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The 'Ulamā' of British India and the Hijrat of 1920

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IN the summer of 1920, when the *Khilāfat* movement (1918–24)¹ was at its height, thousands of British Indian Muslims, under severe emotional stress, began to emigrate to the neighbouring Muslim country of Afghanistan. Believing that British India was no longer safe for Islam they had sought refuge in the *hijrat*² or voluntary withdrawal as the only course left open to them.

In a country like British India, where the rulers were Christian, the whole matter according to the Sunnī 'ulamā' hinged upon the question whether India was *dār al-ḥarb* or *dār al-Islām*. The controversy began with the famous *fatwā* of *Shāh* 'Abd al-'Azīz (1746–1824) declaring India under the British *dār al-ḥarb*;³ it had continued to raise its head

¹ The Indian *Khilāfat* movement was apparently the outcome of the pan-Islamic pull among the Muslims of British India. Its ostensible object was to save the Ottoman Empire from the threatened dismemberment after the First World War. But in India pan-Islamism had come to merge with nationalism and with the cry of *status quo ante bellum* for Turkey the *Khilāfatists* raised the slogan of *swaraj* (self-government) for India. Thus, Hindus joined Muslims in this struggle and together they launched the non-cooperation experiment to put pressure on the British Government. But this *rapprochement* was short-lived. By 1922, differences between the two communities had re-emerged. The Central *Khilāfat* Committee itself became involved in factionalism and scandals. In March 1924, the Turks themselves abolished the *Khilāfat*, an anomalous institution in a nationalistic state. For some years the movement continued on the secondary issue of the freedom of the *Jazīrat al-'Arab* (Arabia, including Iraq, Syria, Transjordan, Palestine, and especially Hijāz) from non-Muslim control, but in fact it had lost its sting as well as its *raison d'être*. For a detailed analysis see M. Naeem Qureshi, 'The *Khilāfat* Movement in India, 1919–1924', unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis, 1973.

² Voluntary withdrawal on religious grounds from a *dār al-Islām* ('the land of peace'—country under Islamic rule or law) to a *dār al-ḥarb* ('the land of war'—country not under Islamic rule or law). Voluntary exodus is not peculiar to Islam. Other notable examples are those of the Plebeians to secure rights from the Patricians of Ancient Rome, the planned flight of the Israelites, the withdrawal of the Puritan Fathers from England and the emigration of Doukhobors from Russia.

³ What had disturbed the Delhi 'ālim was the progressive interference by the British with the inherited tradition and practice of the Islamic law. *Shāh* 'Abd al-'Azīz issued his ruling on the ground that the country was being ruled not by the orders of the *Imām al-Muslimīn* but those of the Christian rulers. His attitude becomes clearer when his ruling is contrasted with his approach towards the Hindu Marathas

over the years.⁴ Most often the solution had been sought in the classical interpretation of the Islamic tenets which prescribe *jihād* or *hijrat*.⁵ Classically, the *dār al-ḥarb* includes those countries where the Muslim law is not in force in the matter of worship and the protection of the 'Faithful' and the *zimmā*. When a Muslim country does become a

under whom India was *dār al-Islām*, as they had not replaced the Islamic legal system by one of their own. With regard to India under the British, the ruling of his disciple, 'Abd al-Ḥayy (d. 1828), was even more specific: it was 'the country of the Enemy', for 'no recourse is made to our holy law'. Both 'Abd al-'Aziz and 'Abd al-Ḥayy believed in encouraging the *hijrat*, should it become necessary. But these rulings were mere angry protestations of academic theologians trying to satisfy the religious qualms of those forced to live under Christian rule. For Shāh 'Abd al-'Aziz's *fatwā* see *Fatāwā-i 'Azizī*, I (Calcutta, 1906), pp. 32-5. For his approach towards the Marathas see Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964* (London, 1967), p. 19. 'Abd al-Ḥayy's ruling is quoted in W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (London, 1871), p. 140. For their views on the *hijrat* see Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (London, 1964), p. 215. For the analysis of 'Abd al-'Aziz's *fatwā* also see P. Hardy, *Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 51.

⁴ Rashid Ahmad Gangōhī is reported to have fought against the British in 1857; but by 1898 he was preaching loyalty in their favour. In the collection of his *fatāwā* published later in 1924, he, however, appears non-committal. See India Office Library (London) [hereafter IOL], India Confidential Home Political Proceedings [hereafter ICHPP], January 1919, Pro. No. 206; and *Fatāwā-i Rashidiyya*, I (Muradabad, 1906), pp. 76 and 87. The opposite views were more explicitly expressed during the revived *Mujāhidin* excitement of the 1880s by Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpurī, Sayyid Ahmad Kḥān and 'Ubayd-Allāh 'Ubaydī Suhrawardī, who denied that India was *dār al-ḥarb*. See *Abstract of the Proceedings of the Mahomedan Literary Society of Calcutta. Lecture by Moulvi Karamat Ali (of Jounpore) on a Question of Mahomedan Law Involving the Duty of Mahomedans in British India towards the Ruling Power* (Calcutta, 1871); Syed Ahmed Kḥān, *Review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans* (Benares, 1872); and Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, 'India', in A. J. Arberry and R. Landau (eds), *Islam To-day* (London [1942]), p. 204. Also see Maulvi Chiragh Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal, and Social Reforms in the Ottoman Empire and other Mohammedan States* (Bombay, 1883), pp. 23-5; Abdur Rahim, *The Principles of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (London, 1911), p. 397; *Maqālāt-i Shibli*, I (Azamgarh, 1930-34), pp. 182-7; Shams al-'Ulamā' Sayyid Muḥammad Nazir Ḥusayn Muḥaddis Dehlawī, *Fatāwā-i Naziriyya*, II (Delhi, 1918), pp. 30, 41, 47 and 472-3. For Shī'a views see Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* pp. 115-19; and for Ahmadiyya views see Khwaja Kamal-ud-din, *Attitude of Muslims of India Towards British Government and other Muslim and non-Muslim Powers*, Lahore, 1912, pp. 10-11. It is interesting that the controversy still exists in India to-day. The known opinion of the 'ulamā', especially of Sa'id Akbarābādī of Aligarh, is, however, in favour of regarding India *dār al-Islām*. Their argument is that the Indian Muslims share in the running of the government and that they enjoy religious freedom. As a corollary, Pakistan's war with India, as in 1965 and 1971, is not considered a *jihād*. See 'Jihād', *Āj Kal* (Delhi), XXX, No. 6 (January 1972), pp. 8-10.

