

WAVELL'S VICEROYALTY (1943-47): A MISSING LINK IN HISTORICAL LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT:

A critical understanding of Lord Wavell's Viceroyalty (October 1943-March 1947) is important for a true understanding of the ever-changing dynamic political relationship amongst the three leading political actors in India of that time, the British, the Hindus and the Muslims. Although there is ample literature about the viceroyalties of Lords Linlithgow and Mountbatten which informs us well about the British policies during their tenures at the helm of power in India, the equally important historical period of Lord Wavell's viceroyalty is often overlooked by the historians. This study focuses on a review of literature on Lord Wavell's viceroyalty and stress the need that his services are not given a thorough reappraisal. Literature available on this topic suggests that there exists a considerable gap in historical literature of that period. No single work available on this topic has dealt at length with Lord Wavell's Viceroyalty but that calls for more effort and research rather than continued neglect and apathy towards that important period.

A critical understanding of Lord Archibald Wavell's Viceroyalty (October 1943-March 1947) is quite pertinent in order to understand the role of three leading political stakeholders of that time, i.e., the British, the Hindus and the Muslims. There is enough literature about the viceroyalties of Lords Linlithgowⁱ and Mountbatten,ⁱⁱ highlighting the British policies in India. Unfortunately, the equally important historical period of Lord Wavell's viceroyalty has often been touched but fleetingly by the historians. This paper attempts to fill in that gap in the historiography pertaining to Wavell's tenure.

Wavell's viceroyalty (October 1943-March 1947) may be termed as significant and decisive one because of the developments ensuing inside and outside of India during the same period (1940s) that forced the British to a hasty exit. From the day one of his viceroyalty, Wavell aimed to keep India united. He also advised His Majesty Government (hereafter referred as HMG) that India should be granted independence by March 1948. In keeping with this time-frame, he suggested appropriate plansⁱⁱⁱ on various occasions for a smooth British withdrawal from India. It may be inferred that he was well-aware of the deteriorating security situation in India and was afraid that unless the British departed soon, they would be forcibly thrown out by the ever increasing strength of the Indian political awakening.

Despite Wavell's best efforts, by the end of his term, the internal political dynamics and international situation had forced the two major domestic players, the Congress and the Muslim League, as well as HMG, that there was no 'honourable' way

out of the Indian mess but a partition. This is the result which all the three leading political players, especially the Congress and HMG, had been working to avoid for the longest time.

Upon his arrival in India in 1943, Wavell was faced with three independent though highly demanding and complex problems each one of which cried for his full and undivided attention. One, how to push the Japanese enemy back from India's eastern frontier;^{iv} second; how to deal with the growing repercussions of the Bengal famine on Indian political mindset;^v and, finally, how to oversee the complex day to day workings of the huge Indian governmental setup. **It was an atmosphere in which its workings, per HMG's priority list, were to be given the least attention, i.e., till the accomplishment of a final victory over Japan.**^{vi}

Wavell's predecessor, Linlithgow (**Years**), faced a near-total rebellion by the Congress in 1942 during the Quit India Movement.^{vii} He arbitrarily used vast resources of the Indian government to suppress it successfully. Thereafter, with the incarceration of main Congress leaders calm seemed to have descended on the Indian political scene.^{viii} As the change in the Allied fortunes of war coincided with Wavell's arrival in India, he immediately became aware of the fact that there was no way out but to face all the problems. Nothing short of a full blooded effort was required and Wavell, true to his nature and training, plunged immediately and headlong into the fray.^{ix}

On the domestic political front, besides attempting to bridge what looked like an unbridgeable gulf between the two main protagonists, the Congress and the League, there were numerous smaller political confrontations. Although not a direct responsibility of the central government, such skirmishes could derail his main objectives. One such sideshow was the intense battle fought between the Muslim supporters and detractors of the demand for Pakistan.^x

Wavell, right from the beginning of his term, saw a variety of complex problems littering the Indian political scene, chiefly, the Hindu-Muslim friction which had entered in its final phase in the 1940's which led to the Muslim League's demand for a separate homeland. This demand (for Pakistan) had divided the Muslims into two groups, its supporters and detractors, which were as sharply opposed to each other as were the Muslim League and the Congress. Additionally, the Cripps Proposals^{xi} had been rejected by both the Congress and the League at a critical juncture of World War II. The situation was further aggravated as the British Government was not yet ready to make a fresh attempt at breaking the political impasse.

