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# *G.A. Naqvi: from Indian Police (UP), 1926 to Pakistani Citizen (Sindh), 1947*

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RAKESH ANKIT

## **Abstract**

*This is the story of how G. A. Naqvi (Indian Police, 1926) of the United Province (UP) was affected by the events of 1947–1948 in British and independent India and Pakistan and had to become what he did not wish to be: a private citizen in Pakistan. It shows how he, like so many others, had to become reconciled to the idea of British India breaking-up into independent India and Pakistan. This process changed forever the relationship between institutions of the Indian State and individual lives of Indian Muslims; the ‘long’ Partition of British India prompted new questions of legitimacy, citizenship and sovereignty, while producing “displacement, disruption and disappointment”. This was especially so in the so-called ‘Muslim-minority provinces’, among which the UP held the pre-eminent position and to which Naqvi belonged. After 21 ½ years of service, Naqvi found himself unwanted in both India and Pakistan, in a time of deepening communal divide, suspicion and hostility. A much sought-after officer during the Second World War, how was he to know that over 1947–1948, not one of the four governments to which he was and/or could be affiliated with would want to have anything to do with him.*

## **Introduction**

In the winter of 1942 in British India, with the Second World War into its third year and in a seesaw mode, the War Department of the Government of India (GOI) was on an expansion drive. It especially sought security officers for countries with substantial Indian populations, one of which was Iran. Casting around for a reliable man with an unblemished record and required proficiency in Persian, it found G. A. Naqvi of the Indian Police from the intake of 1926 and the cadre of United Province (UP). Naqvi was obtained on deputation from the UP Government in January 1942 and appointed as Assistant Security Officer at Tehran, with the commissioned rank of major in the British Indian Army. His appointment happened soon after the combined occupation of Iran in August 1941 by Britain and Russia, in which Indian troops played a major role. A man of evident potential and earmarked for promotion, Naqvi was transferred to the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, in 1943 for training and returned to the British Embassy in Tehran, as Consular Attaché.

With the end of the war, Naqvi was shifted to the newly minted External Affairs Department (EAD) in 1945 and, still at Tehran, was designated as Additional Consul for Indian Affairs. A year later, in August 1946, the UP government wanted Naqvi back. They were short of senior police officers and the communal climate in the province – as in the rest of north India – was starting to fall apart. However, the newly formed interim government of India, with Jawaharlal Nehru responsible for External Affairs, requested the retention of Naqvi for another year in view of his experience in Iran and his knowledge of Persian. Much sought-after at this time, how was G. A. Naqvi to know that exactly a year later his wheel of fortune would have turned so much that not one of the four governments he was and/or could be affiliated with would want to have anything to do with him.

After fifteen years of service in the UP and five in Tehran, Naqvi returned to find himself unwanted in an India of deepening communal division, suspicion and hostility. He remains barely traceable today as four out of the five files on him in the National Archives of India, including those containing his reports from Tehran to the EAD and its predecessor are “missing/not transferred”. Information mentioned against their entries in the yearly index however, trace an entire arc from the heyday of a bold, assured and imaginative Major Naqvi – who suggested that “Persians of good families who owing to their fears of the Russians wish to come to India may be allowed to do so”<sup>1</sup> to the stresses of his sad and helpless early retirement on proportionate pension.<sup>2</sup> This is the story of how G. A. Naqvi was given no choice by the contingent nature of the events of 1947–1948 and had to become what he did not wish to be: a private citizen in Pakistan. It shows how he, like so many others, had to become reconciled to the idea of British India becoming independent India and Pakistan, two nation states, which broke asunder the old colonial Indian society. A legacy of this break-up was, and remains, the poignant question Gyanendra Pandey asked: “Can a Muslim be an Indian?”<sup>3</sup>

In the post-1947 world, as the ‘official mind’ sought to answer this question, it wielded remarkable influence over trajectories of individual lives, even Naqvi’s, and changed forever the relationship between institutions of the Indian state and the individual lives of Indian Muslims. In this change, a ‘bureaucratic imperative’ as well as ‘a nationalist imperative’ were at work.<sup>4</sup> The now-recognised “lengthy, messy and difficult”,<sup>5</sup> not to mention ‘long’,<sup>6</sup> Partition of British India prompted new questions of legitimacy, citizenship and sovereignty for an old colonial State apparatus,<sup>7</sup> while producing “displacement, disruption and disappointment” for the old colonial Society.<sup>8</sup> In this ‘flux’, the contract between ‘everyday state’ actors in India and its Muslim society on the one hand, and that between government and its servants

<sup>1</sup>File No. 24 (6) – ME/45, EAD (Middle East Branch), NAI.

<sup>2</sup>File No. 30 (23) – EII, MEA (EII Branch).

<sup>3</sup>G. Pandey, “Can a Muslim be an Indian?”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XLI, 4 (October, 1999), p. 614.

<sup>4</sup>Pandey, p. 629.

<sup>5</sup>W. Gould, T. Sherman and S. Ansari, “The flux of the matter: loyalty, corruption and the ‘everyday state’ in the post-partition government services of India and Pakistan”, *Past and Present*, 219 (May, 2013), p. 238.

<sup>6</sup>See V. Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York, 2007) and Y. Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven, 2007).

<sup>7</sup>I. Talbot, “Punjabi refugees’ rehabilitation and the Indian state: discourses, denials and dissonances”, *Modern Asian Studies*, XLV 1 (2011), p. 109.

<sup>8</sup>See J. Chatterji, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947–1967* (Cambridge, 2011).

like Naqvi on the other, was refashioned along ‘particularistic’ lines.<sup>9</sup> This was especially so in what were called the ‘Muslim-minority provinces’,<sup>10</sup> where it produced an ‘everyday violence’ amid transitioning state structures and political institutions,<sup>11</sup> among which the UP held the pre-eminent position and to which Naqvi belonged. The post-1947 Indian state’s attempts to “alleviate the sense of uncertainty [that] reconfigured the composition of the police and bureaucracy, and transformed [its] ideational underpinnings”,<sup>12</sup> is yet again illuminated when examined through the looking glass of Naqvi’s unexpected story.

## Part I

With the announcement of the Partition Plan on 2–3 June 1947, the Home Department of GOI circulated a questionnaire containing four items to its Secretary of State services, namely the Indian Civil Service (ICS), the IP, the Indian Medical Service and the Indian Forest Service. This questionnaire was meant chiefly for the European and Muslim members of these services. Its items were brief and direct: do you elect to serve in Pakistan? Do you elect to serve in the rest of India? Is your choice final/provisional? Naqvi replied to this questionnaire on 23 July 1947 that he wished to continue in the service of the GOI and, in words that would return to haunt him, did “not desire any transfer of province” from his UP. In any case, “the question of transfer from the province [did] not arise as [he was] employed by the EAD of the GOI”.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the Home Department received a consolidated list from the UP government of officers who had intimated their intention for a transfer to Pakistan. It was a telling list in that, 10 Muslims in the ICS and all 6 Muslim IP officers serving in UP wanted a transfer to Pakistan, in response to the kind of sentiments being expressed by the Congress government there.<sup>14</sup> Right from the top, Premier G. B. Pant was requiring “every Muslim in India to shed his blood fighting the Pakistani hordes” and thus, asking “each one [to] search his heart now, and decide whether he should migrate to Pakistan or not”.<sup>15</sup> Education Minister Sampooranand was writing that “it is not impossible that the sympathies of our Muslim population will veer towards Pakistan”.<sup>16</sup> As William Gould has shown the, “array of political languages within the UP Congress repeatedly made recourse to self-consciously ‘Hindu’ subjects and symbolism [with] the utmost importance that these acted upon Muslims in UP”.<sup>17</sup>

For officers like Naqvi, on deputation, the UP government presumed that such cases “will be decided by the GOI after consulting this government, if and when necessary”. In

<sup>9</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, pp. 240–241; also, see C. J. Fuller and V. Benei (eds.), *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India* (London, 2001).