⁵ Notable examples of *jihād* and *hijrat* in India were the *Mujāhidin* movement of Sayyid Ahmad of Bareilly, the *Farā'izī* movement of Ḥājī Shari'at-Allāh (1781-1840) of Bengal, the participation of the 'ulamā' in the Revolt of 1857, and the 'Silk Letter Conspiracy' of 1915-16. For a legal and theological discussion of the *jihād* see M. Hamidullah, *Muslim Conduct of State* (Lahore [1945]), pp. 105-59; and Majid Kḥadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, 1955), pp. 51-82.

dār al-ḥarb, it is incumbent upon all Muslims to withdraw to a *dār al-Islām* and reconquer the *dār al-ḥarb*, erstwhile *dār al-Islām*.⁶ When in 622 A.D. the Prophet performed the *hijrat* to Medīna with his followers, he returned to Mecca eight years later as a conqueror. The supporters of the *hijrat* of 1920, in advocating emigration to Afghanistan, had this very end in view.⁷

The question arose whether in the circumstances, when their rulers were endangering the *Khilāfat*, Muslims should leave the 'unholy country' of British India and go to some other land under Muslim rule. Such views had already been expressed by the 'Alī brothers—Shawkat (1873–1938) and Muḥammad (1878–1931)—in their memorial to Lord Chelmsford (1868–1933), the Viceroy of India, in April 1919:

When a land is not safe for Islam a Muslim has only two alternatives, *Jihad* or *Hijrat*. That is to say, he must either make use of every force God has given him for the liberation of the land and the ensurement of perfect freedom for the practice and preaching of Islam, or he must migrate to some other and freer land with a view to return[ing] to it when it is once more safe for Islam. . . . In view of our weak condition, migration is the only alternative for us. . . . This step, which we shall now have to consider with all the seriousness that its very nature demands, will be perhaps the most decisive in the history of our community since the *Hijrat* of our Holy Prophet.⁸

Other *Khilāfatists* held somewhat similar views. Abu'l-Kalām Muḥyī al-Dīn Aḥmad Āzād (1888–1958), for instance, believed that *hijrat* was an important constituent of the five pillars which firmly held the structure of the Islamic society, i.e., fealty of the *jamā'a* to the caliph, its rallying to his call, its submission to his authority and *jihād* or religious war. To him the *hijrat* was a sacrifice of inferior gains for nobler objectives. It was noble because it inculcated a spirit of sacrifice.⁹ Though the *Khilāfatists* in general held the same opinion,¹⁰ the 'Alī

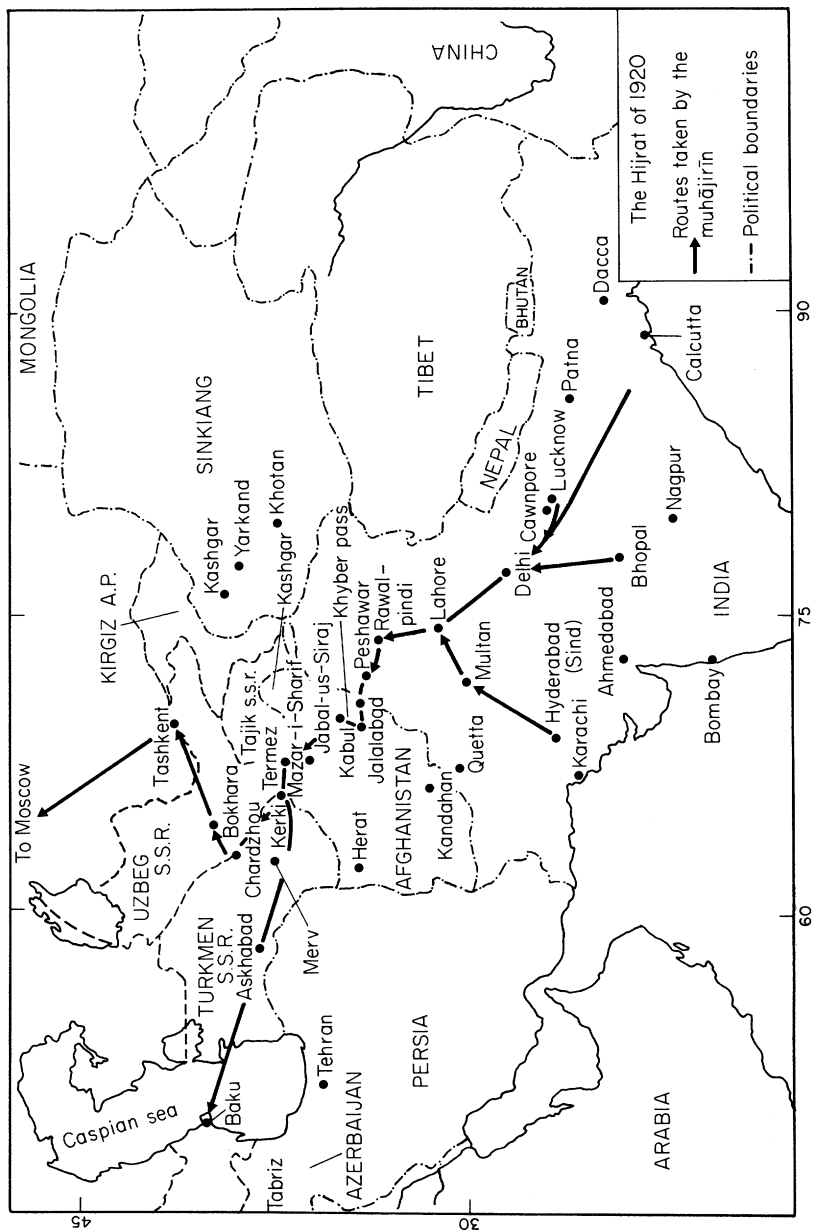
⁶ *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (Leiden, 1953), p. 69.

⁷ For instance, the *muhājirīn* who emigrated under the leadership of Aḥmad 'Alī (*q.v.*) of Lahore had two black standards with the Qur'anic inscriptions on them: 'O! triumph is from Allāh and a speedy victory' (Ixi:13); 'It is He [Allāh] who had sent his Apostle with guidance and religion of truth to proclaim it over all the religions even though the pagans may detest it' (ix:34); 'We are God's helpers' (iii:52); and 'Certainly, the group of Allāh must triumph' (v:59). Also see a poem on the *hijrat* by Muḥammad Isma'il 'Isā of Amritsar in *Zamīndār* (Lahore), 3 July 1920.

⁸ Memorial dated 24 April 1919, IOL, Judicial and Public Department [hereafter J&P], 3915/1919 with 1451/1919.

⁹ Shōrishh Kāshmirī (ed.), *Khuṭbāt-i Āzād* (Lahore, 1944), pp. 220–8.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Zafar 'Alī Khān's views in *Taqārīr-i Mawlānā Zafar 'Alī Khān* (Meruth, n.d.), pp. 36 and 50, and *Zamīndār*, 30 July 1920. For 'Atā-Allāh and others see



brothers were the principal advocates of an actual exodus.¹¹ Their speeches at the Amritsar *Khilāfat* Conference in December 1919, and later during their tour of the Northern India in January and February 1920, bordered closely on calls to *jihād* and *hijrat*.¹²

If any incitement was needed, it was provided by Amīr Amān-Allāh *Khān* (1892–1960) of Afghanistan, who, ever since the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919, had been trading on the excited state of the Indian Muslims. In the call for the *hijrat*, the Amīr found an excellent opportunity to scare the British. In a speech delivered at Kabul on the anniversary of the murder of his father (20/21 February) the Amīr undertook to welcome all those Muslims and Hindus who intended to migrate. He even offered to sacrifice his own life for the Faith and for the defence of the *Khilāfat*, vehemently opposing any suggestion for the settlement of the *Khilāfat* question by 'infidel powers'.¹³

A further weight to the earnestness of the Amīr's offer was lent by the professed support for the *Khilāfat* movement and Turkey by the Afghan delegation, which had arrived in India in April 1920, for negotiations with the Government of India on the resumption of friendly relations.¹⁴ Maḥmūd Tarzī (1866–1935), the Afghan Foreign Minister who was heading the Mission, was reported to have remarked on 16 April in a speech after the Friday prayers at the Landour Mosque near Mussoorie, that the principal object of the delegation in coming to India was to secure just and favourable treatment for Turkey.¹⁵ He referred to the Amīr's speech of the preceding February reassuring his audience that the Amīr would welcome Muslims who felt compelled to leave British India.¹⁶

The gesture was in fact never meant seriously by the Afghan Government. Their motive in encouraging the *hijrat* was to harass the British and thereby to strengthen their own bargaining position at the Mussoorie talks.¹⁷ But the 'invitation' evoked great response in India. The Ḥusayn Mīr Amritsarī *alias* Ghulām Ḥusayn Sōkhta, *Dāstān-i Hijrat* (Amritsar, 1921), p. 4, and IOL, ICHPP, August 1920, Pro. No. 71.