Wavell particularly encouraged those efforts which could bridge the Hindu-Muslim divide. He showed keen interest in the political developments which took place in India like the Rajagopalachari Formula (1944),^{xii} Gandhi-Jinnah talks (1944),^{xiii} Desai-Liaquat Pact (January 1945),^{xiv} to name a few. These political developments had influenced him deeply, therefore, became sensitive of Muslim League's demand. He was convinced that the demand of Pakistan could only be sidelined with the formation of a coalition government as part of a peaceful transfer of power.

In order to break the political impasse in India, Wavell and his staff put forth various political plans such as the Wavell Plan (1945)^{xv} and the Breakdown Plan (1945-47)^{xvi}, besides pursuing the Cabinet Mission Plan (1946) which was the last attempt at preserving the political and territorial unity of India. All of his plans had intended to preserve the Indian territorial unity in one form or another. Coming at a time, when it was

evident to all that the sun was setting on the British empire, and new international alignments would henceforth guide the international setup his efforts generated intense political interest and activity in India. The Indian political leaders also saw this writing on the wall and put forth demands which the British in the beginning were loath to accept. In this atmosphere of an accelerated perception of British decline, a clash between the British on one side and the leading Indian groupings was inevitable. It was made more incendiary by the diametrically opposed vision of India of each of the major groups.

Wavell was not only caught up in the sudden rise of the politically stormy weather in India itself but also had to deal with the obduracy of the HMG government, his employers, which refused to initially even entertain the idea that India would soon be granted freedom.^{xvii} All this led to extremely intense and endless rounds of correspondence, political dialogues, high-level public and private meetings and extremely recriminatory debates via, and in, the media, between the various political actors involved. Since none of the major political actors was willing to compromise, it was left to Wavell to pick up the pieces after each failed attempt and to try to present a new package of political reforms to them in the vain hope that they might be willing to step back just a trifle from their stated positions the next time around. And with each failed attempt Wavell was severely criticized by all the concerned parties.

In this highly charged political scenario in India of the 1940's, with the growing use of violence by the politico-religious groups, and just at a time when totally exhausted by its global struggle against Germany and Japan^{xviii} HMG government was unable and unwilling to offer any relief to Wavell. He was left to his own dwindling resources and devices to fight the increasingly complex political battles in India. In such circumstances his Herculean task in India and what he persistently tried to accomplish over his three and a half year stay here deserve ample praise.^{xix}

What limited Wavell did accomplish deserves full appreciation in historical narratives from a larger number of scholars because his successor, Mountbatten, often the sinecure of historians' efforts, either tried simply to build up on what Wavell had left in place or simply executed the plans that he had drawn, though with a suddenness and crudity which Wavell, with his sense of detail and precision, would certainly have abhorred.^{xx}

All this places Wavell on a much higher historical pedestal than he has so far been allocated. Only a thorough study and further research into his viceroyalty would give him much better appreciation, besides opening new avenues of understanding about the critical period of the mid-nineteen forties in Indian history.

Historiography on the Viceroyalty of Wavell

Although the turbulent and salient features of Indian politics in the 1940's have attracted a number of historians as it was a time of the withdrawal of the British Raj. Many scholars have highlighted the role of chief representative in India, the viceroy, in the political tangle amongst the political parties assumed critical importance. However, compared to his predecessor and his successor, Wavell has been the least understood of the three, and in fact, has often been maligned by the historians. This has deprived him unfortunately of the historians' due attention. Even those who have written about him

have rarely appreciated the real motives behind his actions; and there are only a few good biographies of Wavell as yet available in the market.

In *The House of Wavell* (London: typed, 1948) L.G. Pain deals with the genealogical table and history of the origin and development of the Wavell family. Wavell's life from birth till his Viceroyalty is discussed. However, the author fails to dwell on either the general Indian political situation prevailing during his tenure or specifically the Muslim problem of India of that time.

Robert Woollcombe's *The Campaigns of Wavell: 1939-43* (London: Cassell N Company LTD, 1959) gives interesting information about Wavell's role during the critical years of World War II. The author maintains that Wavell was called to deal with a heavier task than was faced by Allenby in Egypt and, he thinks that the political climate under which he was asked to break the communal deadlock in India might even have baffled the diplomatic skills of a Marlborough. The author intends to portray Wavell as a greatest hero in the British history, which is only partially true, but shows no real interest in analyzing his role as the viceroy of India.