<sup>10</sup>Pandey, “Can a Muslim be an Indian?” p. 628.

<sup>11</sup>See W. Gould, *Religion and Conflict in Modern South Asia* (Cambridge, 2012).

<sup>12</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 237

<sup>13</sup>18 June 1947, Home Department letter no. 160/47-RR, 27 June 1947 (G/E-1/47), GOI to British Embassy (Tehran) and 23 July 1947, Naqvi to JS, GOI (Home), File No. 170/7/47 – Ests (UP), MHA (Ests).

<sup>14</sup>The number of ICS officers who opted for Pakistan was 157, of whom 99 were Muslim and 50 European. See Ralph Braibanti, “Political bureaucracy and judiciary in Pakistan”, in *Bureaucracy and Political Development*. (ed.) J. La Palombara (Princeton, 1963), pp. 360, 367.

<sup>15</sup>Pandey, “Can a Muslim be an Indian?”, p. 617.

<sup>16</sup>Pandey, “Can a Muslim be an Indian?”, p. 616.

<sup>17</sup>W. Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 2.

a concluding remark, which would become the crux of its handling of Naqvi, the letter from Lucknow added that, “unless there is *mutual confidence* between the government and the officers concerned, no arrangement will work smoothly or satisfactorily”.<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, on the eve of transfer of power, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) noted that all three IP officers from UP on deputation – Naqvi, Majid Ullah Khan (Rampur state) and R. N. Kao (later the spymaster-founder of the Indian Research and Analysis Wing) – were “willing to continue in UP”.<sup>19</sup> However, it was one thing for Naqvi to express his wish; it was another for his wish to be granted. Another MHA memorandum of the same day enquired of the EAD “whether [it had] any objection to the GOI accepting his [Naqvi’s] offer”.<sup>20</sup> On 3–4 September 1947, the newly christened Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations (MEA and CR) returned the ball to the MHA’s court by asking “whether the MHA contemplate employing Mr Naqvi” and declaring, without any explanation, “we do not seem to require the services of Mr Naqvi”.<sup>21</sup>

One week later, it was the MHA’s turn to pass the parcel back to the MEA. The former informed the latter that “the MHA do not contemplate employing Mr G. A. Naqvi, IP”. Their position was that if it was decided by the GOI to retain Naqvi’s services, it was the UP government that had to make that call, for it was the provincial government that was “liable to employ him on the termination of his deputation” and was further “liable to pay him compensation, if they do not then retain his services”. However, as Naqvi was still on deputation with the MEA, the MHA wanted “to be informed at an early date for how long the MEA propose to retain Mr Naqvi’s services”,<sup>22</sup> before approaching the UP government.

It took the MEA almost a month to reply that it did not “require the services of Mr Naqvi any longer”. Washing its hands of Naqvi altogether, it submitted that his services were actually placed “temporarily at the disposal of HMG [His Majesty’s Government]” and “he may be reverted to the UP government as early as possible”.<sup>23</sup> It was time to approach the UP’s Congress government for a decision on Naqvi’s desire to continue in service. The chief secretary of UP, B. N. Jha (ICS) was accordingly written to on 9 October 1947. He was brought up-to-date with the to-and-fro between MHA and MEA of the last three months, starting from Naqvi’s “desire to continue in service”. As neither of the GOI ministries contemplated employing him and he was serving at the British Embassy (Tehran) only temporarily, both the ministries wanted to get rid of him to UP at the earliest and impressed upon Jha that “the provincial government should take a decision urgently”.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup>28 July 1947, B. N. Jha (CS, UP) to MHA (No. 6597/II/35C-47); 19/23 European IP officers in UP wanted to retire on 15 August or continue for some months; total officers in UP (excluding leave) – 54 Indian ICS, 19 European ICS, 31 Indian IP, 23 European IP; on deputation – 28 Indian ICS, 17 European ICS, 3 Indian IP, 9 European IP. Muslim officers who desired transfer to Pakistan: serving under the UP government – ICS – Chaudhary Akbar Husain, Mr M. W. Abbasi, Mr G. A. Faruqi, Mr S. G. Ahmad and Mr S. S. Jafri; on deputation to GOI – ICS – SAT Naqvi, Mr Akhtar Hussain, Mr G. A. Madani, S. I. Haque and S. M. Yusuf. IP – Kazim Raza, Abad Ahmad Khan, Nazir Alam, M. Abu Zafar, Rafiq Ahmad, S. Imdad Hasan.

<sup>19</sup>14 August 1947, GOI (Home), File No. 170/7/47 – Ests. (UP), MHA (Establishment Branch).

<sup>20</sup>14 August 1947, MHA office memorandum, 170/17/47-Ests.

<sup>21</sup>3–4 September 1947 (U.O. no. 2683-EII/47), MEA and CR office memorandum.

<sup>22</sup>10 September 1947 (170/17/47-Ests), MHA office memorandum.

<sup>23</sup>6 October 1947 (D.2773-EII/47), MEA and CR office memorandum.

<sup>24</sup>9 October 1947 (170/17/47-Ests), BD Tewari (MHA) to BN Jha (CS, UP).

By now, as we glimpsed above, the 'general exodus' of Muslim officers from the UP was on. Among the police especially, by 1948, 62 per cent of officers in the province were Hindu and 13.8 per cent Muslim.<sup>25</sup> Belying Pandit Pant's boast of having good equable relations with them, but instead, revealing his "overbearing and revengeful" attitude towards his Muslim officers, borne perhaps out of his sense of 'Hindu-ness',<sup>26</sup> all Muslim IP officers had left for Pakistan and only two Muslim ICS officers had stayed on, one as chief commissioner of Delhi.<sup>27</sup> This proved prophetic the warning given by the last British governor of the province, Francis Wylie, to Viceroy Mountbatten five days before the transfer of power that "Pant would have his pound of flesh".<sup>28</sup> Jha's reply began factually that as on 15 August, "Naqvi was on deputation to the GOI" and "was not in service under this government", so it was "for the GOI to take a decision" before making a strange outburst: "As regards the need of this province...it has been possible and will continue to be possible to manage...without him. This government do not need his services".<sup>29</sup>

## Part 2

Mandarins at the MHA were left scratching their heads at this sarcasm-laced reply. One of them could not understand how "the mere fact that he was on deputation to the GOI on 15 August 1947 [meant] that he ceased to have any connection with the provincial government". He considered, not without reason, that after all Naqvi was "still borne on their cadre and the primary responsibility to retain him in their service is that of theirs". He was also quick to point out that "by refusing to accept this responsibility, the provincial government can in no case refuse to accept liability to pay compensation to Mr Naqvi, if it is decided that he should not be retained in service". Did he already divine this undignified and unjust desire of the UP government? He noted that despite saying that "it has been possible and will continue to be possible to manage the work without Mr Naqvi", the UP government "wants to avoid saying in clear terms that they do not propose to retain him in service".<sup>30</sup>

Another civil servant wondered over the "strange attitude" of the UP government and, before reproaching them for it, wanted to ascertain from the EAD, "whether Mr Naqvi's services were placed in their disposal for any definite period or whether there was any understanding that he would be employed under that department indefinitely for the rest of his career".<sup>31</sup> When the MEA replied, it provided ammunition to chide the UP government for their insolent attitude towards Naqvi. It reminded the home ministry that as recently as 28 August 1946, Lucknow had requested "for the reversion of Mr Naqvi on the ground that they were short of senior police officers for maintenance of law and order"; whereupon, the

<sup>25</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, 'The flux of the matter', p. 252.