¹¹ Iqbāl Shāydā'i's memoirs, *Imrōz* (Lahore), 4 May 1969.

¹² See Muḥammad 'Alī, *Taqārīr-i Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Alī*, I, ed. Munshī Mushtāq Aḥmad, 2nd ed. (Meruth [1921]); pp. 16–17; Shawkat 'Alī (ed.), *Muḥammad 'Alī* (Lahore, 1922), p. 38; and Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 82, 2 February 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

¹³ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 426-S, 12 April 1920, IOL, Political and Secret Subject Files, [hereafter PSSF], P. 7020/1920 with 1061/1919, XI. Also see *Dastūr* (Sherkot), 24 April 1920.

¹⁴ For the Anglo-Afghan Conference see IOL, PSSF, 1061/1919.

¹⁵ *The Times* (London), 1 May 1920.

¹⁶ *Āftāb* (Lahore), 10 May 1920. Also see *Dastūr*, 24 April 1920.

¹⁷ Zafar Ḥasan Aybek, *Āp Bīṭī*, I, Lahore, [1964], pp. 202–4. A member of the

Indian Muslims were led to believe that the Afghans would welcome them with open arms. The asylum given by the Afghans in the past to British Indian pan-Islamists, revolutionaries and runaway students¹⁸ had further encouraged them in this belief. Impressed by the attitude of the Afghan Mission, a number of Khilāfatists, got in touch with the delegates.¹⁹ The Khilāfat Workers Conference which was being held at Delhi at that time welcomed the Afghan offers and emphasized the necessity of *jihād* or *hijrat*.²⁰ Even the Central Khilāfat Committee, not realizing that the Afghan overtures were merely a propaganda stunt, released to the press a summary of the Amīr's promises.²¹ The speech received wide publicity and considerable enthusiasm was exhibited for the *hijrat* in various parts of the country.²²

In the furore that followed, the '*ulamā*' were approached to express their views on the *hijrat* and thus give a lead to those who were planning to migrate.²³ But the '*ulamā*' were divided. Broadly, the divisions among the '*ulamā*' reflected the conflicting points of view in Indian Islam, different schools of thought, and different sufi allegiances. To some extent the differences were the outcome of personal recriminations and political considerations. Already, the prominent among the '*ulamā*' had stayed away from the Khilāfat Workers Conference in Delhi in April 1920, where the *hijrat* to Afghanistan had been proclaimed. Even the young firebrands like 'Aṭā-Allāh Shāh Bukhārī (1891-1961) of Amritsar had shown no willingness to support the

Afghan delegation confided to Ṣaḥibzāda (later Sir) 'Abd al-Qayyūm (1866-1937) that his Government could easily get rid of the Indian revolutionaries and the Bolsheviks 'if it were made worthwhile'. See IOL, Political and Secret Memoranda, A. 190, p. 7.

¹⁸ These Indian pan-Islamists were spearheaded by the '*ulamā*' of Deōband under Maḥmūd Ḥasan's (*q.v.*) associate 'Ubayd-Allāh Sindhī (1872-1944). The fifteen students who crossed into Afghanistan in February 1915 did so with the object of proceeding to Turkey and fighting for the Caliph. See IOL, PSSF, 4260/1916; Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madnī, *Naqsh-i Ḥayāt*, 2 vols., Deōband, 1953; and Aybek, *Āp Bitī*, 3 vols.

¹⁹ *Paysa Akhbar* (Lahore), 28 April 1920; *Āftāb*, 16 May 1920; Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 337, 30 April 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

²⁰ For details of what transpired at the Delhi Conference see *Āftāb*, 23 April 1920; and *Dastūr*, 24 April 1920. Also see Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 390, 25 April 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

²¹ Extract from Bombay fortnightly report, 16 January [*sic* for June] 1920, IOL, PSSF, P. 7020/1920 with 1061/1919, XI.

²² Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 337, 30 April 1920, above; and Report on the Political and Economic situation in the Punjab for the fortnight ending 30 April 1920, Thompson Papers. Also see Report on the Conference at Mussoorie, IOL, PSSF, P. 7382/1920 with 1061/1919, II.

²³ *Siyāsat* (Lahore), 21 May 1920.

campaign.²⁴ Yet, a *fatwā* was needed to boost an exodus. The first enquiries in this connection were addressed to Qayyām al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Bārī (1879–1926), the head of the Farangī Maḥall (Nizāmiyya) seminary in Lucknow (U.P.).²⁵ 'Abd al-Bārī was not only a pre-eminent 'ālim and a leading *ḥijrat* of British India, he was also the principal theoretician of the Khilāfat movement. But 'Abd al-Bārī was convinced that India under the British was not *dār al-ḥarb*. As early as June 1919, he had expressed his disagreement with the 'Alī brothers who wanted to undertake either *jihād* or *hijrat* in case the Khilāfat demands were not accepted.²⁶ 'Abd al-Bārī's stance against the *hijrat* from British India was in spite of the fact that Farangī Maḥall had been favourably inclined towards the *fatwā* of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz.²⁷ What influenced 'Abd al-Bārī's thinking can be discerned from his letters and writings. The pith of his argument was: British India is *dār al-Islām* and, therefore, the *hijrat* from India is not mandatory. Even under duress it cannot be declared as totally binding. It is especially not desirable for those whose exodus from India would harm the interests of Islam and benefit the enemies of the *dīn*. The *hijrat* is not an end in itself. It is to be undertaken solely for the defence of the Faith.²⁸

But when, in April 1920, 'Abd al-Bārī sent his telegraphic reply to a telegraphic enquiry from Ghulām Muḥammad 'Azīz (1896–) of Amritsar, the contents were so brief that he appeared to support the *hijrat* from British India.²⁹ Before he could correct the impression his telegram had found its way to the vernacular press and received wide publicity. 'Ārif Hasawī of the daily *Hurrīyyat* (Delhi) was the first to give prominence to it. Hasawī was one of those 'ulamā' who believed in the necessity of the *hijrat* and enthusiastically promoted the campaign.³⁰ From the daily *Hurrīyyat* the contents of 'Abd al-Bārī's telegram reached the *Paysa Akhbār* (Lahore), the *Ẓamīndār* (Lahore), the *Khilāfat* (Bombay) and a number of other newspapers of India. An impression was created, deliberately or otherwise, that 'Abd al-Bārī had given a '*fatwā*' enjoining the *hijrat* with a view to freeing India and the *Khilāfat*.³¹

²⁴ 'Azīz Hindī Amritsarī, 'Teḥrīk-i Hijrat kī Tārīkh', in Sayyid Raīs Aḥmad Ja'firī Nadwī (ed.), *Aurāq-i Gumgashṭa* (Lahore, 1968), p. 778. ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 781.

