

14th AUGUST: DAY FOR RENEWAL OF
COVENANT

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For the people of Pakistan, 14 August is not just one of the 365 days of the year. This is the day on which history took a new and decisive turn in the subcontinent. After an untiring struggle, the Muslims of the subcontinent not only shook off the yoke of 200-year old slavery of the British but also got rid of the domination of the new Hindu colonialism so that the nation could build its future in the light of its religion, beliefs, traditions and aspirations in a free atmosphere.

Freedom Movement, Background and Struggle:

Muslims ruled the subcontinent for about one thousand years and treated all nations that inhabited the land with full regard to human dignity and respect, justice and fairplay. Nevertheless, it is also a fact that they, particularly their rulers and influential classes, committed criminal negligence in the field of preaching of and calling to Islam. It was the result of this negligence that Muslims constituted only one-fourth of the population, whose half was in those provinces where they were in majority while the other half was scattered in other provinces of the country where they were in minority.

During the British domination, Muslims, as a whole, opposed the foreign colonial rule and apart from some segments their majority refused to strike a compromise with it. Consequently, their power gradually decreased because of persistent confrontation with the rulers and discrimination in political, economic and educational fields. Moreover, a new collaboration between the British rulers and the Hindu majority changed the political map.

Muslims were in the forefront of armed resistance against the British rule and when the struggle for freedom extended to political field; it was Muslims again who were in the vanguard. In the Khilafat Movement and the non-cooperation movement, too, it was the Muslims who waged the struggle and offered sacrifices. They entertained the hope that the success of freedom struggle would give them back the rule that the British had snatched from them. But soon it was realized that the fate of the country and all constitution and law-making would be done on the basis on numbers under the new system of secular democracy. The Congress prepared the ground for this to achieve under the leadership of Gandhi and Nehru and turned politics in the direction where it was only natural for the Hindu majority to enjoy real power. For Muslims, it clearly meant that they were to remain deprived of ideological, religious, civilizational, and economic freedoms even after achieving political independence.

The Simon Commission (1928) report, elections under the Act of 1935 and the Congress government that came in their wake, exposed all the characteristics of Hindu colonial rule as well as machinations for subjugating Muslims in the new system. In such circumstances, Muslims'

leadership set new targets for the freedom struggle so as to protect religious and historical identity of the Muslim nation, on the one hand, and, on the other, to meet the demands of the principles and methodology of democratic politics. The Muslims of the subcontinent adopted a clear and consensual stand that was founded in that Muslims were not merely a minority but a nation with its own ideological identity. To them, independence consisted not merely in getting rid of the British rule but in achieving free environment of opportunities where they could shape their individual and collective lives according to their beliefs, values, and traditions of their civilization.

Muslims' initially tried to realize this right in the whole of the subcontinent. Their last effort to achieve this end was under the Cripps Plan in the shape of the confederation of three national zones that were to have the option of complete independence at some later stage, but the Congress sabotaged it. Then, the Plan of 3 June 1947 proposed the establishment of Pakistan as an independent state for Muslims consisting of the Muslim majority provinces and India under the Congress leadership in the remaining areas. The Muslims who were to stay back in India played the decisive role in the Pakistan movement, offered great sacrifices, and whole-heartedly accepted their semi-independence for the sake of an independent Islamic state in the subcontinent simply with the hope that a strong Islamic society and state would flourish in Pakistan and that it would ultimately protect the rights of the Muslims of India as well.

Quaid-e-Azam and the Two-Nation Theory:

Whatever may be the assertions of the Indian leadership today, the fact is that the British, the Congress and the Muslim League all the three had accepted the two-nation theory that is the basis of the division of the subcontinent and Pakistan's establishment. The Congress consented to the joining of the Muslim majority provinces of Punjab, Bengal, and Assam to Pakistan only with the condition of further dividing these three provinces into Muslim majority and Hindu majority areas. The Congress demanded this and, thus, expressly accepted the ideological principle of the division the subcontinent. This was why Quaid-e-Azam repeatedly told the fact that the objective of the Pakistan movement was not just 'independence' but 'Islamic ideology' for which independence is a means and a way to the end. In his address at the Muslim University, Aligarh, on 8 March 1944, he said in clear terms that Tauheed – neither country nor race – is the basis of Muslims' nationality. When the first native of India became a Muslim, he no longer remained a member of the nation he belonged to but became a member of another distinct nation. Have you noted what the motivation behind the demand for Pakistan was? Neither Hindus' narrow-mindedness nor the British scheme – it was a basic demand of Islam.'