<sup>26</sup>Gould, *Hindu Nationalism*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> 2 August 1947, Wylie to Mountbatten, MB1/D1, Mountbatten Papers (Hartley Library), Southampton.

<sup>28</sup> 10 August 1947, Wylie to Mountbatten, L/PJ/5/276, India Office Records, British Library, London.

<sup>29</sup> 17 October 1947 (9049/II-47), BN Jha (CS, UP) to BD Tewari (MHA).

<sup>30</sup> 20 October 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>31</sup> 20 October 1947, MHA's note.

late-EAD had obtained Lucknow's consent to retain Naqvi on deputation for another year. That duration was coming to an end in early November and the MEA was categorical that

There was absolutely no ground for retaining Mr Naqvi permanently under the GOI. He was on deputation purely on a temporary basis...His services are no longer required by this Ministry and he should be reverted to his parent province without delay.<sup>32</sup>

As far as the MHA was concerned, this reply by the MEA parted the clouds and clarified the position. It was now ready to take on the "untenable attitude" of the UP government and decided to send a reply to Lucknow that will make them realise "that the boot is on the other leg".<sup>33</sup> While his file was being pushed three ways – notes were getting typed and comments were being scribbled – G. A. Naqvi himself was far away in Tehran. He was still serving His Majesty's Government's British Embassy and was still on their payroll.

In his first intervention in the imbroglio on his own future, Naqvi wrote a long letter dated 20–21 October to his immediate superior, the British charge d' affairs, which completely changed the scenario. Naqvi began with his opting "for service in India" in July 1947. He next brought up the fact that owing to his deputation, he was away from the UP and India "for nearly 6 years" and, thus, was not "in close touch with conditions in *my* country". He had been "under the impression that the option [between Pakistan and India] was to be exercised purely on territorial grounds of residence" and as he belonged to the UP, he had opted for it. Given where he was, he had "had no opportunity of consulting any friends or relatives and did not know what choice they had made". Some GOI officers, who had passed through Tehran in the summer of 1947, had also given him to understand that "the choice was being exercised by officers in India on purely territorial grounds. It was under this impression that in all good faith, I [he] had made my choice final".

Naqvi's dilemma here can be situated in the scholarship on the underlying tension between two principles of citizenship: *Jus Soli* (birth) and *Jus Sanguinis* (blood).<sup>34</sup> The territorial, and thus perhaps more inclusive nature of the former, is in contrast to the ethno-cultural, religio-communal or national identity(s) of the latter and this tension dominated the conception of citizenship in 1947 as former subjects of empire began becoming citizen(s) of nation states.<sup>35</sup> Post-1947, the Indian state developed "increasingly hard edges", moving – in practice – from *Jus Soli* to *Jus Sanguinis* and discriminating against "Muslims and other caste and class minorities".<sup>36</sup> Second, histories of South-Asian citizenship at this time reveal the emergence of religious minorities "as a distinct legal category of citizens who were not fully protected by the states within which they lived". These were 'minority-citizens', a product as

<sup>32</sup>21 October 1947, MEA's note containing reference to the UP government's letter no. 0-233 (II)/11-351-1942 dated 28 August 1946; EAD's letter no. F23 (18)-E/-46, dated 15 October 1946 and the UP government's reply, no. 0-2597/II-351-42, dated 7 November 1946.

<sup>33</sup>21 October 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>34</sup>See, among others, N. G. Jayal, *Citizenship and its Discontents: An Indian History* (Harvard, 2013).

<sup>35</sup>The same tension is evident in the recovery operation of abducted women as discussed by R. Menon and K. Bhasin, *Borders & Boundaries: Women in India's Politician* (Rutgers, 1998) and U. Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* (Duke, 2000).

<sup>36</sup>T. Hansen, "Niraja Gopal Jayal: citizenship and its discontents: an Indian history", *The American Historical Review* (2014) 119 (5): 1669, doi: 10.1093/ahr/119.5.1669 (last accessed 16 December 2016).

much of ‘bureaucratic rationality’ and ‘governmentality’ as of “violent interactions between government and a range of non-state actors”.<sup>37</sup>

Faced with the prospect of becoming a ‘minority-citizen’ from being a ‘colonial subject’, Naqvi’s initial understanding that citizenship was based on territory would be rudely shattered, leading to his submission to a religion-based citizenship, understandable in the words of Niraja Gopal Jayal that legal citizenship in South Asia was “deeply imbricated in religion”.<sup>38</sup> Naqvi revealed that he had requested a short leave before making his choice between India and Pakistan, so as “to see conditions and to consult friends and relatives” but he “could not be spared from the Embassy in view of the heavy consular work relating to both India and Pakistan”. It was only now that Naqvi’s letter gave the first intimation of what was to come: “If I had been allowed leave at the time and had visited India, I would have known that all my near-relatives were going to Pakistan and I would have certainly opted for service in Pakistan”.

Claiming regretfully that, given these circumstances, he had opted “in complete ignorance of conditions of life and service in India and in [UP] through no fault of [his]”, Naqvi stated that he had “recently been to India on short leave and was in Delhi also”.<sup>39</sup> There, he found that most of his relatives had opted for Pakistan and he had “had to remove [his] children to Karachi, where they [had] joined the Sind University”. As he “could not know of these conditions and other violent changes which [had] taken place in India at the time [he] made [his] choice”, he was now putting in a request with the Partition Council “to cancel my choice for service in India and to accept my final option for service anywhere in Pakistan”. Naqvi concluded by pointing that “in view of changed conditions...it [would] be extremely difficult for [him] to live or serve in India”, and as he had been, anyway, away from his province and his work therein for nearly six years, he had “no doubt, [the] provincial government [would] have no objection to [his] choice”.<sup>40</sup>

In writing so, Naqvi was, at one level, revealing the “distrust and discrimination that Muslims, who remained in India after August 1947, faced” and, at another, seeking a way of defining his newly-fragile and contested nature of belonging in partitioned India.<sup>41</sup> For, he was neither a ‘migrant’ nor a ‘refugee’ yet and “citizenship is not just a legal status, but a set of practices [and] an instrument”.<sup>42</sup> Here, it is also pertinent to note that “anxieties were raised about [those] whose families had migrated to Pakistan without them...initially accepted for safety reasons”. In a year’s time, it would not be acceptable and the UP government and the GOI would insist that “a government servant should not have his family stationed elsewhere in the manner which might cause embarrassment in the discharge of his duties”.<sup>43</sup> These anxieties were symptomatic of the precarious interregnum of Partition and its ambiguous aftermath, which saw legal citizenship being “coloured by experience of violence and migration”. They also symbolised the restrictive and stringent emerging rules of citizenship,

<sup>37</sup>See Joya Chatterji, “South Asian histories of citizenship, 1946–1970), *The Historical Journal*, LV,4, (December 2012), pp. 1049–1071.

<sup>38</sup>Jayal, *Citizenship and its Discontents*, pp. 28–9 and p. 61.

<sup>39</sup>File No. F.10 (54) – ME, Ministry of External Affairs (ME Branch).