²⁶ 'Abd al-Bārī to Chelmsford, 12 June 1920, in *ibid.*, pp. 145–6.

²⁷ 'Abd al-Bārī, *Majmū'a Risāla-i Hijrat wa Risāla-i Qurbānī Gāo*, ed. Shaykh Shāḥid 'Alī, Farangī Maḥall, 1920, reprinted in *ibid.*, p. 150. ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 138–68.

²⁹ Amritsarī in *ibid.*, pp. 781–2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 781–2.

³¹ *Paysa Akhbār*, 28 April 1920; *Jhang Siyāl*, 30 April 1920, *Punjab Native Newspaper Report*, 1920, p. 188; *Khilāfat*, 1 May 1920; Extract from Bombay fortnightly report,

‘Abd al-Bārī was taken aback by this misrepresentation. He promptly issued a clarification to the *Hurrīyyat* explaining in some detail that he had not declared the *hijrat* mandatory but had only described it commendable. The *hijrat* was to be undertaken only as a last resort and when it served the best interests of Islam.³² In his communication to ‘Azīz, ‘Abd al-Bārī advised the latter to deliberate upon the matter before embarking on the venture and not to place an implicit confidence in the Kabul overtures.³³

‘Abd al-Bārī’s stand, which indicated a rejection of the *hijrat*, did not please the promoters of the campaign. They accused ‘Abd al-Bārī of fickleness and brought pressure to bear upon him to revise his views. Abu’l-Wafā Sanā-Allāh Amritsarī (1868–1948) of the Ahl-i Ḥadīs, for instance, wanted to know what had made ‘Abd al-Bārī pronounce his verdict against the *hijrat*.³⁴ Abū Turāb ‘Abd al-Ḥaq of Amritsar, on the authority of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and ‘Abd al-Ḥayy of Lucknow, questioned ‘Abd al-Bārī’s standpoint and asserted that ever since the British occupied India it had ceased to be *dār al-Islām*. In support of his argument he pointed out that the British had gradually replaced the *sharī‘a* by their own administrative and legal systems. This progressive intervention with the Islamic law had turned India into a *dār al-ḥarb* and, therefore, the *hijrat* had become a religious duty.³⁵ Some, like Munīr al-Zamān Islāmābādī of Bengal and ‘Abd al-Qādir Āzād Subḥānī (1882–1957) of Cawnpore, argued that religious injunctions were absolutely clear on the point: the countries under non-Muslim domination fell under the category of *dār al-ḥarb* and those under Muslim rulers were *dār al-Islām*. Moreover, the Prophet had already set an example and the Muslims should follow it. The *hijrat* from India could be easily managed as there were sympathizers abroad who could look after the *muhājirīn*. The emigration of a few lakhs out of a population of several crores would cause no calamity.³⁶ The other chief supporters

No. 506, 16 January [sic], 1920, above, n. 21; Ḥabīb al-Rahmān to Ḥakīm Barham Gōrakhpurī, 12 May 1920, in Mawlānā Muḥammad Yāsīn Chiriyākōtī, *Al-Tanqīd Al-al Khilāfa* (Gorakhpur [1922]), p. 78; Sōkhṭa, *Dāstān-i Hijrat* p. 3; Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961), p. 56; and Maqbūl Aḥmad, ‘Teḥrīk-i Hijrat’, *Intikhāb* (London), December 1968, p. 20.

³² *Hurrīyyat*, 26 April 1920.

³³ ‘Abd al-Bārī, *Majmū‘a Risāla-i Hijrat*, pp. 149–51.

³⁴ *Paysa Akhbār*, 11 June 1920. The reference is to an earlier date.

³⁵ *Vakīl* (Amritsar), 7 May 1920. It is interesting that though Abū Turāb preached the *hijrat* he prevented his son from emigrating to Afghanistan on the pretext that he was a minor, still devoted to his studies and thus needed parental authorization. See *Vakīl*, 22 August 1920.

³⁶ Munīr al-Zamān Islāmābādī to ‘Abd al-Bārī, n.d., *Nuqūsh* (Lahore), CIX, April/May 1968, pp. 197–8.

of this argument were Tāj Maḥmūd of Amrōt, Pīr 'Alī Anwar Sh̄hāh Rāshidī (1888–1974) of Larkana, Pīr Maḥbūb Sh̄hāh of Hyderabad (Sind), 'Abd al-Razzāq (1895–1959) of Malihabad, Aḥmad 'Alī (1877–1962) of Lahore, Muḥyī al-Dīn of Kasur, and Muḥammad 'Irfān (d. 1939) and 'Abd al-Gḥafūr of Peshawar.³⁷

In spite of the pressure, 'Abd al-Bārī remained firm. He maintained that though Sh̄hāh 'Abd al-'Azīz had declared British India *dār al-ḥarb*, he had not pronounced the *hijrat* to be mandatory. In any case, he preferred to wait until such time when the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind, the religio-political body of the Indian '*ulamā*', had given its verdict. All he would do was to advise reflection and deliberation before embarking on the *hijrat*.³⁸

'Abd al-Bārī had other '*ulamā*' on his side too. The '*ulamā*' of Deōband, for instance, chose to stand aloof from the campaign. They had generally become cautious in their pronouncements since the discovery of the famous 'Silk Letter Conspiracy' in 1916. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān, the Principal of the Seminary, in particular, was inimical to the *hijrat* or *jihād*.³⁹ Even his illustrious mentor, Maḥmūd Ḥasan (1851–1920), after his prolonged internment in Malta seemed to be unenthusiastic about the *hijrat*.⁴⁰ Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī (1863–1943), a later Deōbandī, was definitely against the venture. He did not think that the conditions prescribed by the *sharī'a* for a voluntary withdrawal were in existence in British India.⁴¹ Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ra'ūf (1876–1948) of Danapur (U.P.) was unwilling to support the campaign because he thought that it would create divisions in the Muslim community.⁴² Aḥmad Razā Khān (1856–1921) of the Bareilly school, who had ideological objections to a Muslim alliance with the Hindus, declined to lend support even to the Khilāfat movement.⁴³ Among the other critics of

³⁷ The information is based on: Sōkhta, *Dāstān-i Hijrat*, pp. 3–4; IOL, J&P, 5259/1920, 5446/1920, 6728/1920 and 6882/1920; ICHPP, August 1920, Pro. No. 71; Amritsarī in Ja'fri Nadwī, *Awrāq-i Gungashta*, p. 795; *Zamīndār*, 20 July 1920; A. H. Khān (ed.), *Mard-i Mōmin*, Lahore, 1964, *passim*; and Pīr 'Alī Muḥammad Rāshidī, 'Pīr 'Alī Anwar Sh̄hāh Rashidī Marḥūm', *Jang* (Rawalpindi), 23 April 1974.