Quaid repeated this when he addressed government officials on 11 October 1947, after the creation of Pakistan:

The creation of a State of our own was means to an end and not the end in itself. The idea was that we should have a State in which we could live and breathe as free men and which we could develop according to our own lights and culture and where principles of Islamic social justice could find free play.

In his address at Islamia College, Peshawar, on 13 January 1948, Quaid said that 'Islam is the main spring of our life and existence. Our demand for Pakistan was not for achieving a piece of land but because we wanted a laboratory where we could test Islam's principles.'

At the Sibbi Darbar on 14 February 1948, Quaid-e-Azam said:

It is my belief that our salvation lies in following the golden rules of conduct set for us by our great Law Giver, the Prophet of Islam. Let us lay the foundations of our democracy on the basis of truly Islamic ideals and principles. Our Almighty has taught us that 'our decision in the affairs of the State shall be guided by discussions and consultations'.

These are not just Quaid's views but the vision of the Muslims of the subcontinent on which Pakistan was established, which is like a covenant between Allah and the people and social contract between the leadership of the Pakistan movement and the Muslims of the subcontinent. This is the reality on which is established the foundation of Pakistan and this is what gives this country a distinct status in the comity of nations.

The Foundation of Pakistan:

The principle and the idea on which Pakistan was established and the subcontinent was divided has three components:

1. Muslims are a nation not on the basis of color, race and geographical situation but the one that stems from Faith, religion, common values of life and world-view and civilization and way of life based on them; and wherever they are in the world Muslims are bound to shape their individual and collective lives to the extent possible according to their ideology of life.
2. An independent state composed of a federation of the Muslim majority areas in the subcontinent shall be established so that Muslims could reconstruct their individual and collective lives according to their own beliefs.
3. Minorities in both the countries shall be given their legitimate rights and they shall not be subjected to any sort of injustice. Muslims minority shall enjoy safety and protection in India and non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan shall enjoy full protection and opportunities for development.

To get this accepted by the champions of secular civilization and liberalism and the establishment of an independent state on the basis of this ideology in an era of domination of Western civilization that is based on the separation of the Divine and the mundane, religion and state, ethics and politics was a miracle of the 20th century. It was special blessing of Allah on the Muslim nation and the fruit of the sacrifices of the Muslims of the subcontinent. That two blessings blended on the day Pakistan came into being – independence and the blessed 27th of Ramadan – was an exquisite signal from the Nature.

Whatever may the secularists say today; these are the irrefutable historical facts. This is why despite outsiders' intrigues and insiders' treacheries this foundation of Pakistan and distinction is firm in the shape of the Objectives Resolution and the Islamic provisions in the Constitutions of 1956, 1962, and 1973. Whoever has tried to divert from these founding guidelines or weaken or eliminate them has himself been wiped out.

For Muslims, each day comes with a message for awakening and every night has numerous aspects for reminding and recalling. The characteristic feature of this nation is that it remembers its Lord and the purpose of existence in all conditions – whether walking or sitting, or even when relaxing: "who remember Allah, standing and sitting and lying down". (Al-e-Imran 3:191). Still, some days are for renewing our covenants, beyond just reminding. 14 August is such a day for the Pakistani nation that brings to fore innumerable illuminating historical memories in its fold. For every Pakistani, this is the day that rekindles the heart and the mind and refreshes the relationship with the objective of life.

This year, 14 August has assumed great significance. We invite every Muslim of Pakistan to do serious pondering, to renew his covenant with his God, and to resolve to play his role in taking the country and the nation out of the situation they are in, and to become active for this end.