Michael Carver's *Wavell and the Middle East: 1940-1* (Austin: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Centre, 1993) concentrates basically on Wavell's activities in Africa particularly during his Italian campaign. Similarly, Donald Cowie in *Campaigns of Wavell: The Inner Story of the Empire in Action, Second part: September 1940 to September 1941* (London: Chapman & Hall LTD, 1942) discusses in detail only the campaigns of Wavell as a general. Rowan Robinson, *Wavell in the Middle East* (London: Hutchinson and Co. LTD., nd.), deals exclusively with Wavell's role as a soldier and general. Wavell's early period of Viceroyalty is discussed by William F. Burbridge in *The Military Viceroy: Field Marshal Wavell* (London: Sydenham & Co. Ltd., 1944). R.H. Keirman in *Wavell* (London: George Harper & Co., 1945) covers only the first one and a half years of Wavell's viceroyalty. He sheds light on Wavell's actions in dealing with the Bengal famine and war against Japan but fails to deal with the Muslim problem in India as was faced by Wavell later on.

In *Wavell: Portrait of a Soldier* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1961), Bernard Fergusson gives a critical appreciation of Wavell's role as a soldier. Because of his close association with Wavell as a soldier, he describes his personal as well as military experiences with Wavell. He critically evaluates Wavell's relationship with Churchill but is least interested in Wavell's role as the Viceroy.

John Collins, R.J. *Lord Wavell: A Military Biography*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964) deals with Wavell's life before becoming the Viceroy of India. In his second book, edited by Michael Roberts, *Wavell: Supreme Commander* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1968) Collins gives interesting aspects of Wavell's life as a soldier-writer but gives sketchy information about his viceroyalty.

Ronald Lewin has written a scholarly work, *The Chief, Field Marshall Lord Wavell, Commander-in-Chief and Viceroy 1939-1947* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1980), about Wavell's life. He mostly analyses his military career besides casually dealing with the Indian politics and Wavell's efforts therein. H.M. Close has penned a valuable work, *Wavell, Mountbatten and the Transfer of Power* (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 1997), on the last days of Wavell's viceroyalty. The author has compared three British politicians, Wavell, Attlee and Mountbatten, who were responsible for shaping British policies in India during the closing period of the Raj. He

acknowledges Wavell's role during the last days of his viceroyalty, however, the author is less interested in the Indian Muslim politics of that period and consequently fails to appreciate Wavell's dilemma during his political actions.

Victoria Schofield's work, *Wavell, Soldier and Statesman* (London: John Murray, 2006), seems like the best biography of Wavell's so far in which she throws some light on the Viceroyalty of Wavell. She has rediscovered Wavell on the basis of unpublished letters and diaries, together with interviews with those who knew Wavell. She analyzes Wavell's military life and his role in the Indian politics and dwells upon the differences between the thinking of Wavell, Churchill and the men who managed Whitehall as far as handling the British policy towards the Indian political problems was concerned. Unlike some other Western scholars, she gives a balanced picture of the Hindu-Muslim problem in India. However, since she has not focused solely on the Muslim problem in India she concludes wrongly that in the Breakdown Plan Wavell had endorsed the creation of Pakistan.

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Main Schools of Historians about Wavell's Viceroyalty

There are many writings about the Wavell's viceroyalty; however, historians from three different countries are in the forefront of historical research about the history of British India in the nineteen forties, namely, the British, the Indian and the Pakistani historians. As far as the British writers on Wavell are concerned they have concentrated mostly on two aspects of his tenure in India: the first group of writers portrays Wavell mostly as a failed administrator reasoning mostly that since Wavell was an army man he was incapable of taking correct political decisions regarding the complex political issues which he faced in India at that time; historians like David Hudson^{xxi} and R. J. Moore^{xxii} can be cited as good representatives of this group. The second group, though dealing more extensively with the events which took place during Wavell's tenure, still fails to appropriately highlight his role during the extensive political happenings of his time. The best known representatives of this group are Victoria Schofield^{xxiii} and H. M. Close.^{xxiv}

Historians from India about Wavell's time-period as the viceroy of India can also be broadly defined as holding, in the main, two contradictory opinions. One group, of which Ram Gopal^{xxv} and B. R. Nanda^{xxvi} can be considered the best representatives, considers Wavell as not only incapable of dealing with the complex political situation in India of the nineteen forties but also considers him to have displayed pro-Muslim tendencies during his viceroyalty. This group also believes that Wavell was a supporter of the demand for Pakistan. The second group of historians from India, led in the main by Abul Kalam Azad^{xxvii} and H. M. Seervai,^{xxviii} thinks that Wavell, as the viceroy, was just implementing the British policy which he was being handed down from the Whitehall.