³⁸ Reference in Muḥammad Anīs to 'Abd al-Bārī, 24 June 19[20], *Nuqūsh*, CIX, p. 220; Munīr al-Zamān Islāmābādī to 'Abd al-Bārī, n.d., above, n. 36; 'Abd al-Bārī, *Khutba-i Ṣadārat* (Erode, 1921), p. 26; and Sōkhta, *Dāstān-i Hijrat*, p. 3.

³⁹ See his letter to Ḥakīm Barham Gōrakhpurī, 12 May 1920, above, n. 31.

⁴⁰ *Hazrat Shaykh al-Hind kā ek Zārūrī Khaṭ*, published by the Khilāfat Committee, Azamgarh (Azamgarh, n.d.).

⁴¹ Aḥmad Sa'id, *Jidd-ō Jahd-i Āzādī awr Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī* (Rawalpindi, 1972), pp. 69–70.

⁴² *Zamānā*, 11 June 1920, cited by Ḥakīm Muḥammad Sikandar of Amritsar in *Vakil*, 23 June 1920.

⁴³ Interview with Malik Lāl Khān (1892–1976), former Secretary of the Punjab

the *hijrat* were Pīr Mihr ‘Alī Shāh (1859–1939) of Golra, Muḥammad Ishāq of Mansehra and Aslam Jayrājpuri (1882–1956) of Aligarh who opposed the venture for they honestly believed that it was irrelevant and unnecessary.⁴⁴ Mirzā Bashīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad (1889–1965), the head of the Qādiyānī wing of the Aḥmadiyya, opposed the *hijrat* on the ground that India under the British was not *dār al-ḥarb*.⁴⁵ In any case the Qādiyānīs were a dissident group from the main body of orthodox Islam and as such did not subscribe to the finality of Prophet Muḥammad or believed that *jihād* or the *hijrat* were admissible.

But this did not deter the organizers of the *hijrat* from stepping up the exodus. They had the support of no less a person than Abu’l-Kalām Āzād. It was he who supplied them with the much-needed *fatwā*. Āzād declared that for the Indian Muslims there was no *sharī‘* alternative to *hijrat*. Before the Great War the *hijrat* was commendable, but now it was mandatory. But Āzād admitted that it was neither possible nor desirable for the entire Muslim population in British India to migrate. Those staying behind were advised to continue the struggle for the *Khilāfat* and to experiment non-cooperation with the Government. He suggested that the exodus should be planned and organized in a proper way and that *bay‘a* be performed before embarking on the venture. He, therefore, advised those ‘seeking righteousness’ to get in touch with him or obtain instructions from ‘Abd al-Qādir and Muḥyī al-Dīn of Kasur, and Dā‘ūd Ghaznawī of Amritsar and ‘Abd al-Razzāq of Malihabad, who were Āzād’s chief associates in the campaign.⁴⁶

The pro-*hijrat* *Khilāfatists*, thus armed with the *fatwā* and emboldened by the Afghan overtures, worked up an active *hijrat* campaign. A Central Hijrat Office was set up at Delhi, with branches at a number

Khilāfat Committee, at Lahore in September 1966. In fact, Aḥmad Razā Khān’s views on the *Khilāfat* began to crystallize from the time of the Balkan War in 1912, when he refused to patch up his differences with the other ‘*ulamā*’ in order to concentrate on helping the Turks. See Murtaḥa Ḥassan to Aḥmad Razā Khān, 31 October 1912, *Nuquṣh*, CIX, pp. 113–14; and Muḥammad Aḥmad to ‘Abd al-Bārī, 10 November 1912, *ibid.*, p. 119.

⁴⁴ Fayz Aḥmad, *Mihr-i Munīr* (Golra, 1973), pp. 144, 270–9; Amritsari in Ja’firi Nadwī, *Awrāq-i Gumgashṭa*, p. 792; and *Paysa Akhbār*, 12 June 1920.

⁴⁵ Mirzā Bashīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad, *Mu‘āida-i Turkiyya awr Musalmānōn kā Āinda Rawayya* (Qadian, 1920), pp. 8–9. Also see his *Tark-i Mawālāt awr Aḥkām-i Islām* (Qadian, 1920), pp. 9, 47–53.

⁴⁶ The exact date of the *fatwā* is not known. But from internal evidence it appears that it was given in April or early May 1920. The *fatwā* was published by the *Ahl-i Ḥadīs* (Amritsar) of Abū Turāb ‘Abd al-Ḥaq, in its issue of 30 July 1920. For the text of the *fatwā* see Ghulām Rasūl Mihr (ed.), *Tabarrakāt-i Āzād* (Lahore, [1959]), pp. 203–6.

of places in the country, to provide facilities to the intending *muhājirīn*.⁴⁷ Corps of volunteers were enlisted to assist in the work. Efforts were also made to familiarize the masses with the religious aspects of the *hijrat* and *jihād*. The propaganda was launched in those provinces where the response seemed to be visibly strong or the organizers themselves enjoyed considerable influence—U.P., Sind, the Punjab, and later the Frontier. Propaganda leaflets were widely circulated and preachers appointed to spread the campaign. Mosques were frequently utilized for this purpose. The *mawlawīs* preached from the pulpit that the Muslims who did not migrate would become infidels. Writers stirred popular emotions through prose and poetry. The vernacular press published rosy accounts of life in Afghanistan. The people were told stories of red carpet receptions which awaited the *muhājirīn*: that the Amīr had promised them a tract of fertile land in Jabal al-Sirāj; that they would be helped and fed by their Afghan co-religionists; and that for three months they would have to do no work at all. The other aspect of this propaganda was more sinister, although the *Khilāfatists* do not seem to have been directly responsible for this. Through the inventiveness of scandal-mongers, wild rumours were spread that Mecca and Medina were in British occupation and that the sacred sanctuary of the Ka'ba had been destroyed; that the study of the Qur'an was being prohibited in British India; and that Sunday, and not Friday, was to be fixed as the day for prayers. This had great effect on the simple-minded peasantry and the illiterate.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Later in July 1920, when the Secretary of the central office migrated to Afghanistan, Aḥmad Sa'īd, the well-known 'ālim of Delhi and the Secretary of the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind, was requested to look after its affairs. But Aḥmad Sa'īd, with the consent of the important 'ulamā' of Delhi, advised that the headquarters of the *hijrat* organization should be shifted to Peshawar, which had then become the centre of the campaign. A skeleton staff was, however, retained in Delhi under the supervision of Aḥmad Sa'īd. The Peshawar Hijrat Committee was formally established on 12 July 1920, with Jān Muḥammad as its President and 'Abd al-Ṣamad, 'Alī Gul Khān, Aghā Qāsim, Ḥakīm 'Abd al-Jalil and 'Abd al-Rab as the other office-bearers. An Anjuman-i Muhājirīn of the Frontier had, however, existed at Mardan since early May 1920. See *Zamīndār*, 7 May and 16 July 1920; and Diary dated 12 July 1920 in Malik Lāl Khān Papers.