Defense of the Ideological Foundation:

The dangers to the ideological and religious foundations of the state need to be squarely met today. A group of people is continuously trying to weaken the foundation and to cloud the vision of Pakistan. Those classes and people are in the forefront of this effort that had had no role in the Pakistan movement, who after the independence got hold of the reins of the country just for promoting their own interests, who used the resources of the country for personal aggrandizement or in the interests of their likes. Quite audaciously, these people are asserting that Iqbal and Quaid wanted to establish a secular state and it is the clergy and the religious extremists who had first opposed the creation of Pakistan and now are bent on making Pakistan a theocracy and taking it back to medieval times. To bring this home, at times Kamal Ataturk and Turkey are talked about and at times Taliban are dreaded. These 'self-righteous' have now even been joined by the outgoing American ambassador Mr. William B. Milam according to whom to talk of Jihad

and Ummah is part of an anti-Jinnah vision. While Jihadi forces are poked fun at during Seerat conference, claims of taking pride in Islam too abound. This double-play is on at different levels completely ignoring historical and ground realities. To check this trend is needed for the protection of the true concept of Pakistan.

Pakistan movement was neither a secret movement nor confined to drawing-room politics. It was a popular movement in every city, town and village and participated by the majority of 100 million Muslims of the subcontinent. The feudal lords, nawabs and intellectuals who joined it during the conclusive days were not at its helm. Muslims from all classes and especially the common people were the real strength of this movement. If one section of Ulema sided with the Congress, an overwhelmingly big section played its role in strengthening the Pakistan movement. After Iqbal, the man who presented the case of the two-nation theory with positive logic and strong reasons was Syed Abul A'la Maududi. He openly challenged those Ulema (Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi) who were championing one-nation theory and answered all their contentions. Shoulder to shoulder with the Quaid-e-Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan in the movement were Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Maulana Ehtesham-ul-Haq Thanvi, Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni, Maulana Abdul Sattar Niazi, Maulana Athar Ali, Maulana Raghیب Hasan, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Ansari, Maulana Ibn-ul-Hasan Jarchvi, Pir of Manki Sharif, and Pir of Zakori Sharif and others carried the message of Pakistan to every household. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam launched a campaign in the length and breadth of the subcontinent and gathered Muslims on the Pakistan front. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi supported the movement and on his demise the Central Working Committee of the Muslim League recognized his services in a session presided over by Quaid-e-Azam. Those who blame Ulema should do some introspection and refrain from trying to refute historical facts.

The Secularists' Short-Sight:

The 54-year history of Pakistan stands witness to the fact that secular leadership is the group that most harmed the country and that is in the control of its system and a cause for its destruction and weakness. These elements have been superimposed on the country sometimes in the shape of politicians, at other times in the guise of bureaucracy, and at others in the garb of military rulers. On the other hand, religious forces have always reined in dictatorships and struggled for the rights of the people. Today, whatever good is found in the shape of Islamic provisions of the Constitution, protection of basic rights and freedoms, firm stand on matters of national security, country's defense, and revival of democratic values – the most prominent is the role of religious forces.

Each and every attempt at confusing and clouding the vision of Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam from the secular class has bitten the dust simply for not being based on truth. While the example of Turkey is given time and again, little attention is given to the question as to what secularism has given to Turkey. A nation that dominated the horizons in the East and the West when it held the flag of

Islam is now indebted to and dependent on Western nations after espousing their secularism, and is strolling towards economic mess and political chaos.

Only that person who is devoid of both sight and insight can afford to ignore the popular movement against secularism in today's Turkey. Then, the military's role in Turkey's independence and survival and military's role in the Pakistan movement – there is huge difference. Above all, the military has not solved country's problems neither in Turkey, nor military's assuming political role in Pakistan every now and then has produced any good. This should also be kept in mind that in a bid to keep the Turk military on the secular foundations, thousands of able and talented officers have been expelled from the military service just for their attachment with religions, and the military has thus been deprived of their capabilities. This has weakened both the country and the military. Whereas the military in Pakistan has been organized, especially since the fall of Dhaka, on the motto of Faith, Piety, and Jihad (War in the way of Allah). How it can be made a champion of secularism? Whoever tries to impose secular beliefs on military or the nation would turn the country into a hotbed for confrontation and internecine conflicts. No well-wisher of the country can commit such a folly.

