# Cripps Scheme:

While the British reaction to the Pakistan demand came in the form of the Cripps oﬀer of April, 1942, which conceded the principle of self-determination to provinces on a territorial basis, the Rajaji Formula (called after the eminent Congress leader C.Rajagopalacharia, which became the basis of prolonged Jinnah-Gandhi talks in September, 1944), represented the Congress alternative to Pakistan. The Cripps oﬀer was rejected because it did not concede the Muslim demand the whole way, while the Rajaji Formula was found unacceptable since it oﬀered a "moth-eaten, mutilated" Pakistan and the too appended with a plethora of pre- conditions which made its emergence in any shape remote, if not altogether impossible. Cabinet Mission, the most delicate as well as the most tortuous negotiations, however, took place during 1946-47, after the elections which showed that the country was sharply and somewhat evenly divided between two parties- the Congress and the League- and that the central issue in Indian politics was Pakistan.

These negotiations began with the arrival, in March 1946, of a three-member British Cabinet Mission. The crucial task with which the Cabinet Mission was entrusted was that of devising in consultation with the various political parties, constitution-making machinery, and of setting up a popular interim government. But, because the Congress-League gulf could not be bridged, despite the Mission's (and the Viceroy's) prolonged eﬀorts, the Mission had to make its own proposals in May, 1946. Known as the Cabinet Mission Plan, these proposals stipulated a limited centre, supreme only in foreign aﬀairs, defense and communications and three autonomous groups of provinces. Two of these groups were to have Muslim majorities in the north-west and the north-east of the subcontinent, while the third one, comprising the Indian mainland, was to have a Hindu majority. A consummate statesman that he was, Jinnah saw his chance. He interpreted the clauses relating to a limited centre and the grouping as "the foundation of Pakistan", and induced the Muslim League Council to accept the Plan in June 1946; and this he did much against the calculations of the Congress and to its utter dismay.

Tragically though, the League's acceptance was put down to its supposed weakness and the Congress put up a posture of deﬁance, designed to swamp the League into submitting to its dictates and its interpretations of the plan. Faced thus, what alternative had Jinnah and the League but to rescind their earlier acceptance, reiterate and reaﬃrm their original stance, and decide to launch direct action (if need be) to wrest Pakistan. The way Jinnah maneuvered to turn the tide of events at a time when all seemed lost indicated, above all, his masterly grasp of the situation and his adeptness at making strategic and tactical moves.

# Partition Plan:

Partition Plan By the close of 1946, the communal riots had ﬂared up to murderous heights, engulﬁng almost the entire subcontinent. The two peoples, it seemed, were engaged in a ﬁght to the ﬁnish. The time for a peaceful transfer of power was fast running out. Realizing the gravity of the situation. His Majesty's Government sent down to India a new Viceroy- Lord Mountbatten. His protracted negotiations with the various political leaders resulted in 3 June (1947) Plan by which the British decided to partition the subcontinent, and hand over power to two successor States on 15 August, 1947. The plan was duly accepted by the three Indian parties to the dispute- the Congress the League and the Akali Dal (representing the Sikhs).

# Leader of a Free Nation:

In recognition of his singular contribution, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was nominated by the Muslim League as the Governor-General of Pakistan, while the Congress appointed Mountbatten as India's ﬁrst Governor-General. Pakistan, it has been truly said, was born in virtual chaos. Indeed, few nations in the world have started on their career with less resources and in more treacherous

Circumstances. The new nation did not inherit a central government, a capital, an administrative core, or an organized defence force. The Punjab holocaust had left vast areas in a shambles with communications disrupted. This, alongwith the en masse migration of the Hindu and Sikh business and managerial classes, left the economy almost shattered.

The treasury was empty, India having denied Pakistan the major share of its cash balances. On top of all this, the still unorganized nation was called upon to feed some eight million refugees who had ﬂed the insecurities and barbarities of the north Indian plains that long, hot summer. If all this was symptomatic of Pakistan's administrative and economic weakness, the Indian annexation, through military action in November 1947, of Junagadh (which had originally acceded to Pakistan) and the Kashmir war over the State's accession (October 1947-December 1948) exposed her military weakness. In the circumstances, therefore, it was nothing short of a miracle that Pakistan survived at all. That it survived and forged ahead was mainly due to one man-Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The nation desperately needed a charismatic leader at that critical juncture in the nation's history, and he fulﬁlled that need profoundly. After all, he was more than a mere Governor-General: he was the Quaid-i- Azam who had brought the State into being.

In the ultimate analysis, his very presence at the helm of aﬀairs was responsible for enabling the newly born nation to overcome the terrible crisis on the morrow of its cataclysmic birth. He mustered up the immense prestige and the unquestioning loyalty he commanded among the people to energize them, to raise their morale, to raise the profound feelings of patriotism that the freedom had generated, along constructive channels. Though tired and in poor health, Jinnah yet carried the heaviest part of the burden in that ﬁrst crucial year. He laid down the policies of the new state, called attention to the immediate problems confronting the nation and told the members of the Constituent Assembly, the civil servants and the Armed Forces what to do and what the nation expected of them. He saw to it that law and order was maintained at all costs, despite the provocation that the large-scale riots in north India had provided. He moved from Karachi to Lahore for a while and supervised the immediate refugee problem in the Punjab. In a time of ﬁerce excitement, he remained sober, cool and steady. He advised his excited audience in Lahore to concentrate on helping the refugees, to avoid retaliation, exercise restraint and protect the minorities. He assured the minorities of a fair deal, assuaged their inured sentiments, and gave them hope and comfort. He toured the various provinces, attended to their particular problems and instilled in the people a sense of belonging. He reversed the British policy in the North- West Frontier and ordered the withdrawal of the troops from the tribal territory of Waziristan, thereby making the Pathans feel themselves an integral part of Pakistan's body-politics. He created a new Ministry of States and Frontier Regions, and assumed responsibility for ushering in a new era in Balochistan. He settled the controversial question of the states of Karachi, secured the accession of States, especially of Kalat which seemed problematical and carried on negotiations with Lord Mountbatten for the settlement of the Kashmir Issue.