⁴⁸ The information is based on: Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 379, 7 May 1920, Chelmsford Papers; Grant to Carter, No. 1420-R, 21 May 1920, IOL, PSSF, P. 7020/1920 with 1061/1919, XI; Extract from Bombay fortnightly report, 16 January [*sic.*] 1920, above, n. 21; J&P, 6728/1920 with 5703/1920; IOL, ICHPP, November 1920, Pro. No. 45; *The Times*, 16 August 1920; Sōkhṭa, *Dāstān-i Hijrat*, pp. 3-4; Qāzī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghaffār, *Ḥayāt-i Ajmal* (Aligarh, 1950), p. 222; and Khān Abdul Ghaffar Khān, *My Life and Struggle* (Delhi [1969]), p. 50. For various poems to excite the *hijrat* see Hājī Aḥmad, *Dard-i Khilāfat* (Aligarh, 1921 [composed in 1920]); *Nāla-i Khilāfat*, issued by Anjuman-i Islāh-i Muslimīn

But though the appeal to the *hijrat* was based primarily on religious injunctions, other factors had combined to make it effective. Among these was the desperate economic condition of the Indian peasantry. There were some people who were attracted by the prospects of improving their lot in Afghanistan.⁴⁹ The *hijrat* was thus most widely accepted in those areas—the U.P. (in the early stages), Sind and the Frontier—where the economic condition of the peasantry was particularly bad. In the Punjab, where their lot was comparatively better, the rural areas were much less affected. There were also some militant Muslims who wished to go to Turkey via Afghanistan in order to fight for the Caliph.⁵⁰ Yet others found in the *hijrat* an opportunity to go abroad and, with the help of a friendly foreign power, find some way of striking at the British power in India.⁵¹ Thus, not unnaturally, the ‘extremists’ among the *hijrat* leaders encouraged the venture with the ultimate view of overthrowing British dominance in India by paralyzing the Government.⁵²

Whatever the reasons, the *hijrat* received a fair impetus.⁵³ The *Zamīndār* of 7 May 1920, announced that 1338 persons, corresponding to the number of the Muslim *Hijra* era, were ready to proceed at once to Afghanistan.⁵⁴ Consequently, a number of the *muhājirīn* began to arrive in Peshawar, mostly from Delhi and Lahore and a few from Bhopal.⁵⁵ And already some enthusiasts had secretly started crossing the border.⁵⁶ Early in May 1920, the Political Agent, Khyber, reported (Lahore, 1920); Muḥammad Badar al-Dīn, *A’īna-i ‘Ibrat* (Muradabad, 1920); Sayyid Kamāl al-Dīn Ja’fri, *Khilāfat aur Musalmānōn kā Farz* (Allahabad, 1920); *Zamīndār*, 3, 20 and 30 July and 4 September 1920; *Paysa Akhbār*, 17 July 1920; and *Siyāsāt* 28 June, 8 and 28 July, 9 August and 7 and 8 October 1920.

⁴⁹ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P. & R., No. 521, 26 June 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁵⁰ Muzaffar Ahmad, *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (Calcutta, 1962), p. 16.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* Also see Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (Benares, 1927), p. 1.

⁵² Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 497, 19 June 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁵³ In Delhi, people were so worked up that Ghulām Muḥammad ‘Azīz sent a telegram to the Viceroy that ‘it is impossible for the faithful any longer to remain under the British rule peacefully’. Another was addressed to Maḥmūd Ṭarzī, the Afghan Envoy at Delhi, thanking him for the hospitality offered by the Amīr. Col. C. E. Yate, ‘Unrest in India: the Question of the Khaliphate’, *Asiatic Review* (London), XVI, 1920, pp. 379–80. Also see *Paysa Akhbār*, 29 April, 1920.

⁵⁴ The communication was addressed by one Miyān Qamar al-Dīn Kākā Khel, Secretary, Anjuman-i Muhājirīn-i Islām Šūbah Sarḥadī at Mardan.

⁵⁵ Grant to Carter, No. 1420–R, 21 May 1920, above, n. 48.

⁵⁶ The early *muhājirīn* crossed secretly for fear of chastisement by the police. See Iqbāl Shāydā’i’s memoirs, *Imrōz*, 2 March 1969. Also see Muzaffar Ahmad, *Communist Party of India*, p. 13.

that forty persons had reached Jalalabad through routes other than the Khyber.⁵⁷ But the *hijrat* as an organized exodus may be said to have begun on 18 May 1920—three days after the peace terms with Turkey were published in India—when the first *qāfila* of some eager *muhājirīn* crossed the border for Kabul 'with great happiness and success.'⁵⁸

But the exodus, in spite of the efforts of the campaigners like 'Aṭā-Allāh Bukhārī (now a staunch convert) and Zafar 'Alī Khān (1873–1956), was slow. Though large numbers had enrolled themselves, the number of the actual emigrants was small. By the end of June 1920, only about 133 persons, mostly from the central Punjab districts, Delhi, Bhopal, Bikaner and Peshawar, had emigrated to Afghanistan.⁵⁹ Earlier that month, the Viceroy, giving his reasons for this slow progress, had reported to the Secretary of State for India: 'The prospect [of the *hijrat*] is not attractive; there is to be no return from emigration and those wishing to emigrate cannot receive any financial help.'⁶⁰ But the more important factor in this connection was the reluctance of the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind and the Central Khilāfat Committee to patronize the *hijrat*. At their meetings at Allahabad, in the first week of June 1920, both the organizations, despite Āzād's *fatwā* and Shawkat 'Alī's pleadings, had pronounced the *hijrat* optional and decided that there was to be no emigration *en masse*. Only the common people were to embark on the venture, the real workers staying behind to carry on the agitation.⁶¹ Primarily, the reason for this decision was the preoccupation of the Jam'īyyat and the Central Khilāfat Committee with the proposed inauguration of the non-cooperation programme. Until that had been launched and practised they could not think of taking up another venture like the *hijrat*. Besides, the *hijrat* was encountering strong opposition from prominent Khilāfatists and moderates like Ḥasrat Mohānī (1878/80–1951), Ḥakīm Ajmal Khān (1865–1927), Dr Mukhtār Aḥmad Anṣārī (1880–1936), Dr Sayf al-Dīn Kichlū (1884–1963), Āṣaf 'Alī (1888–1953), Muḥammad 'Alī Jinnāh (1876–1948), Muḥammad Shafī' (1869–1932), Fazl-i Ḥusayn (1877–1936), Dr Muḥammad Iqbāl (1877–1938) and others.⁶² They honestly

⁵⁷ Grant to Carter, No. 1420-R, 21 May 1920, above, n. 48.

⁵⁸ *Rājput Gazette* (Lahore), 22 May 1920.