<sup>40</sup>20–21 October 1947, Naqvi to the British Embassy (Tehran).

<sup>41</sup>See T. Sherman, *Muslim Belonging in Secular India* (Cambridge, 2015).

<sup>42</sup>Sherman, *Muslim Belonging in Secular India*, p. 10 and Jayal, *Citizenship and its Discontents*, p. 95.

<sup>43</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 248.

which made it “harder for Muslims to claim Indian citizenship”.<sup>44</sup> Naqvi’s representation was accompanied with a recommendation from M. J. Creswell, the British charge d’ affairs in Tehran. In it, Creswell confirmed that it was true, as:

Mr Naqvi says, that he applied for leave to visit India in July or August last in order to see things for himself before deciding finally for which service to apply and that owing to pressure of work at this Embassy, he could not be spared until September, when he was allowed to proceed on short leave to Delhi.

In these circumstances and “in view of his long connexion with this Embassy and excellent work”, Creswell strongly recommended that Naqvi’s “present request be favourably considered by both Dominion governments”. Creswell understood that “several other Indian members of the SoS services who opted finally for service under one or other government [had] since been allowed to change their option”.<sup>45</sup> Taken together, these two representations impressed the MHA enough for a deputy secretary to admit that this was a “rather interesting case”.<sup>46</sup> They did not, however, budge the UP government from its position. Chief Secretary B. N. Jha wrote to the MHA on 4 November 1947 that “it is for the GOI to take a decision in the light of [earlier] observations made by this government and this government have no further comments to make”.<sup>47</sup> What about the MEA? Its understanding, unlike Creswell’s, was that “a final option [was] incapable of being changed and consequently Mr Naqvi’s request should not be acceded to”. Again, unlike Creswell, it was “unaware, whether any other member of the services [had] been allowed to change his final option”.<sup>48</sup> It wanted the MHA to approach the Partition Council.

Before continuing on Naqvi’s paper trail, it is pertinent here to ponder over his repeated references to “violent changes in conditions in India and Delhi”, which he saw and felt during his short trip in autumn of 1947. The vulnerabilities and fragilities of the Indian Muslims post-Partition were in a category of their own compared to those of Hindu and Sikh refugees. While in 1946–1947, all weak and poor lives – whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh – were cheap, depending on where they found themselves, in 1947–1948, the Indian Muslims had an especially beleaguered time – as much at the hands of the actors of the new Indian state as from the agents of the old Indian society. While much work exists on the ‘communalised’ violence or violence between communities, the role of state structures has been put under spotlight only in recent times.<sup>49</sup> Their attitude towards Indian Muslims was charged with accusations of almost personal responsibility for Partition and actions towards them contained random punishments, arbitrary arrests, mass eviction, property seizure and large-scale killings, regardless of their, at times, incoherent institutional functioning. How to effectively control this, posed questions, not just of the imbricated collusion with society and of the control, legitimacy and sovereignty of the state, but also for influential individual interventions to the contrary from Nehru downwards.

<sup>44</sup>Sherman, *Muslim Belonging in Secular India*, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup>21 October 1947 (No. 161), British Embassy (Tehran) to Secretary, MEA.

<sup>46</sup>30 October 1947, MHA’s note.

<sup>47</sup>4 November 1947 (9295/II-351-42), B. N. Jha (CS, UP) to MHA.

<sup>48</sup>5 November 1947, MEA’s note (6923-E-I/47).

<sup>49</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 22.



The following all speak of the “unspeakable horrors” of violence in Delhi, UP and Bihar, respectively *after* Partition.<sup>50</sup> (1) The diaries of Hasrat Mohani (1875–1951), the noted Urdu poet and political activist, who had championed Tilak’s trial in 1908, coined ‘Inquilab Zindabad’ in 1921, who was associated with the Congress Party since 1921, made a member of the Constituent Assembly and penned the popular ghazal *Chupke-chupke raat din, aansoo Bahana Yaad Hai*; or (2) the memoirs of Anis Kidwai of the Kidwai family from Barabanki, whose husband Shafi Ahmad Kidwai, administrator at Mussoorie municipality, was murdered while her brother-in-law Rafi Ahmad Kidwai (1894–1954) was the home minister in the Pant Ministry of 1946–1947 before becoming independent India’s first minister for communication; or (3) the accounts of Dr Syed Mahmud (1889–1971), close friend of Nehru since 1922–1923, active in Congress politics from 1921 and holder of multiple ministries in Bihar during 1937–1939 and 1946–1952 governments. In the month that Naqvi travelled to UP, Hindi was made the *sole* language of administration, cow-slaughter was banned and “the atmosphere was so bad for Muslims”, recalled an Aligarh citizen, “that everybody wanted to migrate”.<sup>51</sup>

While Naqvi was in Delhi, a bloody and enforced “Muslim exodus from Delhi” was taking place, which apart from a few credible works in recent years,<sup>52</sup> still awaits a full reckoning. In 1941–1942, when Naqvi had last been in Delhi, Muslims there numbered 304, 501 (33 per cent of the population). By the 1951 census, their numbers had dwindled to 99, 501 (5.71 per cent).<sup>53</sup> In between, more than 300,000 Muslims were pushed out from Delhi in September–October 1947, 44,000 Muslim houses were occupied in old Delhi alone and around 20,000–25,000 were killed, despite the “religious neutrality of the Indian State”.<sup>54</sup> Delhi became a city of ‘mixed zones’ and ‘Muslim zones’, of ‘empty houses’ and ‘evacuee property’, of ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘occupation’ and ‘camps’ and ‘dumps’ and “those who wished to go” and “those who wished to stay”.<sup>55</sup> This violence cannot be simply contextualised in the longer trajectory of pre-Partition violence from August 1946 as well as in the tropes of action–reaction, given the refugee influx into Delhi from Punjab and Sindh.

For what befell the Indian Muslims was not so much or only from the hands of a torn society in a fit of spontaneous passion and baser human instincts but was, at places, at the behest of, in collusion with and, at times, led by the forces of the independent Indian

<sup>50</sup>See F. Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces’ Muslims, 1860–1923* (Cambridge, 1974) and *The ‘Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (Delhi, 2001); C. M. Naim, “The Maulana who loved Krishna”, *Outlook* (12 January 2012) <http://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/the-maulana-who-loved-krishna/279545> (accessed 2 October 2016) and “A sentimental essay in three scenes”, [http://muslimleague.uchicago.edu/Naim\\_KeynoteML.pdf](http://muslimleague.uchicago.edu/Naim_KeynoteML.pdf) (accessed 2 October 2016); also, N. A. Siddiqui, *Hasrat Mohani aur Inquilab-i-Azadi* (Karachi, 2004), A. Kidwai, *In Freedom’s Shade* (Delhi, 2011) and V. N. Datta and B. Cleghorn (eds), *A Nationalist Muslim and Indian Politics* (Delhi, 1974).

<sup>51</sup>E. S. Mann, *Boundaries and Identities: Muslims, Work and Status in Aligarh* (Delhi, 1992), pp. 60, 176; also see M. Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India’s Muslims since Independence* (Delhi, 1997).

<sup>52</sup>See “Delhi 1947–48” in G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 121–51 and “Partition and independence in Delhi, 1947–48”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXXII, 36 (06 September, 1997), pp. 2261–2272; p. 2263; “Muslim exodus from Delhi” in Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*, pp. 19–44 and “Partition and the transitional state in India” in T. Sherman, *State Violence and Punishment in India* (London, 2010), pp. 133–150.

