

Hon. Liaquat Ali Khan

As his death occurred so soon after the establishment of the independence of Pakistan, there fell upon your shoulders, sir, the tremendous task of giving substance to the blueprint of building the machinery of government in order that your nation might effectively express the will of the Pakistan people to contribute, through democratic processes, to the welfare of mankind.

(Translation):

Mr. Prime Minister, your stay in Canada, short though it may be, will allow you, I hope, to realize the interest we take in your country and your people. As our contacts become closer and more frequent, we shall better understand our mutual problems and be in a position to find a more satisfactory solution.

I wish to assure you that you may count on the understanding and good will of the Canadian people as Canada expects the same from your fellow citizens.

(Text):

In greeting you on this occasion, may I be permitted, Mr. Prime Minister, to state how happy we are that you are accompanied by your charming wife. Her gentleness and gracious manner almost belie the dominating force which the Begum Liaquat Ali Khan is known to exercise in organizing the women of Pakistan to meet the challenge of providing social security under most difficult circumstances.

On behalf of the parliament and people of Canada I ask that the Honourable Liaquat Ali Khan convey to the people of Pakistan, on his return, our best wishes for their well-being and happiness, together with the assurances of deep friendship.

Members of the houses of parliament, I present to you the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Hon. Liaquat Ali Khan (Prime Minister of Pakistan): Mr. Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Speaker of the House of Commons, honourable members of the Canadian parliament: In permitting me to address you here today within these walls, you have conferred upon me a great honour and privilege which I value very highly and for which in the name of my country and my nation I thank you.

As the recipient of this signal token of your esteem my thoughts at this moment turn to the struggle which made it possible for our people to emerge as a free democratic nation to take their rightful place amongst the free nations of the world. For in honouring me today you honour them, their freedom, and the memory of that courageous man who guided their footsteps towards the goal of liberty. You will pardon me, therefore, if on this memorable occasion I am reminded of

the father of our nation and the founder of our freedom, our Great Leader, our Quaid-e-Azam, Mohammed Ali Jinnah of revered memory, without whose vision, determination and burning honesty Pakistan might have remained a vague longing and a distant dream, and the reality, of which my humble presence in your august company today is but a symbol, might never have been born. A sincere patriot, a passionate follower of the democratic idea, and a man who saw farther and more clearly than his fellows, he led the Muslims of British India out of their perplexities and frustrations into the open air of freedom, and gave shape, significance and direction to their quest for liberty. All his life he fought for freedom, but since he fought for the substance and not for the shadow, for the thing and not for the word, he let no illusions or catch-phrases obscure his penetrating insight or confound his grasp of the essentials. He struggled long and hard to forge the diverse peoples of his subcontinent into a mighty nation. But foremost as he was in the ranks of those who fought for independence, he was also the first to perceive the inexorable logic of facts, and, when the time came, to proclaim fearlessly that the people of British India, bound together though they were in their common subjection, were not one, but two nations, and that to relegate one hundred million Muslims to the position of a perpetual political minority and to force the Hindu nation and the Muslim nation into a single unwieldy state would be the negation of democracy and would create the greatest single unstable area in the world. The great truth that he uttered was so startling in its simplicity that for a long time even some of his close friends and companions found it stimulating, but strange. But the hundred million suppressed Muslims knew instinctively that what he said merely gave coherence and dynamism to their own hesitant, inarticulate feelings. When on the 14th of August, 1947, our flag was unfurled in Karachi, a nation of eighty million people thanked God that the Quaid-e-Azam had lived to see his dream come true. And when he left us to rest in God, to whose greater glory he had dedicated himself, we knew that he had bequeathed to us a great destiny to fulfil. Wherever the flag of Pakistan may fly, its capital shall always be that hallowed piece of earth where he lies buried.

The three years that have elapsed brought with them many a trial that we expected and many others that we did not. The mass migration that took place between our country and our neighbour, and caused much unhappiness to people on either side of the border, was a great shock to our economy