⁵⁹ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P. & R. No. 521, 26 June 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁶⁰ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 461, 4 June 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁶¹ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 497, 19 June 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁶² Amritsarī in Ja'fūrī Nadwī *Awrāq-i Gumgashṭa*, pp. 777 and 783; Ghaffār, *Ḥayāt-i*

believed that the venture was not in the best interests of the community and did all in their power to stem its tide.⁶³

A more important influence on the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā' and the Khilāfat Committee was the opposition from the Hindu press and the Hindu leaders.⁶⁴ M. K. Gandhi (1869–1948), who had joined the Khilāfat movement at an earlier stage, was utterly opposed to the *hijrat* though he did not venture to condemn it publicly.⁶⁵ He argued that Muslim withdrawal from India was not a practical step as 'we cannot think of bringing pressure on the Government through it.'⁶⁶ Therefore, he pressed for the *hijrat* to be held over until the last stage of non-cooperation had been gone through.⁶⁷ The Khilāfatists had realized that if they were to retain Hindu support, they must remove the fear of an invasion from the North-West which the *hijrat* campaign seemed to have encouraged. Thus, it is not surprising to see Shawkat 'Alī agreeing to the decisions of the Jam'īyyat and the Khilāfat Committee to discourage the *hijrat*. In a statement issued in the first week of July 1920, he reaffirmed that so long as non-cooperation was not pushed to its logical conclusion, it would be unwise to take up the *hijrat* and thus mar the unity of action.⁶⁸

The details of the campaign are outside the scope of this study but it will not be out of place to mention that from early July 1920, as a result of fresh efforts, more and more *muhājirīn* had begun to proceed

Ajmal, p. 222; *Āftāb*, 30 March and 10 May 1920; *Paysa Akhbār*, 28 April 1920; *Sökhta, Dāstān-i Hijrat*, p. 4; IOL, ICHPP, August 1920, Pro. No. 71; L. F. Rushbrook Williams's letter dated 11 October 1968; and his *The State of Pakistan* (London, 1962), p. 9; and A. H. Albiruni, *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* (Lahore, 1950), p. 177. Also see Grant to Carter, No. 1420–R, 21 May 1920, above, n. 48; Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P. & R., No. 442, 28 May 1920, Chelmsford Papers; and *The Times*, 14 August 1920.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Hindu* (Madras), 2 June 1920; and *Sindhī* (Sukkur), 28 May 1920, *Bombay Native Newspaper Report*, 1920.

⁶⁵ Gandhi has been wrongly accused of starting the *hijrat* by writers like A. B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and To-day* (Lahore, 1948), p. 32; and F. S. Briggs, 'The Indian Hijrat of 1920', *Moslem World*, XX, No. 2 (April 1930), p. 164.

⁶⁶ Gandhi to Shradhdhanand, 2 May 1920, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, XVII (Ministry of Information, Government of India: Delhi, 1958–), p. 381. Also see *Paysa Akhbār*, 29 July 1920; *Source Material for a History of Freedom Movement in India, (Collected from Bombay Government Records)*, III, Part I (Government of Bombay: Bombay, 1965), p. 307. Such views he had expressed as early as June 1919. See J&P, 4695/1919 with 1451/1919. Strangely enough, in the late 1920s and 1930s, the *hijrat* (minus 'jihād') became an important item in Gandhi's *satyagraha* action. See G. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, 2nd edn (Ahmedabad, 1951), p. 278; H. B. Sarkar, 'Non-violent Non-cooperation in World History', *Journal of Indian History*, XLVIII, Pt I, No. 142 (April 1970), p. 72.

⁶⁷ IOL, ICHPP, November 1920, Pro. No. 45.

⁶⁸ *Hindu*, 8 July 1920.

on the *hijrat*.⁶⁹ The Deputy Commissioner of Hissar (Punjab) had rightly observed that: 'Whatever may be the fate of the emigration movement, the *hijrat* of men's mind towards Kabul has commenced.'⁷⁰ At this stage the *hijrat* activity was most conspicuous in Sind, where a large party of the *muhājirīn*, accompanied by their families, left for Peshawar by a special train under Jān Muḥammad Junējo (d. 1920), a leading Sind barrister.⁷¹ The news about the Sind contingent produced a wave of excitement in upper India and gave a fillip to the *hijrat*, particularly in the Punjab.⁷² Their arrival in Peshawar spurred the campaign in the Frontier, since the region was already sullen over the killing of a *muhājir* by a British soldier in a fracas at Kutcha Garhi, a small railway station between Peshawar and Jamrud.⁷³ Very soon, the whole Frontier came under the surging tide of the *hijrat*. Most seriously affected were the rural areas in the Peshawar and Mardan districts, particularly the Doaba and the Hashtnagar tracts of the Charsadda sub-division. The peasants gave up their agricultural pursuits and abandoned their lands in anticipation of joining the *hijrat*.⁷⁴ Crafty landlords and speculators, mostly Hindus, exploited the ignorant and encouraged them to emigrate in order to buy up cheaply the property and crops of the intending *muhājirīn*.⁷⁵ As a result, the poor peasants were forced to sell their belongings at very low prices. At some places in the Frontier land valued at Rs 10,000 could not fetch Rs 100. Cow buffaloes worth Rs 200 were offered at Rs 40. Crops and houses were similarly undervalued.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, endless streams of intending *muhājirīn* kept descending on Peshawar from various parts of British India but mostly from the Frontier, the Punjab and Sind. In many cases whole families, and in some, whole villages had set out for the *hijrat*. By 3 August 1920, the

⁶⁹ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 541, 2 July 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

⁷⁰ Report on the Political and Economic Situation in the Punjab for the fortnight ending 15th June 1920, Thompson Papers.

⁷¹ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 609, 24 July 1920, Chelmsford Papers. The entire expenses for hiring the special train (Rs 14,500) were paid by Junējo from his own pocket. *Paysa Akhbār*, 15 July 1920.

⁷² *The Times*, 14 July 1920.

⁷³ For details of the Katcha Garhi incident see IOL, ICHPP, December 1920, Pros. Nos. 325-52; J&P, 6728/1920 with 5703/1920, and 5978/1920 with 5411/1920.

⁷⁴ Grant to Carter, No. 2090-R, 27 July 1920, IOL, J&P, 6728/1920.

⁷⁵ *Church Missionary Review* (London), LXXI (1920), p. 362. Also see Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 661, 13 August 1920, Chelmsford Papers; and Rushbrook Williams's letter to the writer, above, n. 62.

⁷⁶ Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 624, 30 July 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

number of the *muhājirīn* who had crossed into Afghanistan, had reached 13,000. Less than a week later, it shot up to over 20,000 and more were crossing the border.⁷⁷ By the end of that week the figure had passed the 40,000 mark.⁷⁸ Even this estimate was not final, as large numbers of the *muhājirīn* had been emigrating without the assistance of the *hijrat* committees and many had not even bothered to notify the Afghan authorities. Besides, a number of the *muhājirīn* had wound their way through routes other than the Khyber, notably through the Mohmand country and the Tochi Pass. On top of this, the *hijrat* was still in progress and the *muhājirīn* were pouring in at the rate of seven to eight thousand a week.⁷⁹

Quite justifiably the Afghan authorities panicked and decided to stop further emigration. On 9 August 1920, the Amīr issued a *farmān*, promulgating that only after the previous *muhājirīn* had been absorbed, would any fresh emigrants be allowed into Afghanistan.⁸⁰ In fact, this was a pretext to stop the immigration completely. Partly, the Afghan attitude was the result of the Anglo-Afghan talks at Mussoorie in the early summer of 1920. When the Anglo-Afghan relations seemed to be improving, the Afghans became indifferent to the *muhājirīn*.⁸¹ But largely it was the economic factor which had prompted this decision. Economically, it was impossible for a poor country like Afghanistan to stand the influx of such a multitude of unskilled and destitute people; especially when she had not been able to settle her own people, the *pāwindās*, who were forced to emigrate to India every winter in search of subsistence.⁸²

As a result of the Afghan measure the *hijrat* from India stopped. In fact, the *muhājirīn* began to turn back from Kabul. They were extremely incensed at their cold reception and bad treatment in Afghanistan.⁸³

⁷⁷ Chief Commissioner, North West Frontier Province [hereafter N.W.F.P.], to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Telegram P., No. 285-N., 3 August 1920; and Chief Commissioner, N.W.F.P., to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Telegram P., No. 314-N., 9 August 1920, J&P, 1676/1920. Also see Briggs, 'The Indian Hijrat of 1920', p. 165.