<sup>53</sup>See P. Chopra, *Delhi Gazetteer* (New Delhi, 1976), p. 130 and V. K. R. V. Rao and P. B. Desai, *Greater Delhi: A Study in Urbanisation, 1940–1957* (Delhi, 1965), p. 55. I am grateful to Rotem Geva for these references and figures.

<sup>54</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 21, 27.

<sup>55</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, pp. 27–36.

state – notwithstanding its meta-narrative and self-image of syncretism and secularism – which forced the Indian Muslims into a pact of ‘protection’ from the very state agents that ‘persecuted’ them, on the latter’s terms of preferences, prejudices and political supremacy.<sup>56</sup> An illustration of this is the fact that:

while there had been 6 Hindus, 5 Sikhs, 9 Anglo-Indians and 13 Muslims in the senior ranks of Delhi’s police at the end of May 1947, by the end of August there were 14 Hindus, 6 Sikhs, 7 Anglo-Indians and 7 Muslims in the force. A month later there were no senior Muslim police officers left in Delhi,<sup>57</sup>

while 75 per cent of all Muslims left the police force.<sup>58</sup> And yet, as Pakistan’s Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan would tell them: “Pakistan does not want that Muslims from regions other than East Punjab leave their *watan* and property and come to Pakistan. It is the duty of the GOI to protect [them]”.<sup>59</sup> As Dilip Menon has put it, the multiple transitions from colony to nation(s) and subjects to citizens were thus moulded by the “travails of Partition, uncertain and nascent states(s), and political pragmatism and prejudice”.<sup>60</sup>

### Part 3

On 7 November 1947, the day Naqvi’s year-long deputation with British Embassy (Tehran) was to end, Naqvi wrote a longer, more detailed and more candid letter to the secretary (MEA), explaining his position and outlining the reasons for his dilemma and second, now third, thoughts. He began on a surrendering note by applying “to retire on proportionate pension under premature retirement rules...in case suitable appointment cannot be found for [him] by the Pakistan government”. Invoking his entitlements as an officer of the IP, “to retire before 14 August 1947 and to be granted compensation under clause 5 (2) and (3) of the announcement of the Viceroy of 30 April 1947”, he also asked for “leave admissible to [him] on full pay and half pay preparatory to retirement”. Naqvi’s mindset can be gauged from his next sentence in which he declared that he was “prepared to forego any extra rights with regard to leave or pension which [he had] earned by remaining in service after 14 August 1947” and desired that “[his] retirement may take effect as if applied for before 14 August 1947”. Since then, anyway, he had been serving neither India nor Pakistan but the British and had been paid by them. Reiterating his peculiar position over the last 5 ½–6 years, his misapprehensions of ‘conditions’ in India, his ignorance of his rights with regard to retirement and compensation, his inability to consult other members of his service or his service association (IPA of UP), the denial of privilege leave to him in June–July 1947 owing to pressure of work “relating to GOI”, Naqvi reinforced his request for retirement – in case his services were not transferred to Pakistan – with some new facts.

<sup>56</sup>See F. Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Harvard, 2013), S. Kapila, “A history of violence”, *Modern Intellectual History*, VII, 2 (August 2010), pp. 437–457 and S. Purushotham, “Internal violence: the ‘Police Action’ in Hyderabad”, *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 57 (2) (2015), pp. 435–466.

<sup>57</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, pp. 250–251.

<sup>58</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 25.

<sup>59</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 43.

<sup>60</sup>D. Menon. Review of Niraja Gopal Jayal: *Citizenship and Its Discontents: An Indian History*. H-Asia, H-Net Reviews, February 2015, <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=40925> (accessed 16 December 2016).

He revealed that in 1943, when he was working in the British Embassy (Tehran), a number of Sikh merchants (Sardar Sahib, Sardar Saheb Singh, Akali Narain Singh, Sardar Chet Singh and Sardar Ujagar Singh) were expelled from Iran by the Iranian authorities, with the approval of the British Embassy and the GOI, as their activities were regarded as 'prejudicial' to both India and Iran. These persons, upon their return to India, had started an agitation against him, attributing their expulsion to his "communal" bias. Prominent Sikh leaders in India supported them by writing letters to senior GOI officials on their behalf. Upon enquiry, the allegations by the Sikhs were found to be "unfounded and unjustified", both by the embassy and the GOI. Still, the episode left a whiff of hostility against Naqvi and members of the Sikh community in Iran had, from time to time, complained against him. Since then, Naqvi continued, he had sent reports to the GOI on the members of the local Indian community, most of whom were Sikhs, which were "not very complimentary to them and of which they [had] information". This was not fanciful, for one of the Naqvi files 'missing' in the archives is titled "Major Naqvi's proposal for taking precautions to prevent his periodical reports on Persia from passing into the possession of anyone outside the Embassy".<sup>61</sup>

Second, as consul, Naqvi had held that "the prestige of a country in foreign countries [depended] largely on its nationals and that in order to strengthen relations with Iran, it was desirable to encourage educated and cultured Muslims and Parsis to come to [Iran], as they [had] social, cultural and religious affinities with the people of Iran". He now wondered, "whether it was as a result of this view or it just so happened, most of the officers and men appointed in Iran during [his] time were Muslims and some Muslims and Parsis were also given trade facilities with Iran by the Commerce Department". This was strongly resented by the Sikhs in Iran and in 1946, headed by Sardar Mohendra Singh, they had made several representations to the British Embassy (Tehran) and to the GOI and agitated a great deal, "holding [Naqvi] responsible for all this and accusing [him] of communal bias and of trying to help Muslim businessmen". Naqvi insisted that he had "had nothing to do with the Commerce Department [who] had their own Trade Commissioner [in Tehran] dealing with trade matters" and, yet, the Sikhs in Iran kept on complaining against him, "on account of the resentment they [had] for the expulsion of their relatives and friends in 1943".

Naqvi believed that in July 1947, Sardar Mohendra Singh, and some others, had gone to India with the object of meeting senior officials of the GOI to 'complain' against Naqvi, "to try and harm [him in] any way possible". As some of the Sikh merchants who had been expelled from Iran in 1943 and their relatives were residing in Delhi and some in the UP, Naqvi had "no doubt [that] they [would] continue to misrepresent [him] in some form or other, if [he] [remained] in service in India. In view of their strong and persistent hostility, [he had] every reason to feel that it [would] be difficult for [him] to serve in India". The letter concluded in wistful tones. Naqvi had done 21 ½ years of service, having joined the IP in the UP in 1926, "as a result of open competition". He had a good record of service, having been "commended for good work throughout" and "never had any adverse entry or remark". He did not want to apply for retirement, but for his conviction that this was "the only course open" to him. Rather self-effacingly, he put that his early retirement "would not cause any

<sup>61</sup> File No. 87 – EP, External Affairs Department (EP Branch).

inconvenience”, as his province had been without his services for six years. Naqvi hoped that this long explanation would “satisfy the GOI, the UP government [and] the Governor-General” that he was “justified in requesting to be allowed to retire”, if his transfer to Pakistan could not be arranged, and expressed “gratefulness in anticipation of the governor-general’s sanction of his retirement”.<sup>62</sup> In Naqvi’s fears here, from the Sikh merchants and their families, one finds echoes of what Yoginder Sikand poignantly said: “Partition did not solve [inter-communal] relations. Rather, it inter-nationalised it”,<sup>63</sup> and, it can be added, inter-governmentalised it, as meanings and definitions of ‘loyalty’, ‘suspicious’ and ‘jealousy’ within the old–new state(s) and society(s) became sites of potentially violent contestations.