Pakistani historians who have written about Wavell's tenure in India can also be categorized into two groups: One group, of which I. H. Qureshi^{xxix} and Jamiluddin Ahmad^{xxx} are the best known, believes that Wavell was anti-Pakistan, and therefore, his actions damaged the demand for Pakistan. The second group maintains that though Wavell can be deemed to have taken a stand which was against the demand for Pakistan

he still can by no means be considered as anti-Muslim. This latter group, represented mostly by Sikandar Hayat^{xxxii} and Ayesha Jalal^{xxxiii}, also holds to the view that Wavell was an honest and impartial viceroy and his sudden dismissal and replacement by Mountbatten caused more problems than it solved.

Conclusion

Wavell's viceroyalty was the most important period of the 1940's because it was during this period that the British policy towards Indian independence and its partition were formalised and Wavell himself played a key role in the formulation of that policy. Various political plans which he formulated like the Wavell Plan, the Cabinet Mission Plan and the Breakdown Plan were all the result of his continuous endeavours to bring about a peaceful solution to the problems faced by various communities in India. He also wanted to ensure a safe exit for the British from India. In spite of Wavell's sincere search for a harmonious solution to the political problems of India in the 1940's it is ironical that all his plans ended up in controversy and subsequent failure.

It must be emphatically pointed out that Wavell's tenure was the bridge between the viceroyalties of Linlithgow and Mountbatten. Whereas Linlithgow's tenure can be considered as a relatively steady period in Indian politics in spite of the Congress's revolt of 1942 it must be pointed out that on the basis of the available historical material that it was during Wavell's time period as viceroy specifically that all those decisions were made which resulted in the partition of India during his successor's brief tenure in 1947. Mountbatten, regardless of the glitter which has come to be associated with his name, simply executed those decisions whose extensive groundwork had already been laid down during his predecessor's tenure.

The most likely reason Wavell has been unduly neglected by historians, in spite of the significance this writer feels he deserves, is probably the fact that nearly all his plans and his untiring efforts towards actualizing those plans in the end failed to cause even a small dent in the obdurate and unshakeable positions of the leading Indian political parties. For failing to achieve near-impossible goals in an atmosphere of diametrically opposed political positions and the sudden onset of British powerlessness due to its defeats and setbacks during WWII, Wavell has been branded a failure and Mountbatten, who actually carried out the exit move, something for suggesting which Wavell had earlier been branded a 'defeatist', has been unduly lionized.

The broad outlines and even some finer details of the exit plan executed by Mountbatten in August 1947 had been mostly formulated in Wavell's tenure but since he had already incurred Whitehall's ire because of his criticism of their policies he was unceremoniously and abruptly removed in March 1947 to be replaced by Mountbatten. The credit, therefore, for executing the last grand British move on the Indian political scene, a glittering exit, masking the terrible bloodshed that was going on especially in the Punjab and towards the prevention of which Wavell had earlier presented his 'Breakdown Plan', was snatched from his hands and his historical reputation has remained in limbo ever since. India was the biggest and the most important colony vacated by any European power in the past hundred years and Mountbatten was at the helm there when the move took place so Wavell's position has been submerged unduly by that of his successor.

While a variety of memoirs, autobiographies and biographies have been penned by contemporaries, participant observers and historians on the partition of India in 1947 and many of them are solid works of historical writing which provide valuable insight and information about Wavell's viceroyalty, there is still, however, a need to throw a fresh light on the basis of fresh research material recently made available for study and research. Wavell and Mountbatten papers available since 2000 in the British Library, London, and various personal diaries of the then provincial governors and their weekly reports, civil servants, many volumes of the government's records as presented in the Transfer of Power, the Quaid-i-Azam papers edited by Zawwar H. Zaidi and Leo Amery's Diaries published in 1988, have become available for public access and which can be mined for fresher, newer, more valuable and up to date research about that period.

