqbal wanted youngmen to be efficient, up and doing, tough and resolute. He was despaired of the old generation as has been mentioned in the beginning of this article. He impinged his hopes on the young generation who could be made to unlearn as well as learn afresh. And this is why he prayed to God Almighty with utmost sincerity and tenderness of feeling in a couplet.

جوانوں کو مری آہ سحر دے  
 پھر ان شاہین بچوں کو بال و پر دے  
 خدایا آرزو مری یہی ہے  
 مرا نور بصیرت عام کر دے!

"Grant the youth my plaints of early morn. Furnish again these eaglets with strong wings. My only prayer to you, my Lord, is that the Light of my vision be diffused amongst all."<sup>81</sup>

In his celebrated poem, "Saqi Nama" (ساقی نامہ) he repeated the same theme

جوانوں کو سوز جگر بخش دے

<sup>80</sup> *Kulliyat-e-Iqbal*, (Urdu), Lahore, 1984, p. 411.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p. 378.

مرا عشق، مری نظر بخش دے!

(O God) Bestow on the youth my warmth of feeling. My unbounded love, and my vision.<sup>82</sup>

And no doubt it were 'the young man of his nation of Islam who proved harbingers as well as the most untiring and determined fighters for the achievement of Pakistan, their cherished homeland. Allama Iqbal who around 1910 had addressed the Muslim youth

کبھی اے نوجوان مسلم! تدر بھی کیا تو نے  
وہ کیا گردوں تھا تو جس کا ہے اک ٹونا ہوا تارا!

Muslim youngman have you ever pondered over the fact that you are a fallen star of a magnificent firmamentt."<sup>83</sup>

Was in October 1937 issuing a message to a gathering of the Muslim Students Federation held at Calcutta in which these words stand out

"I hope the young generation is fully aware of. the delicate political situation through which the Indian Muslims are passing. Be not afraid of The opposing forces. Continue your struggle. In struggle lies hidden the secret of life."

The young generation under the august and wise guidance of the Quaid-e-Azam did their job well. The youth belonging to the present generation are also aware of the circumstances in which they have now been placed. They are determined. They know their job. They will do well. Insha Allah.

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<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, p. 416.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*, p.180.