Once again, Naqvi’s representation was accompanied with a Briton’s recommendation; this time, from J.H.L.E. Rougetel, who supported Naqvi’s statements regarding retirement application, proportionate pension, compensation claims and the denied leave. As regards the statements about ‘Sikh hostility’, Rougetel wrote that it had been “verified from the archives of this Embassy that in 1942–3, Mr Naqvi took part in certain enquiries connected with the security of the British occupation forces, which resulted in the repatriation of the Sikh merchants named”. In this connection, Sir C. P. Skrine (ICS, 1912),<sup>64</sup> who took over the post of Additional Counsellor for Indian Affairs in March 1946, informed Rougetel that soon after his arrival, he had received complaints against Mr Naqvi from a number of Sikhs in Tehran, “from which it was clear that they knew of and resented the part played by him in the above mentioned enquiries”. Rougetel confirmed that Naqvi’s work at Tehran had been “uniformly conscientious and diligent” and he was convinced that “neither personal nor communal prejudice entered into his reports against Indians suspected of seditious activities during the war”. Rougetel continued, in a rather ironic vein in the light of all that had happened since: “in his diplomatic and cultural work here, [Naqvi had] consistently laboured for the ideal of a *united* India and for its honour and prestige in the eyes of Persians”. Rougetel concluded by supporting Naqvi’s “application for service under the government of Pakistan” and hoped that “in the event of its being unsuccessful, he [would] be permitted to retire on proportionate pension and entitled compensation”.<sup>65</sup> The reiteration of the request by Naqvi of his ‘change of option’, accompanied by a longer explanation, was grabbed at, this time, with both hands by an MHA, floundering between an adamant UP government and a reluctant MEA. As an official wrote with palpable relief:

The GOI (MEA and MHA) do not require the services of Mr Naqvi. At the same time, it is possible for the UP government to manage the work of the province without Mr Naqvi. In the circumstances, we need not object to Mr Naqvi’s change of his option for service in Pakistan. We may therefore request the Partition Secretariat to take necessary action.<sup>66</sup>

Another simply scribbled on the margins, “I agree. This change will be *in the interests of all concerned*”.<sup>67</sup> Yet another was almost grateful: “The position has since been automatically

<sup>62</sup> 7 November 1947, Naqvi to the Secretary (MEA and CR).

<sup>63</sup> Y. Sikand, *Muslims in India Since 1947: Islamic Perspectives on Inter-Faith Relations* (London, 2004), p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Clarmont Percival Skrine (1888–1974) joined the Indian Political Service in 1915 and served in Kerman, Kashgar, Madras and Tehran.

<sup>65</sup> 12 November 1947 (325/10/47, No. 173), Rougetel (British Embassy, Tehran) to Secretary (MEA and CR).

<sup>66</sup> 10 November 1947, MHA’s note.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

settled by Mr Naqvi wishing to change his option for service in Pakistan. We may agree to allow this change so far as the Union of India is concerned".<sup>68</sup> The UP government was astonishingly prompt in conveying its consent. A telegram arrived from them within three days of their indicating that "they accept his option for Pakistan".<sup>69</sup> The MEA's volte-face and participation in creating this consensus that Naqvi would be better moved to Pakistan is particularly glaring for their initial reaction to Naqvi's first representation, as we saw above, was that "a final option [was] incapable of being changed and consequently Mr Naqvi's request should not be acceded to". How does one begin to account for this volte-face except by noting Naqvi's bringing up the Akalis and the MEA buckling under the weight of its responsibility to make its officer feel secure? And, as the Calcutta-based English-daily, *The Statesman*, asked, "how were the Muslims of India to prove their loyalty when the very act of fleeing in fear from their homes was interpreted as a sign of disloyalty and extra-territorial attachment?"

That this spared very few, even highly placed people, can be seen from the fact that in October 1947, the very month of Naqvi's first letter, Chaudhary Khaliqzaman – leader of the Muslim League in the Constituent Assembly and a public figure of long-standing and association with the Nehru family in the UP – "unexpectedly and abruptly" left for Pakistan. Later, Z. H. Lari – deputy leader of the Muslim League in the UP Legislative Assembly – followed suit. These departures have to be understood as "primarily a question of where one could live in relative mental and physical peace" as Gyanendra Pandey put it.<sup>70</sup> In any event, the file now moved to the Partition Secretariat, who pronounced their verdict on Naqvi on 17 November 1947. In doing so, they also made it clear where the responsibility lay for Naqvi's change of heart.

Mr Naqvi's [offer to continue in service] has not yet been accepted by the UP government and the GOI...It should be easy therefore to deal with his case *de novo* by treating his present request for transfer to service in Pakistan as his reply to Home Department's [questionnaire] of June 1947...All that seems necessary is that the MHA or MEA & CR should inform the Pakistan government that the UP government and the GOI have accepted his present request...His employment in the British Embassy (Tehran) from 15 August onwards should be formally regularised as a case of deputation of an officer of the Pakistan government and the question of his further retention in his present post, if considered necessary, will have to be settled by his present employers with the Pakistan government.<sup>71</sup>

Just when all decks seemed to have been cleared in Tehran, New Delhi and Lucknow, and Naqvi seemed all set to effect his change of option, news came from Karachi which nobody had anticipated. On 25 November 1947, Agha Hilaly (ICS-Madras, 1936, who would go on to be Pakistan's envoy in the USSR, India, UK and the USA) surprised the MEA by writing on behalf of the government of Pakistan that they were "unable to accept Mr G. A. Naqvi's change of option" and requested that "he may kindly be informed accordingly".<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> 11 November 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>69</sup> 14 November 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>70</sup> Pandey, "Can a Muslim be an Indian?", p. 627.

<sup>71</sup> 17 November 1947, Partition Secretariat's Note.

<sup>72</sup> 25 November 1947 (D.1375-I&U/47), Agha Hilaly (for Secretary, GOP) to Secretary (MEA and CR).

This response from the nascent Pakistani state can be situated in the recent scholarly attention given to the policy(s) adopted by the provincial governments of Sindh and West Punjab, from early 1948 onwards, on the question of how to absorb officials migrating from India. In February 1948, the Sindh government issued a circular that sought to protect the “promotion prospects of Sindhi Muslims”.<sup>73</sup> In June, men like Naqvi, ex-police officers from India, met the province’s additional inspector general to request recruitment “from among their ranks”. In August, they (along with their civilian counterparts) petitioned central and provincial governments “to absorb all such displaced officers”, and sought to meet Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. They argued for “special consideration” by virtue of the sacrifices they had made to come to Pakistan, which had left many “financially weak” and unable to find new careers.<sup>74</sup>

But, as has been shown by Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “self-styled locals soon expressed deep unhappiness at the employment of those they deemed to be newcomers”. The lingering issue of retrenchment of excess staff from war years was overlain by the issue of so-called ‘deputationists’ from India, who, they felt, were usurping “the chances which otherwise [would have] been open to [them]”. A letter published in *Dawn* in May 1948 protested that it was “highly unfair to import a person of non-Pakistan nationality”. Similarly and simultaneously, the government of West Punjab also passed orders in January 1948 that “barred Muslims from UP from entering the services there”.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, 12,000 government employees from Delhi, UP and elsewhere, who had ‘opted’ for Pakistan and had taken refuge from violence in camps like the Purana Qila, found themselves unwelcome in Pakistan. Their arrival was ‘contested’, others following suit were sought to be ‘deterred’, migrants from outside Punjab were understood as “now nationals of India” and the government of Pakistan refused to let its territory become a ‘dumping’ ground of Muslims.<sup>76</sup>

#### Part 4

Ten days later, on 5 December 1947, Naqvi’s Tehran tenure finally came to an end, even as he had nowhere to make a new beginning. In this, he shared the *bad-qismat* [misfortune] of many, ‘*Jin ke liye Na Hind mein jagah hai Na Pakistan mein thikana*’ [for whom there is neither place in India nor refuge in Pakistan].<sup>77</sup> He relinquished his charge as Additional Consul for Indian Affairs to D. W. T. Smithies, Consul and was issued his last-pay certificate. On deputation since 15 August, he was being paid a total of Rs. 3457.80/ as salary after PLI and GPF deductions of Rs. 282.80/. Recoveries from his pay up to August 1947 had been made, but for after that period, no recoveries could be made as he was paid in sterling on deputation. He had also been advanced one month’s leave salary of Rs. 1450/ which was to be recovered in three instalments and an advance travel allowance of Rs. 7348/ to be recovered in one instalment, even as it was not yet clear by which of the three governments

<sup>73</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 253.

