**[Jinnah was Jinnah](https://www.dawn.com/news/1775223/jinnah-was-jinnah)**

[Muhammad Ali Siddiqi](https://www.dawn.com/authors/362/muhammad-ali-siddiqi) Published September 11, 2023

IF Lord Mountbatten called Jinnah “psychopathic”, one could understand: Jinnah had hurt his royal ego by denying him the pleasure of being the governor-general of both Pakistan and India.

While Nehru had no problem with becoming Mountbatten’s prime minister, not the Quaid-i-Azam, who never in his life had a boss. Mountbatten had his revenge by altering the boundary award and giving India access to Kashmir. That is a story unto itself. The point to note is that the adjective he chose for Jinnah only served to point out Jinnah’s qualities which men and women higher than Mountbatten in intellect and character said in better words.

Mountbatten’s frustration admitted his failure to dissuade Jinnah from pursuing his life mission — Pakistan. Others saw in this a charismatic leader with integrity, intellectual brilliance and determination to give his people a sovereign state. Aga Khan III said of Jinnah: “Of all the statesmen that I have known in my life — Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Churchill, Curzon, Mussolini, and Mahatma Gandhi — Jinnah is the most remarkable. None of these men in my view outshone him in strength of character and in that almost uncanny combination of prescience and resolution which is statecraft.”

American author Stanley Wolpert, whose book *Jinnah of Pakistan* is a classic on the Quaid’s life, wrote of him, “Few individuals significantly alter the course of history. Fewer still modify the map of the world. Hardly anyone can be credited with creating a nation-state. Mohammad Ali Jinnah did all three.”

Though he died 75 years ago, Jinnah’s qualities will not be forgotten.

Mrs Sarojini Naidu, political activist and author of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Ambassador of Unity, said of him “a casual pin might surely find it easier to describe his limitations than to define his virtues. His are none of the versatile talents that make so many of his contemporaries justly famed beyond the accepted circle of their daily labours.

“Not the gracious gifts of mellow scholarship, or rich adventure or radiant conversation; not the burning passion of philanthropy or religious reform. Indeed, by sequestered taste and temperament, Mohammad Ali Jinnah is essentially a solitary man with a large political following — but the true criterion of his greatness lies not in the range and variety of his knowledge and experience, but in the faultless perception and flawless refinement of his subtle mind and spirit; not in a diversity of aims and the challenge of a towering personality but rather in a lofty singleness and sincerity of purpose and the lasting charm of a character animated by a brave conception of duty and an austere and lovely code of private honour and public integrity.”

Sir Stafford Cripps, who knew Jinnah well and was a member of the Cabinet Mission that came to India in 1946, said Jinnah was “a man of the highest probity and honour; difficult to negotiate with for the very reason he was so determined in his purpose”, while Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinlek said he admired Jinnah for his “tenacity and tremendous personality — his inexorable determination”.

His political rivals, including Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, were honest enough to admit the Quaid’s greatness. Gandhi said of him “I believe no power can buy Mr Jinnah”, while Nehru acknowledged his greatness, saying “Jinnah is one of the most extraordinary men in history”, and “good character and good politics were those secrets due to which Jinnah got success”.

A comment showing political knowledge and experience was made by British politician and author John Biggs-Davison: “Although without Gandhi, Hindustan would still have gained independence and without Lenin and Mao, Russia and Chi­na would still have endured Communist revolution, without Jinnah there would have been no Pakistan in 1947.”

Sir Patrick Spens, India’s last chief justice before independence, said, “There is no man or woman living who imputes anything against his honour or his honesty. He was the most upright person that I know, but throughout it all, he never, as far as I know, for one moment, attempted to deceive anybody, as to what he was aiming at or as to the means he attempted to adopt to get it.”

What was Jinnah’s negotiating strategy that led to his success?

Prominent tycoon Sir Perceval Griffiths gave an account of a London meeting where those present asked Jinnah to develop “cogently and impressively” his two-nation theory and expound the full Pakistan demand. They raised all the obvious arguments — economic dangers, frontier problems, military and administrative difficulties.

According to Sir Percival, “Mr Jinnah brushed them all aside and completely refused to discuss the details. This capacity for adhering to a clear-cut idea and ignoring all difficulties of detail and procedure was perhaps Mr Jinnah’s greatest source of strength.”

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