Today, secular beliefs are a means and tools for establishing the domination of global colonialism and the West. Globalization consists of not only economic and political domination but also has an ideological and civilizational agenda whose aim is to establish the domination of the West, especially America, on all the countries of the world in general and the Muslim world in particular by undermining state institutions and using non-government organizations (NGOs). Those who see the future of the country in secularism and liberalism are playing consciously or unconsciously the role of the agents of Western colonial agenda. They cannot be called friends of the country and the nation.

We want to raise the question as well that what secularism and liberalism have to give to the world. Secularism did play an important role in the movement against the religious persecution in the West. Yet, in essence it is a negative movement and has nothing positive to give to humanity. It has a role only as a supportive principle of nationalism, capitalism, democracy or socialism, i.e. as a part of the triangle. Secularism alone has no vision of individual, society, and humanity that could introduce the world a better system of life. This is why the need for religion or some lofty ethical system of values is being felt in the West itself. No doubt that their experience of Christianity does not bring forth happy memories, yet a big section of their intellectuals desires and feels the need for some religion or a system that could fill the spiritual vacuum, they are in its search and think it vital for the survival of the modern civilization.

Three Foundations of the Constitution:

We want to convey to the secular class and to the leadership of every walk of life with utmost sincerity to desist from committing the folly of making controversial what are the consensual points in the nation. While these might not become controversial, confusion and despondency might grip the nation and mental growth of new generations can be disturbed. Above all, this might plunge the nation into internal tension that would result in the waste of national potentials while the need is to organize and galvanize all capabilities for positive constructive purposes. The country's Constitution that enjoys national consensus provides a solid base for this end to achieve. This Constitution has three basic features and the guiding concepts of each of these have been determined in the Constitution quite clearly. The biggest reason of our flaws and weaknesses lies in our not acting according to the Constitution. It is an irony that while everyone has taken oath of loyalty with this Constitution, everyone has adopted the way of disloyalty to it.

Islam is the first foundation of the Constitution. The Objectives Resolution is not just the preamble of the Constitution but an operative clause of it. Articles 2 and 2A determine powers of the state and ideological boundaries. Article 227 gives the principles and limits of law-making. Article pertaining to the Council of Islamic Ideology and Federal Shariat Court establish a system of checks and balances for policy formulation and law-making. The whole chapter of guiding principles for policy provides guidance for the whole ambit of governance in the light of Islam. In this connection, Constitution makes the annual evaluation report mandatory but this has never been acted upon. The Constitution also instructs for bringing the entire legal system in conformity with the Shariah but the destination is still out of sight despite that 28 years have already elapsed. Articles 62 and 63 set the standard for leadership and oaths under the Constitution are like covenants with the nation. The Council of Islamic Ideology that was established under the Constitution has provided Islamic instructions and teachings for every walk of life in the shape of its more than 40 reports. Yet, the question is raised 'where is the Islamic model?' and 'which Islam we should act on?' For us, Saudi Arabia, Iran, or Sudan are not the model. Our model is in Quran and Sunnah and our Constitution has clearly laid down the outlines of this model. The Constitutional institutions have not slacked in providing guidance. If there has been failure, it is because of that political leadership, parliament, political parties and their leaders who ignored all this for being blinded by the rat-race of their self-interests.

The system of parliamentary democracy is the second foundation of the Constitution. The Constitution has left no vacuum or ambiguity in this regard, either. Distribution of powers and obligations and role of each and every institution has been determined, but neither election are held according to the Constitution nor does the Parliament play its role. Even the Courts have become a hotbed of politics and cronyism. In case of doubt, a reading of the autobiography of former Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah "Law Courts in a Glass House" would suffice as it exposes all in the glass house and the political field.

Federalism is the third foundation of the Constitution. This means distribution of powers between the Center and the provinces and an active system of decision-making from top to bottom. It is now 28 years since the adoption of the Constitution, yet neither the process of distribution of powers has been completed nor have the institutions established under the distribution of powers been strengthened. The disease of self-aggrandizement and concentration of power in one's own self has created such turmoil in the country that separatist trends are on the rise and people are deprived of justice and rights.

If these three foundations of the Constitution are honestly acted upon, we would not need any 'messiah' or a 'national reconstruction' body.