⁷⁸ Enclosure to the Sarhaddar, Dakka, to the Political Agent, Khyber, 12 August 1920, IOL, J&P, 6882/1920.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ The course of the negotiations can be followed in IOL, PSSF, 1061/1920.

⁸² A curious side-light of the *hijrat* was that some Afghan residents of Khost, who had been deprived of their lands in favour of the *muhājirīn*, asked the Deputy Commissioner of Bannu to allow them to migrate to India. See Chief Commissioner, N.W.F.P., to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Telegram No. 326-P.N., 10 August 1920, IOL, J&P, 6728/1920.

⁸³ Chief Commissioner, N.W.F.P., to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Telegram No. 877-P., 20 August 1920, IOL, J&P, 6882/1920.

The trek back had been as hazardous as was their journey to Kabul.⁸⁴ Help was, however, forthcoming from the Government. The sympathetic effort on the part of the authorities was intended to help restore normal conditions quickly and prevent a recrudescence of the campaign.⁸⁵

In retrospect the *hijrat* of 1920 remains a curious phenomenon. In a way it reflects the depths of Muslim frustration. The Khilāfat movement had made the Indian Muslims desperate and the *hijrat* was the result. But in spite of the fact that the object of the campaign was clearly anti-British and the excitement ran high, the *muhājirīn* remained completely non-violent. The whole campaign looked artificial. No doubt the *hijrat*, in the context of classical Islamic juristic interpretations and Indian political developments, was neither illogical nor an isolated event, but it was ill-conceived, miscalculated and ill-organized. It ignored all economic and political realities. The advocates of the *hijrat* were, in fact, tricked into involvement by the machinations of the Afghan diplomacy. Once the Afghan relations with Britain improved, they disowned any responsibility. The 'ulamā' who pronounced the *hijrat* mandatory and the leaders who encouraged it, in a moment of extreme anti-British temper, closed their eyes to its consequences. In theory, it was all very well that Muslims should leave British India and then reconquer it; but the accomplishment of this in practice depended largely on the assistance of some foreign powers like Afghanistan, Russia and Turkey. However pious the organizers' intentions may have been, they unconsciously pushed the Indian Muslims into a disastrous adventure.

The *hijrat* caused considerable disruption for large numbers of people. In addition to the 40,000 *muhājirīn* estimated by the Afghan authorities, over 7,000 had crossed the border after the Amīr's postponement order. An unknown number of the *muhājirīn* had gone through routes other than the Khyber. Moreover, small parties had been emigrating as late as September 1920. Therefore, the total number involved may safely be estimated at over 60,000.⁸⁶ Out of these, about seventy-five per cent

⁸⁴ See, for instance, *Paysa Akhbār*, 28 August 1920.

⁸⁵ Chief Commissioner, N.W.F.P., to Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Telegram No., 875-P., 19 August 1920, IOL, J&P, 6882/1920.

⁸⁶ The number of the *muhājirīn* has been variously estimated between 18,000 and two million. The Punjab Khilāfat Committee counted 120,000 *muhājirīn* though Malik Lāl Khān believed that 235,000 had emigrated to Afghanistan. A *muhājir* in his account states that at one time in Kabul alone, the number had reached 125,000 and more were coming. Another *muhājir* puts the total at 23,000, while a third believes it was 36,000. According to the estimation of the Government of India, approximately 30,000 *muhājirīn* had emigrated to Afghanistan. See The Punjab Khilāfat

returned to India. Others had either stayed in Afghanistan or scattered to Turkey and Russia.⁸⁷ A large number perished through exhaustion or disease. The road from the Frontier to Kabul was dotted with graves of the *muhājirīn*,⁸⁸ not to mention those who died in Afghanistan or in Russia. According to an eye-witness the Khyber Pass was littered with corpses.⁸⁹ It took a long time for the people involved to recover from the disaster.⁹⁰

In spite of the disasters of the *hijrat*, the impact of its failure was largely inconsequential. The protagonists of the venture were no doubt discredited but they escaped the expected wrath by sheltering behind the intricacies of theological explanations or by shifting the blame to the Afghan Government. Nor did there emerge, apart from those that were already in existence, any ominous divisions among the '*ulamā*' or between them and the politicians. This was because the differences over the *hijrat* were scholastic and political rather than fundamental: the ideological content was never in dispute; it was the expediency of launching the campaign that had precipitated the controversy. The Khilāfat movement, too, remained largely unaffected by the *hijrat* campaign. The majority of the Khilāfatists had regarded the *hijrat* as a side issue and the Central Khilāfat Committee, like the Jam'īyyat al-'Ulamā'-i Hind, had treated the controversy almost with contempt.⁹¹ Even when the Khilāfat Committee finally decided in the middle of August 1920 to take up the venture, the opposition to the idea was strong.⁹² The fact of the matter is that the Khilāfat movement, far from

Committee, *Mas'ala-i Hijrat: Punjāb Khilāfat Committee kā I'lān*, Lahore, 1920, pp. 3-4; Malik Lāl Khān Papers; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1921, (2020), *Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India During the Year 1920*, Fifty-sixth Number, p. 52; Briggs, 'The Indian Hijrat of 1920', p. 165; Sokhta, *Dāstān-i Hijrat*, p. 31; 'Abd al-Qādir's memoirs in *The Times*, 25 February 1930; Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow*, p. 2; ———, *I Met Stalin Twice* (Bombay, 1953), p. 2; Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 698, 21 August 1920, IOL, J&P, 6882/1920. However, the figure 60,000 seems more plausible.

⁸⁷ See the map, indicating the routes taken by the *muhājirīn*.

⁸⁸ *The Times*, 30 November 1920.

⁸⁹ Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, p. 19.

⁹⁰ Years later, Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madnī (1879-1957), an associate of Maḥmūd Ḥasan, compared the sufferings of the *hijrat* with the hardships undergone by the Muslim refugees in 1947 as an argument against the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. See Madnī to Muḥammad Ṣiddīq, n.d., in Najam al-Dīn Iṣlāhī (ed.), *Maktūbāt-i Shaykh al-Hind*, II (Deoband, 1954), pp. 262-3.

⁹¹ See n. 61, above.

⁹² Sēth Miyān Muḥammad Ḥājī Jān Muḥammad Chhōtānī, the President of the Central Committee, was among those who opposed the decision. See Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, Telegram P., No. 698, 21 August 1920, Chelmsford Papers.

being adversely affected by the *hijrat*, gained a momentum. For it was precisely from August 1920 that the non-cooperation experiment was launched and developed. If the Khilāfat movement failed to achieve its declared objectives, the reasons were other than the failure of the *hijrat*.