Numerous volumes of Wavell's collections, personal diaries of the then governors of provinces and their weekly reports, diaries kept by the bureaucrats and many volumes of Transfer of Power reveal the hard fact that British Government created all sorts of hurdles on the road to Pakistan. Wavell, His Majesty's Government and the Congress formed a united front against the League and were fierce enemies of the demand for Pakistan.

This writer feels that it is time that his services are given a thorough reappraisal and that he is given a proper place of distinction which is his rightful due at the closing time of British Indian history. Literature available on this topic suggests that there exists a considerable gap in historical literature of that period. No single work available on this topic has dealt at length with Lord Wavell's Viceroyalty but that calls for more effort and research rather than continued neglect and apathy towards that important period.

Notes and References

ⁱ Rizvi, Gowher, *Linlithgow and India: A Study of British Policy and the Political Impasse in India, 1936-43*, (London, 1978).

ⁱⁱ There are number biographies and works on the Lord Mountbatten but Zigler's work is quite interesting about Lord Mountbatten's viceroyalty. Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten and Partition*, (Montreal 1985)

ⁱⁱⁱ Wavell floated a number of schemes for transfer of power in the hands of Indians and to withdraw from India.

^{iv} By the end of 1943, the Japanese were still at the gates of India, but the overall situation had changed substantially. They had lost air and sea supremacy to the American forces while on the Burmese front, Britain was not only hitting back aggressively but was ready to take the offensive into Burma. Because of India's pivotal importance it could not any more be taken for granted, psychologically as well as politically

^v Wavell had to cope with the economic problems of India. The most urgent problem in India was the food crisis particularly in Bengal where a famine had broken out. Many factors had combined in contributing to the severe famine in Bengal which reached its peak of death and desolation in 1942 and continued unabated in the year 1943. The famine was a serious disaster and claimed the lives of millions of men, women and children. Linlithgow himself had feared that the death toll might rise up to one and a half million in July 1943. Linlithgow address in the Central Legislative Assembly of India, *Indian Annual Register 1943*, vol. ii, p. 328; Archibald Wavell, *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal*, ed., Penderel Moon, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 96

^{vi} Churchill's appointment of Wavell, a professional soldier, as the Viceroy of India in 1943, was aimed at blocking any unexpected major political change during the war because he wanted everybody involved to devote all energies towards contributing to a victory in the war. However, he had misjudged because Wavell, besides being a good soldier was a politically astute person as well. R. J. Moore, *Churchill, Cripps, And India 1939-4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 138.

^{vii} Congress incited a rebellion in 1942 to uproot the British rule in India with the aim of taking over the full control of the government at the centre. Its leaders were in prison, and its vast organization had been rendered ineffective following its unsuccessful rebellion of 1942. As it was in no mood to compromise with the British its leaders were being kept in jail without any contact with their followers thus leaving the field open to the League. To some critics, this was a big tactical mistake which Jinnah exploited to the maximum for his party's benefit

^{viii} Lord Wavell, the Viceroy-designate, along with his wife reached Delhi on 17 October 1943. He was sworn in as the new viceroy on 20 October 1943. Wavell was briefed by Linlithgow about political situation in India. Linlithgow told him that before the Cripps' proposals were made, the British Government should become the Constitution-making body and should also assist in running the war. Wavell, *Viceroy's Journal*, pp. 32-4

^{ix} Just prior to taking over as the viceroy of India but immediately following the announcement of his appointment in 1943, Wavell had devised a scheme known as the 'Wavell Plan', which envisaged the establishment of a Federal Executive Council composed of leaders from the main Indian political parties to ensure smooth running of the Government during the war and peaceful transfer of power later on to the Indians

^x Those Muslims who opposed the Muslim League programme and its Pakistan plan can be termed as 'Nationalist Muslims'. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Congress (1940-46), was the leader of these Congressite and 'Nationalist' Muslims. 'Nationalists' were divided into such groups as the Unionists, the Ahrar, Khudai Khidmatgars, the Khaksars, etc., and were in the forefront of opposition to the Pakistan scheme. Azad, along with his Muslim supporters, was dead set against the idea of Pakistan and left no stone unturned to denounce Jinnah, League and the demand for Pakistan. They believed in the 'composite' Indian nationalism and were determined to maintain the unity of India