The reasons that London's credible magazine Impact International has enumerated in its July issue for the dismissal of such an all-weather head of state as Mr. Rafiq Tarar ring alarm. Tarar was fully cooperating with the new rulers but it was perhaps for the first time that he returned the recommendation for the appointment of new judges to the High Court that had ignored merit and principle. He did not sign despite insistence. Then, he took strong exception to the utterance at the Punjabi Conference held in Lahore that 'Pakistan was not created for the recitation of Quran'. He declared: 'Tilawat (the recitation) shall continue as long as there was Pakistan.' As is related, the Chief Executive said to the President: 'why do you pass remarks on these petty things?' It is also related that Tarar for the first time used his constitutionally sanctioned presidential powers to call the attention of the Chief Executive to the remarks he had made offhand at a Seerat Conference about the Jihadi organizations. He cautioned that such unscrupulous and unbalanced remarks could have a demoralizing effect on the morale of those who were engaged in the freedom movement.

If this is the background of Tarar's removal, it indicates towards an alarming and dangerous situation that can take the nation to more tension. This is why we want to say in clear terms that protection and respect of these three foundations of the Constitution is imperative. The legitimacy that the Supreme Court has given to the present government is condition with these three foundations. However weak might have become this nation, it cannot allow anyone to undermine these foundations. Ghulam Muhammad, Iskandar Mirza, General Ayub and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto all tried to do this in their respective rule but were themselves doomed. Wise is he who learns from the past and does not confront the nation with any new trial, or his end would not be different from that of his predecessors.

Elections and Transfer of Power:

An aspect that calls for attention in the circumstances surrounding 14 August this year is of the revival of democracy and transfer of power that provide the background in which a new system is being launched on 14 August after completing elections at district level. Here, discussion on the

pros and cons of the system is not intended. Good or bad, however might be the system, if it has been introduced then it should be respected and whatever ground realities have come to fore should be whole-heartedly accepted. Interfering in it every now and then is not warranted.

The people showed little interest in the system in the beginning, but they began to take interest later. At the level of district system, it now stands proved that political parties are still the real forces of the country that have become active under the names of different groups. This reality should be accepted that there is nothing that can replace either politics or political parties. All should be done for the reform of the both, but there is no substitute to them. If restrictions are imposed on them in an unnatural way or if the elected people, whoever they might be, are removed through ordinances, then the whole system would collapse before coming into being. It is people's exclusive right to choose their representatives. To impose on them those one likes is against democracy, justice and honesty and rather leads to oppression and dictatorship. This should be avoided. The very tragedy with Pakistani democracy is that some people have considered themselves as embodying the whole wisdom; instead of giving the nation an opportunity to run its affairs, they try to impose their own decisions on it and think that it is they who are to determine what constitutes national interest. This is a path to worst dictatorship and exploitation of humans.

Even the slightest regard for 14 August demands that whatever system the government has erected, it should be allowed to function without interference and politicking. There should surely be an independent and credible system for the accountability of the people's representatives, but there should not be any room for whimsical dealings. The new system should be restricted for the lower level with limited and determined powers, it should not be made to serve as a rung for provincial or central level system. Rather, elections at provincial and central levels under a powerful and credible Election Commission and in the framework of the Articles 62 and 63 should be arranged. We reiterate that a reasonable system of proportional representation can be formulated with the help of consultations at the national level. Such a system can greatly assist and help in solving many of our problems. Only free and fair elections can usher in new leadership. A clear timetable and road map should be presented to the nation on 14 August.

Pakistan-India Talks and Kashmir Issue:

The significance of 14 August has further increased this year in the backdrop of Pakistan-India talks. However huge may be our differences with General Pervez Musharraf over his way of governance and his priorities, and we have not relented on that, his being firm on the national stand on Kashmir, taking the nation and its leaderships into confidence before the talks with India, bravely and intelligently presenting our own view in the framework of national consensus both in Delhi and Agra, and not to compromise on the stand that is based on truth and justice – are such accomplishments on which we congratulate him, and pray for his being steadfast on the issue.