<sup>74</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 259.

<sup>75</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, pp. 260–261.

<sup>76</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, pp. 34–42.

<sup>77</sup>Abdul Ghafoor to Rajendra Prasad in Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 33.

– GOI, GOP or the UP government. On the afternoon of 5 December 1947, Naqvi left for Karachi and gave his forwarding address as c/o Syed Kazim Raza, Inspector-General of Police there.<sup>78</sup> Raza's case is curious too, for in June 1947 he had intimated to the MHA that he wanted to continue in UP, but, when that provincial government sent the consolidated list of officers opting for Pakistan in July, his name was on that list.<sup>79</sup>

In the month from 14 November, when Naqvi's file had left the MHA for the Partition Secretariat to 15 December, when it made its way back, much water had flown down the Yamuna. The issue at hand had shifted from Naqvi's continuing in service, to his change of option, to Pakistan's rejection of that possibility, to the consequent premature retirement, to now deciding on his proportionate pension and compensation. As they looked back at the whole saga from June 1947, mandarins at the MHA ever-so-slightly started to rewrite it, by shifting some chronology and stressing some emphases, to suit their position. For instance, they now asserted that "*before*, however, a decision could be taken about his retention or otherwise in service", Naqvi had asked that "*he* may be allowed to change his option to Pakistan since *he* contends that *he* had opted for India in complete ignorance of the conditions in this country", and that "in view of changed conditions, *he* found it difficult to live or serve in India". They may not have *communicated* their decision to him but, as we repeatedly saw above, each one of them – MHA, MEA and the UP Government – had taken the decision not to retain Naqvi. And, so naturally and quite enthusiastically, even if not initially as in the case of the MEA, they had supported his request because, as we saw above, "it was in the interests of all concerned". Yet, if responsibility for the narrative thus far was sought to be put on Naqvi's shoulders, an exercise that was rather easy to do given his physical absence, it could not be denied that

Mr Naqvi had first opted finally for India and not Pakistan. It would have been Pakistan's responsibility to take a decision about [him] had Mr Naqvi opted for Pakistan in the very beginning. However, at this stage, Pakistan is not bound to accept his change of option.

The MHA could not evade the twin, related matters of pension and compensation, now that Naqvi had no employment avenues left. But before it tackled paras 5 (2) and (3) of the viceroy's announcement of 30 April 1947, under which Naqvi sought premature retirement, proportionate pension and compensation, the MHA could not resist a swipe at him, which revealed more about its mindset than Naqvi's:

Mr Naqvi has emphasised at every step that it is impossible for him to continue to serve in India. From his two representations, it is clear beyond doubt that Mr Naqvi does not want to serve the Dominion ("owe allegiance to the Union") of India. In view of this and also because Pakistan has rejected his request, we have no course open but to allow him to retire...The retirement may take effect on the expiry of his leave from 5 December 1947.

Through the sentiments, words and actions of the MHA and the MEA, one can see the stresses and suspicions of separatism borne by Indian Muslims, as they tried to lead their lives in independent India. They were 'fair game' as much for the politics of old nationalists, as

<sup>78</sup>From Tehran to UKHC (Delhi), 5 December 1947.

<sup>79</sup>14 August 1947, MHA's note.

for the processes of new state. This suspicion, along with a scramble for 'spoils', also explains the hostility shown by the UP government. As regards compensation, the MHA's position was that as Naqvi was "not prepared to serve the Dominion of India...there [was] no ground for the grant of compensation". In a final unjust and ironical touch, the MHA made light of Naqvi's apprehensions about "the alleged continued Sikh hostility". It coolly remarked that:

Mr Naqvi belongs to the UP where Sikhs are not powerful either as a community or as a political party. It appears that resort to this plea has been made simply to make out a case for compensation. Mr Naqvi can hardly have a legitimate cause for anxiety about his future.<sup>80</sup>

The MHA also decided to bypass the UP government on premature retirement, proportionate pension and compensation issues, perhaps with good reason, as Lucknow had made it amply clear that neither had they any need for Naqvi nor would they "object to his premature retirement". Second, technically speaking, Naqvi had "applied for retirement and it [was] not that his services [were] being terminated by the UP government or the GOI", no matter that the latter had driven him to that situation. But this voluntary retirement made not Lucknow but the GOI "liable for the payment of any compensation", a question that no longer arose as far as the MHA were concerned. Naqvi had served for 21 ½ years' service and was 45 ½ years of age. To get full proportionate pension, he should have completed 26 years' service.<sup>81</sup> These were the cold, hard facts of the matter and to P. V. R. Rao (ICS), whose was the joint secretary (Home) at this time, they were quite simple. The Home Department's June 1947 questionnaire

gave a clear indication to Mr Naqvi of circumstances under which he could ask for a transfer. He had no right to ask for a second option and the government of Pakistan is, therefore, right in refusing to take him into their service. As Mr Naqvi has left service, he should be treated as having retired on proportionate pension. He is not eligible for compensation.<sup>82</sup>

Rao, accordingly, sent a letter to Naqvi at his Karachi address on 18 December 1947, reiterating the above and reminding Naqvi that once he opted for India in July, he "ceased to have a right to ask for a second option". Further, the GOI's "refusal to grant the transfer, to which you are not entitled, cannot confer any right to receive compensation";<sup>83</sup> all that Naqvi had a right to ask and it was the pleasure of the GOI to give was a long leave preparatory to retirement – anyway due to him, for Naqvi, remarkably, had "had no long leave during his service".<sup>84</sup> Naqvi was thus placed in that category of government servants who were "granted leave in preparation for their retirement, but often with decisions on the exact nature of these arrangements being deferred until some undefined point in the future".<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> 15 December 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>81</sup> 15 December 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>82</sup> 16 December 1947, MHA's note.

<sup>83</sup> 18 December 1947, P.V.R. Rao (JS, GOI) to GA Naqvi (c/o Kazim Raza).

<sup>84</sup> 30 December 1947, MHA's note and see note 22 above.

<sup>85</sup> Gould, Sherman and Ansari, "The flux of the matter", p. 245.