^{xi} On 11 March 1942 Churchill announced that he was sending Sir Stafford Cripps to Delhi with a draft declaration of British plans regarding 'self-government' for India. The main issue was the grant of the Dominion status to India after the war with the right to secede, but with the provision that the self-governing States would have the right to opt out of the union and retain their existing constitutional

position vis-à-vis the British government. Deep differences arose and no agreement was reached between the British Government and the Congress. No clarification or assurance could change the mindset of the Congress leaders like Gandhi who believed that presence of the British in India was an invitation to Japan to invade their country and, therefore, their withdrawal would remove the threat. He thought that a free India would be better able to cope with the invasion. Therefore, he decided to launch a 'Quit India' movement which he thought would wrap up the British rule in India. Jinnah and the Muslim League had no doubt that Japanese aggression had to be resisted and consequently created no trouble during the war. The Muslim League also rejected the Cripps Proposals because they did not ensure the creation of Pakistan.^{xii} Rajagopalachari (1879-1972) was probably the first important Hindu leader to realize the genuineness of the League's demand for a separate Muslim state and tried to convince his fellow Congress leaders to accept the division of India on the basis of the Lahore Resolution. Gandhi gave importance to his views. Wavell allowed Rajagopalachari to see Gandhi in prison. Following its approval from Gandhi he presented his formula to Jinnah for his consent in April 1944. Jinnah was ready to refer it to the Muslim League Working Committee for its approval, but Rajaji demanded that Jinnah should accept it first and approve it forthwith before taking it to the Working Committee. However, Jinnah turned down this demand. Consequently, Rajagopalachari announced the failure of his secret negotiations with Jinnah and held him responsible for its failure. But the overall formula itself was extremely vague. Therefore, Jinnah turned down Rajagopalachari formula as "it was offering a shadow and husk, a maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan".

^{xiii} Gandhi-Jinnah talks commenced on 9 September 1944 and continued till the 27 September. The talks began first on the basis of the Rajagopalachari formula, which, Jinnah found not good enough on numerous counts and referred instead to the Lahore Resolution of 1940 instead as the basis for talks. Gandhi did not accept Jinnah's thesis that Muslims were a separate nation and that they had the right to a separate homeland. The talks proved fruitless in breaking constitutional and political deadlock.

^{xiv} Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress party in the Central Assembly, brought to the Viceroy a plan on 20 January 1945, which, he claimed, had been discussed with Liaquat Ali Khan, leader of the League assembly party. He also claimed that Mr. Gandhi was in agreement with it, and that Liaquat Ali Khan also had the support of Jinnah on this proposal. The Desai-Liaquat pact recommended an Interim Government under the existing constitution. It also recommended Congress-League parity. No new election in the centre or in the provinces should be held during the war and coalition governments would be formed in the provinces, etc. Desai told the Viceroy that he wanted a National Government under the present constitution with the members drawn from the existing legislature. Wavell found his proposals reasonable and thought they could ease the political situation, for Desai's views were almost identical to his own proposed plan which he had sent recently to His Majesty's Government.

^{xv} The Wavell Plan envisaged the establishment of a Federal Executive Council composed of leaders from the main Indian political parties to ensure smooth running of the Government during the war and peaceful transfer of power later on to the Indians. He announced that except for the posts of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, the Executive Council would consist entirely of Indian members. It would have full control of all portfolios including exercising sway over Finance, Home and External Affairs. All these steps were part of Wavell's attempt to solve the then prevailing administrative, political and constitutional problems of India. To achieve this goal he convened a conference at Simla on June 25-14 July 1945 and invited important Indian leaders including Jinnah and Gandhi. He assured them that if they promised to support the war effort of the British Government, he would proceed with his plan.. It failed owing to variety of reasons. For details see: Muhammad Iqbal Chawla, "Punjab Politics and the Wavell Plan", *Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 2007),

^{xvi} In his Breakdown Plan, Wavell suggested, in case partition of India becomes inevitable and in case the Muslim-majority provinces opted to form their separate union, partitioning the Punjab, Bengal and Assam to make Pakistan small, weak and unattractive for Jinnah..

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- ^{xvii} In this regard an interesting study has been done by Irial Glyn in one of his recent article. He has recorded that Wavell was treated like an untouchable by HMG and therefore all his proposals presented to HMG were not given serious attention. Glyn, Irial, "An Untouchable in the presence of 'Brahmans', Lord Wavell's Relationship with Whitehall during His Time as Viceroy of India, 1943-57," *Modern Asian Studies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 1-25
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