India has quite dexterously, rather cunningly, created a situation where satisfying his ego and honoring him, on the one hand, were to be employed to win him over, while on the other, a well-orchestrated and full-blown media onslaught was devised to divert him from the centrality of the Kashmir issue to peripheral problems. Every method of temptation and pressure was employed with great dexterity and the same strategy that Gandhi had adopted in his meetings with Quaid-e-Azam was repeated – warmth and cunning, flattery and blackmail, personal regard and attempt to divert from national stand. It is a matter of satisfaction that Musharraf came out of the trap of Vajpayee and Advani almost the same way as Quaid had frustrated the moves of Gandhi. Now he has had a direct experience of Hindu politics.

In Quaid's days, Gandhi and Savarkar were the two main characters of Hindu politics. Savarkar represented Hindu extremism and animosity against Muslims, and Gandhi was the able guardian of Hindu interests. Today, Savarkar and Gandhi, in the shape of Advani and Vajpayee are trying to control Pakistan just as they had tried to stop it from emerging on the map of the world. Gandhi recognized Jinnah as "Quaid-e-Azam" and offered to make him prime minister of India, but Quaid knew the game full well and, therefore, accepted to have a 'ravaged' Pakistan rather than falling prey to Gandhi trap. The same is the game even today i.e. to divert Pakistan from its principled stand on Kashmir and thus drive a wedge between Pakistan and freedom movement in Kashmir, Pakistan's leadership and the nation are pushed into the throes of mutual confrontation so that India could perpetuate its occupation on Kashmir. India is itself not ready to talk to the Hurriyet, but is infuriated over Pakistan's contacting Hurriyet. Ignoring its own pledges and promises, the whole history of the issue, popular movement and thousands who lost their lives, it is trying to get Pakistan entangled in visa concessions and matters of trade. While the popular movement in Kashmir is at its peak, people have offered sacrifices in the thousands, every funeral procession has become a popular referendum against Indian occupation, yet the Indian leadership refuses to recognize this as an issue and is hell-bent on getting our leadership bogged-down in window-dressing business.

Camp-David and Oslo are talked about repeatedly, but what they have delivered to the Palestinians is seldom considered. We ourselves are being given sermons on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) since the Tashkent Declaration till today, but what have they yielded in these 40 years? The mantra of bilateral talks is on since 1972 (Simla Agreement), but what has been achieved after sitting for more than 50 times across the negotiation table? Even the most staunch of Israel's supporters are compelled to admit that Oslo's is not the way to the solution of problems.

In the International Herald Tribune of 17 July, two Jew intellectuals say the same thing that is worth pondering. Henry Seigman, who is Senior Fellow of the famous American Council on Foreign Relations and a sympathizer of Israel, is compelled to write:

The Oslo accord failed to produce a permanent status agreement for many reasons, but primarily and most importantly because Israel never committed itself to the only goal that could have made possible such an agreement – a viable, sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. ...Confidence is not an abstraction that exists for its own sake; it assumes meaning in relation to a goal – it is confidence that the goal can be achieved. In the context of Oslo, ‘confidence building measures’ can only mean steps that lead Palestinians to believe that they will achieve viable statehood... the absurdity of returning to this proven prescription of failure – "confidence building measures" unrelated to a goal that begins to address the most basic aspiration to meaningful statehood – boggles the imagination. And yet that remains the basis of U.S. diplomacy.

Similar is our problem. While the real question is of the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the insistence is on not talking about it but rather is on taking ‘confidence building measures’ and getting entangled in matters that have nothing to do with the real issue. What is more to it is that the result of this is already known. We never move beyond these measures to the real issue. Whenever the real issue has been deferred or left ambiguous, nothing could be achieved – whether in Palestine or in Kashmir. This is the game of Israel, of India, of America. For how long would we continue to be bitten from the same whole? Zionist preacher Geoffrey Wheatcraft writes in article in the same issue of the Tribune:

This is an undoubted fact that the whole process known as "Oslo" (it could be called "Clinton") has faltered.

These two comments on Oslo serve as eye-openers; it is useless to try the tested. But this is what India wants to engage us in. While General Musharraf has come out clear and clean, the game is not yet over. Preparations for next stages, support of Jihadi forces (who are up in arms against the occupation), firmness on the principled stand, making all efforts to influence and mobilize world opinion, attempting to influence the opinion of Indian public and intellectuals, and trusting the nation and taking it along – these all are aspects of a renewal of the covenant of 14 August.

