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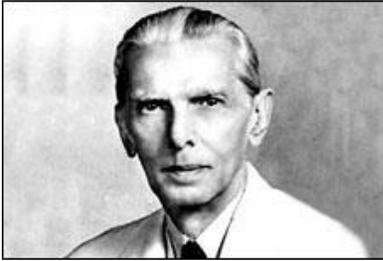
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## The Founding Father's Vision of Pakistan

*Dr. Dildar Ahmed*



Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

There is no doubt that the Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan, envisaged a democratic system based on social justice and fair play as taught by Islam. At the 30th session of the All India Muslim League in Delhi on April 24, 1943, he declared:

“In Pakistan will be a people’s government. Here I should like to give a warning to the landlords and the capitalists who have flourished at our expense by a system which is so vicious, which is so wicked and which makes them so selfish that it is difficult to reason with them. The exploitation of the masses has gone into their blood. They have forgotten the lessons of Islam. Greed and selfishness have made these people subordinate to the interests of others in order to fatten themselves. It is true we are not in power today. You go anywhere in the countryside. I have visited villages. There are millions and millions of our people who hardly get one meal a day. Is this civilization? Is this the aim of Pakistan? Do you visualize that millions have been exploited and cannot get one meal a day? If this is the ideal of Pakistan, I would not have it.”

It is, in fact, interchangeable whether you say Islamic Pakistan or Quaid’s Pakistan or Iqbal’s Pakistan. The Quaid-e-Azam was not a theocrat; he was not a theologian either. However, he was a true Muslim and wanted to develop democratic Pakistan based on the Islamic Principles. After the creation of Pakistan on one occasion, he said: “I do not know what the ultimate shape of our constitution is going to be, but I am sure

that it will be of a democratic type, embodying the essential principles of Islam. Today, they are as applicable in actual life as they were 1300 years ago. Islam and its idealism have taught us democracy. It has taught equality of man, justice and fair play to everybody. We are the inheritors of these glorious traditions and are fully alive to our responsibilities and obligations as framers of the future constitution of Pakistan. In any case Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state — to be ruled by priests with a divine mission”.

He described the creation and idea of Pakistan in the following words: “The creation of Pakistan was a mean to an end and not an end in itself. The idea was that we should have a State in which we could live and breathe as free men. What reason is there for anyone to fear democracy, equality, and freedom on the highest standard of integrity and on the basis of fair-play and justice for everybody as taught by Islam? Let us make it the future constitution of Pakistan. We shall make it and we will show it to the world.”

The founder of Pakistan never wanted Pakistan to be a theocratic country. However, it does not mean that he wanted it to be secular. Theocracy and secularism are, in a sense, antonyms but these are, from the Islamic point of view, two extremes. In fact, no political “religious” leader of significance in Pakistan ever wanted it to be a theocratic country. Theocracy, secularism and an Islamic system of governance are three different things. Islam not only rejects secularism, it is also opposed to theocracy. It has no priesthood and upholds a system of governance that is based on a true egalitarian democracy, the example of which can be seen in the rule of the first four Pious Caliphs. In Islam, even the Messenger of God is commanded by God to “consult people in their affairs”. Islamic democracy, however, has to work within the framework of the Islamic world-view and its value system. Allama Iqbal has given it the name of “spiritual democracy”. An idea of the Quaid’s vision of Pakistan can be had from the design of our national flag, which was approved by him. The very fact that it has two colours, one representing the Muslims and the other the minorities, rejects both theocracy and secularism. Our misfortune as Pakistanis is that we have no real democratic party in our country. Even the so-called liberal and progressive parties are, at best, clubs of feudals and the elite aristocracy. The

masses can only be the “workers” and not the leaders of these parties. Although a narrow-minded vision of religion is a problem, there are other reasons as well that constitute obstacles to the promotion of democratic values in our country. Thus, the future of Pakistan should be shaped on the basis of the principles and aspirations laid down by its founding fathers. It is a vision of a moderate, modern, tolerant, progressive, democratic, Islamic Pakistan.