Decisions and Destiny of Muhammad Ali Jinnah
by Brent Williams - Transcript

Slide 1:
Hello, I am Brother Brent Williams. President Monson has said: “Decisions determine destiny.” Let me introduce to you some of the dreams and decisions of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Likewise, reveal the influence Gandhi and the Nehrus had on some of Jinnah’s decisions. Moreover, how the combined decisions of each not only determined their destinies but that of two nations.

Slide 2:
According to Wolpert: “Few individuals significantly alter the course of history. Fewer still modify the map of the world. Hardly anyone can be credited for creating a nation-state; Muhammad Ali Jinnah did all three. Hailed as “Great Leader” (Quaid-i-Azam) of Pakistan.” Jinnah was born in Karachi in 1876 but his path to destiny started in London.

Slide 3:
Jinnah’s father, a wealthy business man, sent him to London for an education. Jinnah, at 16, chose law over business but he fell in love with theater. After just one reading from a Shakespeare play, he landed a stage job. He loved it! Jinnah would have chosen the stage over law but his father said Jinnah was dishonoring the family. Dutifully he stuck with law. Later after passing the bar, Jinnah sailed for Bombay.

Slide 4:
Jinnah channeled those theatrical skills toward arguing legal cases, the dream of the stage faded away. His legal career in Bombay flourished. In 1906, Jinnah joined Congress, the political party at center the independence cause. Meanwhile, Gandhi, practicing law in South Africa, fought apartheid by championing the rights of Indian indentured laborers.

Slide 5:
Jinnah and friends, Gokhale and Nehru (senior) were elected to the Viceroy’s Central Legislative Council in 1910. (The Viceroy was the imperial authority over all of India.) The prominent moderate leader of Independence, Gokhale said Jinnah was: “the ambassador of Muslim-Hindu unity.” In mutual admiration, Jinnah had said he hoped to be the “Muslim Gokhale.”

Slide 6:
Jinnah challenged the Viceroy to end the exportation of indentured laborers from India to South Africa. I wonder if Gandhi knew about that when he first met Jinnah in 1915. At which time Gandhi said: “I’m glad to find a [Muslim]…chairing [the Gujarat Society].” Pointing out Jinnah’s minority status was insulting. Carelessly, Gandhi set the contentious tone of their relationship.

Slide 7:
In 1916, Jinnah had convinced the President of the Congress to adopt a constitutional frame work called the Lucknow Pact. The pact secured a united Hindu-Muslim India. It guaranteed Muslim representation in the government. The British Secretary of State supported the pact. If implemented India would have joined Canada and Australia as a free Common Wealth Nation.
Slide 8:
With the dream of a united Hindu-Muslim India securely framed in Lucknow, Jinnah pursued another dream. In 1918, Jinnah married the beautiful Ratanbai (Ruttie) Petit. Ruttie, a Parsi, converted to Islam before their marriage. (Parsi are Indians of Persian descent and Zoroastrians by faith.) Later, they were blessed with a daughter. Dina was their only child.

Slide 9:
World War I meant martial law and the draft for India. Jinnah insisted India’s independence first, the draft second. Ironically, Gandhi; the non-violence Guru, supported the draft but not the Lucknow Pact. He won influence with the British. However, both strongly opposed the Rowlatt Act that extended martial law beyond WWI and ruined the Lucknow Pact.

Slide 10:
In 1928, Jinnah’s friend and colleague Motilal Nehru, father of Jawahar Lal, drafted a constitutional framework for a free India. It was called the Nehru Report. Jinnah happened to be in London at the time. Motilal tried to build in safeguards for Muslims. The Maha Sabha, a pro-Hindu anti-Muslim party vehemently objected. Gandhi pressured Motilal for appeasement.

Slide 11:
Needless to say, Motilal’s Muslim safeguards fell far short of the Lucknow Pact. Twice, Jinnah suggested changes to the Nehru Report but in 1929 those changes were thrown out. Naturally, Jinnah rejected it, which estranged his relations with the Nehrus. Tragically, Jinnah’s trust in his old party, the Congress died that year. Doubly tragic, so did Mrs. Jinnah.

Slide 12:
Devastated, Jinnah recovers by spending the next decade rebuilding the Muslim League. On 12/26/1938 addressing the League, the audience hailed Jinnah for the first time—Quaid-i-Azam—the Great Leader. In the early forties, the vision of Pakistan consumed the League. Even though Jinnah harbored the dream of a united, Hindu-Muslim India, he chose the detour of Pakistan until the Simla Conference of 1946...

Slide 13:
Sadly, ironic, they proved destined to divide the nation they loved.
Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-tWle9aYgE

Slides 14-15:
Jawaharal’s Response
Video: https://youtu.be/c-tWle9aYgE?start=4298&end=4318&autostart=0&rel=0

Slide 16:
Nehru’s choice of no compromise, tragically turned the detour of Pakistan into the destiny of the partition. Even though Nehru, Gandhi and Mountbatten would try in ‘47 to persuade Jinnah to be that Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity once again. Sadly, the Quaid-i-Azam would not have it. So, we see that decisions do determine destiny.

Slides 17-26:
References