

I SHALL LAY DOWN MY LIFE IN DEFENCE OF OUR LAND

“In the middle of February 1942, there were discussions held at the spring lectures series at Wagle Hall, Bombay. Three days were reserved for the discussion on *Thoughts On Pakistan*. Dr. Ambedkar was present at the time of the discussion. Acharya M. V. Donde presided over the meeting. At the express request by Donde, his friend, colleague and an eminent educationist in the Province, Dr. Ambedkar rose to reply to the debate.

He said,

He would not waste his words on those who thought that Pakistan was not a debatable subject at all. If it was thought that the demand was unjust, then the coming of Pakistan would be a terrible thing for them. It was wrong, he said, to tell the people to forget history. “They cannot make history,” he continued, “who forget history.” To bring down the preponderance of the Muslims in the Indian army and to make the army safe, it is wise to let out the hostile element. We will defend our land. Do not be under the false impression that Pakistan would be able to spread its Muslim empire over India. The Hindus will make it lick the dust. I confess I have my quarrel with the Caste Hindus over some points, but I take a vow before you that I shall lay down my life in defence of our land. “A thunder of applause greeted his speech.”¹

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¹: Keer, Pp. 340-341.