What perturbed the Indian leadership the most during the Summit at Agra was General Pervez Musharraf’s clear and candid talk with editors of Indian papers and its coverage in the Indian media. This was why the General was denied the opportunity to address the world media before his departure in spite of the promise and his desire. In this is a lesson for us. We should understand where to strike at the opponent’s camp to have the most effect?

The way General Pervez dealt with India in Delhi and Agra is a matter of satisfaction for him, for our army, and for the entire nation. In it is also a lesson for former leaders, especially Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and their associates. Firm position on matters of national interest leads to

success while compromise on them brings disgrace in this world as well as stringent action in the court of Allah Almighty.

The message of 14 August:

Economic problems and the consequent dangers have assumed extraordinary importance in the circumstances in which we are celebrating 14 August this year. Economic mess is not because of any lack of resources, it is the result of wrong economic policies, subservience to the World Bank and the IMF (International Monetary Fund), corruption and graft, misplaced priorities, and pervasive economic mismanagement. The present economic team has been a total failure and to expect it to deliver is vain. However, we consider it our duty to forewarn of the dangers of further consolidating the system of the World Bank and of globalization for being panicked by the depressing economic scenario or by slipping into the throes of worry and despair. The strategy of giving false assurances to the nation while going further down in the debt-mire is worn out. Without giving it up and devising a revolutionary strategy, we cannot come out of this mire. Some people are of the view that it is easier for a military government, in comparison to a democratic dispensation, to adopt a revolutionary strategy. We do not subscribe to this view. But the point is that the present government abandoned this path on the very first day. The compliance, with which the World Bank and IMF conditions are met these days, is unprecedented. Therefore, the present set-up cannot be expected to deliver any good and we are constrained to say that the possibility of any real initiative is extinct without a new leadership. We expect neither some better economic policy nor an effective, transparent and just system of accountability from the present government. The military leadership's being entangled in politics any further is not in the interest of military or the country.

On the eve of 14 August this year, the nation should convey this message to the rulers that the earlier the power is transferred to a new, honest and capable leadership through free and fair elections under the Constitution the better. The leaderships that emerged from elite classes have only harmed the country and added to the rot. Now the need is for such a leadership that is from amongst the people and is accountable to them, whose past is clear and reputation is clean. This leadership should abide by the Constitution and remain loyal to it, refrain from using it for its own interests and work in the interest of the nation and the country according to the demands of the Constitution. The call of the time is to awaken the nation and mobilize it so as to keep them from being used by certain cliques, so that they may become masters of their own fate and play their due role in building and garnishing this country. It is the duty of every Pakistani to realize his position that he is custodian and servant of Pakistan and that he is answerable before both God and His Creation.

The demand of 14 August for renewal of our covenant is that each of us should become active for the realization of the objectives of Pakistan movement and work with the zeal to make Pakistan a

real Islamic state, to remove ignorance, poverty, indigence and dependence, to lit the torch of learning and knowledge and thus to spread the culture of morality, justice and fairplay. And to do this all to bless the people with the benefits of Allah's message and to attain the pleasure of Allah on the Day of Judgment. We need to remind ourselves of the will and wish of Quaid-e-Azam he had expressed on the eve of assuming the leadership of the Muslim League while addressing its Council on 31 Oct. 1939. To settle it in our hearts and to reflect it in our words and deeds can be a befitting gift of 14 August this year. Quaid had said: 'The sole desire of my life is to see Muslims independent and standing aloft. I wish that I die with the conviction and satisfaction that my conscience and my Lord witness that Jinnah did not betray or was disloyal to Islam and that he played his duty for the independence, organization, and defense of Muslims. I do not seek applause or witness from you. What I wish is that at the time of my death my own heart, conviction, and conscience witness that 'Jinnah! You really absolved yourself of your obligation of defending Islam. Jinnah! You did your duty of forging unity, concord and support for Muslims'; that my Lord would say that I was born a Muslim and died a Muslim keeping the flag of Islam aloft amid the domination of the forces of evil.

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