

Editorials by Faiz

by Waseem Altaf

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Faiz Ahmad Faiz remained Editor-in-Chief of the "Pakistan Times" from 4th February 1947 to March 1951-till his arrest by the Government of Pakistan. The editorials of the newspaper were written by either Mazhar Ali Khan or Faiz during 47 to 49. However others like Zohair Siddiqui and Ahmad Ali also joined the team after 49. However some of the editorials written by Faiz for the years 1947 and 48 have been identified and are being reproduced for the readers of Viewpointonline. Here we see Faiz as an intellectual a nationalist with a humanistic vision and a symbol of hope for the newly born State.

In his editorial dated 4th Feb, 1947 Faiz declares that "Pakistan Times" is a Muslim League paper and speaks for 30 million Muslims of the sub-continent. He also advocates the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims, while at the same time commends the Muslim readers the virtues of large-heartedness and forbearance in communal relations. He also foresees more freedom for minorities in Pakistan than they enjoyed in United India.

He expresses joy on August 15th on the day of creation of this State yet expresses deep sorrow over communal riots. He calls it a cruel contradiction that the day of joyous thanksgiving is also the day of mourning. He however expresses the hope that "our present sorrows are but a passing phase and must not be allowed to damage our national heritage that is permanent and enduring"

In another editorial he refers to those who renamed themselves as Anglo-Pakistanis from Anglo-Indians and asserts that this community along with other minorities will have their right of citizenship and service fully guaranteed in the new State. He also speaks about the accession of Baluchistan where he urges the Baluch province to enthusiastically respond to the call of the "great leader" in the forthcoming elections. In his editorial "Gandhiji" we find him paying glowing tributes to Mahatma Gandhi soon after the latter's assassination whom he calls "the true servant of humanity and champion of the downtrodden" "people are as distressed in Pakistan as they are in India" observes Faiz. In "Homage" he pays his tribute to Quaid-i-Azam, but at the same time is uncertain about the future of Indian Muslims after the creation of Pakistan. He considers it the business of Pakistani Muslims to keep in mind the future of Indian Muslims unlike many others who think that this variable need not enter into our national calculations.

What had been his calculations of the character of the State had he been alive today???

Waseem Altaf is a human rights activist.

<http://www.viewpointonline.net/editorials-by-faiz.html>

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