### Coda

At a time when everyone seemed to be washing their hands of Naqvi, one set of persons remained concerned and solicitous. A week into the new year of 1948, P. V. R. Rao received a letter from the UK High Commission in India stating that the “British Ambassador at Tehran has made an enquiry about the case of G. A. Naqvi (IP) of the UP, [his] application for proportionate pension and compensation [and would] be grateful [to] know how the case now stands”.<sup>86</sup> Rao had left the MHA to join the Ministry of Defence, where he would rise to become a powerful defence secretary in mid-1960s. Nevertheless, he replied to the UK High Commission, largely going over the old ground, except for providing two new details. One, Rao reasoned that “in view of the previous decision that Naqvi should continue in service of the UP government, the Pakistan government refused to accept him”, and, two, Naqvi had been “permitted to retire on proportionate pension” by the GOI.<sup>87</sup> A week later, in another clarification, the MHA blandly repeated to the UK High Commission what it had written to Naqvi – that his claim to compensation was rejected

on the ground that in reply to our [June questionnaire], which gave a clear indication of the circumstances under which he could ask for transfer, Naqvi elected on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1947 to continue in service of the GOI and did not desire any transfer from the province on whose cadre he was borne...He then ceased to have a right to ask for a second option. The refusal to grant the transfer, to which he was not entitled, could not, therefore, confer any right to receive compensation.<sup>88</sup>

The absence of full pension and the denial of compensation from the GOI and the lack of any prospect of service under the GOP left GA Naqvi in a financially vulnerable state. What prolonged his misery was that he was on a long leave preparatory to retirement – a period of four months with his average pay and then further 24 months on his half-average pay. Service rules forbade him from taking up any employment during the period of leave preparatory to retirement, in his case an unusually long period of two-plus years. In February 1948, Naqvi sought permission from New Delhi “to take up business or service” during this long lay-off.<sup>89</sup> Even though he had been forced out of it, both as an employee and as a citizen, the new Indian state was not yet done with Naqvi. Mandarins at the MHA mulled over his request, at leisure. One reasonably wrote that “if Naqvi’s ‘business or service’ lies outside the Indian dominion, as the probabilities are, no permission would be required and this would apply not only to the period of his leave prior to retirement but even after retirement”. Although there existed a government notification which did not exempt such cases “except those in which the employment was accepted before 1 January 1948”, it was plainly not meant to cover unusual cases “of the type of Mr Naqvi”.<sup>90</sup> Another was neither so sanguine nor so trusting and wanted to “ask Mr Naqvi what business of employment he contemplates”. After all, the aforementioned “notification [did] not allow an officer to take up employment outside India without the previous permission of GOI”. Thus, the GOI’s

<sup>86</sup> 6 January 1948 (SS.3/36), C.F.V. Williams (UK HC) to P.V.R. Rao.

<sup>87</sup> 8 January 1948 (2-JS (P)/48-MOD), Rao’s reply to Williams.

<sup>88</sup> 14 January 1948, MHA to Williams.

<sup>89</sup> 5 February 1948, Naqvi (Karachi) to MHA.

<sup>90</sup> 20 February 1948, MHA’s note.

reply of 28 February 1948 to Naqvi was “to ask the nature and location of the business or service [he intended] to take”.<sup>91</sup>

### Conclusion

From this point on, G. A. Naqvi ceases to appear in the Indian archives, barring three notifications on him by the MEA – twice in May and once in August 1948. All three are almost identical and pronounce his going on leave, from 6 December 1947, preparatory to retirement, on proportionate pension under Premature Retirement Rules.<sup>92</sup> He makes an appearance in the Pakistani records in 1953, paying a visit, with his host Kazim Raza, to the then defence secretary, Iskander Mirza, just before the imposition of Martial Law in Lahore in early March.<sup>93</sup> How, then, are we to understand what happened to him over 1947–1948?

The Partition of British India and the consequent production and consolidation of two state machineries manufactured and mediated relations between “aspiring citizens and the state” along the major axes of community, class and caste.<sup>94</sup> Naqvi, notwithstanding his two decades plus of distinguished service in the Indian Police, received from these circumstances only one opportunity to influence his fate. Through the treatment meted out to him in absentia by his fellow officials, we see the fine-tuning of different ‘ways of being’ for the Muslims in their everyday existence in post-47 India,<sup>95</sup> outside which there were only ‘ways of escape’. Within a span of three months, it became impossible for G. A. Naqvi to contemplate his life and career in a UP, where the Pant-led Congress government reeked of communal hostility, and in a New Delhi, where on the one hand, Muslims were being evicted and eliminated in a speedy and bloody spiral in spite of Nehru’s presence and influence there, and on the other, the MEA and the MHA were busy playing passing the parcel.

Naqvi’s story is one more illustration of how “state servants were themselves citizens of the state, who made their own demands of it” and “exploring the state at this level therefore provides insights into the social processes by which the state was constantly remoulded”.<sup>96</sup> It also shows, from another vantage and at a different level, the attempts to reconstruct the “core, mainstream – essential, natural soul” of the post-1947 Indian nation by institutions of the Indian state and society. In this process, Naqvi’s identification as an individual of the “minority mentality” or the “marginal community” was important, for that was what instituted the doubt around his “genuine belonging” as an Indian Muslim,<sup>97</sup> aligned as it was with the “unspoken assumption that Muslim government servants would serve Pakistan”.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>91</sup> 21 February 1948, MHA’s note.

<sup>92</sup> 5 May 1948 (143-EII), 13 May 1948 (155-EII) and 28 August 1948 (268-EII), GOI (MEA and CR) Notification.

<sup>93</sup> I am grateful to Dr Ali Usman Qasmi for this information. Perhaps as a Shia, Naqvi might have felt especially concerned about the violence against the Ahmadiyya sect that necessitated the martial law.

<sup>94</sup> Jayal, *Citizenship and its Discontents*, p. 105.

<sup>95</sup> Here, see O. Shani, “Conceptions of citizenship in India and the ‘Muslim Question’”, *Modern Asian Studies* XLIV, 1 (2010), pp. 145–173.

<sup>96</sup> Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 242.

<sup>97</sup> Pandey, “Can a Muslim be an Indian?”, pp. 608, 618.

<sup>98</sup> Gould, Sherman and Ansari, “The flux of the matter”, p. 247.

Finally, what are we to make of the government of Pakistan's refusal to accept Naqvi as an official? While the former betrayed his insecurities as no-longer an 'insider' and their insistence on 'loyalty' in a transitional setting,<sup>99</sup> the latter reveals "attempts to strike a balance between the demands of 'outsider' refugees and those of 'local/natives' for jobs".<sup>100</sup> The role played by the Pakistani state thus is equally important to understand the 'contingent nature' of migration beyond Punjab, from among the 42 million Muslims in the rest of the subcontinent.<sup>101</sup> Was it to be a refuge for all Muslims or were "minorities [to] remain in their regions?" Which Muslim refugees were to be regarded as subjects/servants of GOP and which to be rehabilitated as citizens of GOI?<sup>102</sup> Naqvi's life and career thus suffered its own private Partition between experiencing a Kafkaesque treatment from the hands of one bureaucracy to suffering a Toba Tek Singh moment,<sup>103</sup> at the hands of another.

[rankit@jgu.edu.in](mailto:rankit@jgu.edu.in)

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<sup>99</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, "The flux of the matter", pp. 276–279.

<sup>100</sup>Gould, Sherman and Ansari, "The flux of the matter", p. 253.

<sup>101</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, pp. 26–27 and 40–41.

<sup>102</sup>Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, p. 43.

<sup>103</sup>Arguably the most famous and best short story written about Partition by the great Saadat Hasan Manto and published in 1955; *Bitter Fruit: The Very Best of Saadat Hasan Manto*, edited and translated by K. Hasan (Delhi, 2008).

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RAKESH ANKIT  
Jindal University, India