

Flashback 1971: Nixon & Yahya

INTERACTIVE MEDIA

By Stanley Wolpert

# JINNAH'S LEGACY

The Jinnah Society and its president Liaquat H. Merchant are to be commended for producing a splendid digital tribute to the life and legacy of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, thanks to which his brilliant historic achievements are now available for all to read, see, hear and reflect upon. Besides Jinnah's written words this remarkable CD includes recordings of his eloquent voice and many vivid images, some in motion, preserving great moments during the most vital years of his life. There are also reminiscences by some of his closest friends, copies of his will and The Dawn Trust he drew up himself and many other fascinating new bits of information that help explain why Jinnah retains so unique a place in the hearts and minds of all Pakistanis more than half a century after his death.

"His integrity shone not only through his heroic crusade for Pakistan," Sahibzada Yaqub Khan reminds us, "but also in many other ways the harmony between the inner and outer man... the effortless thrust of strength and power that distinguishes the great statesman. His demeanour... his



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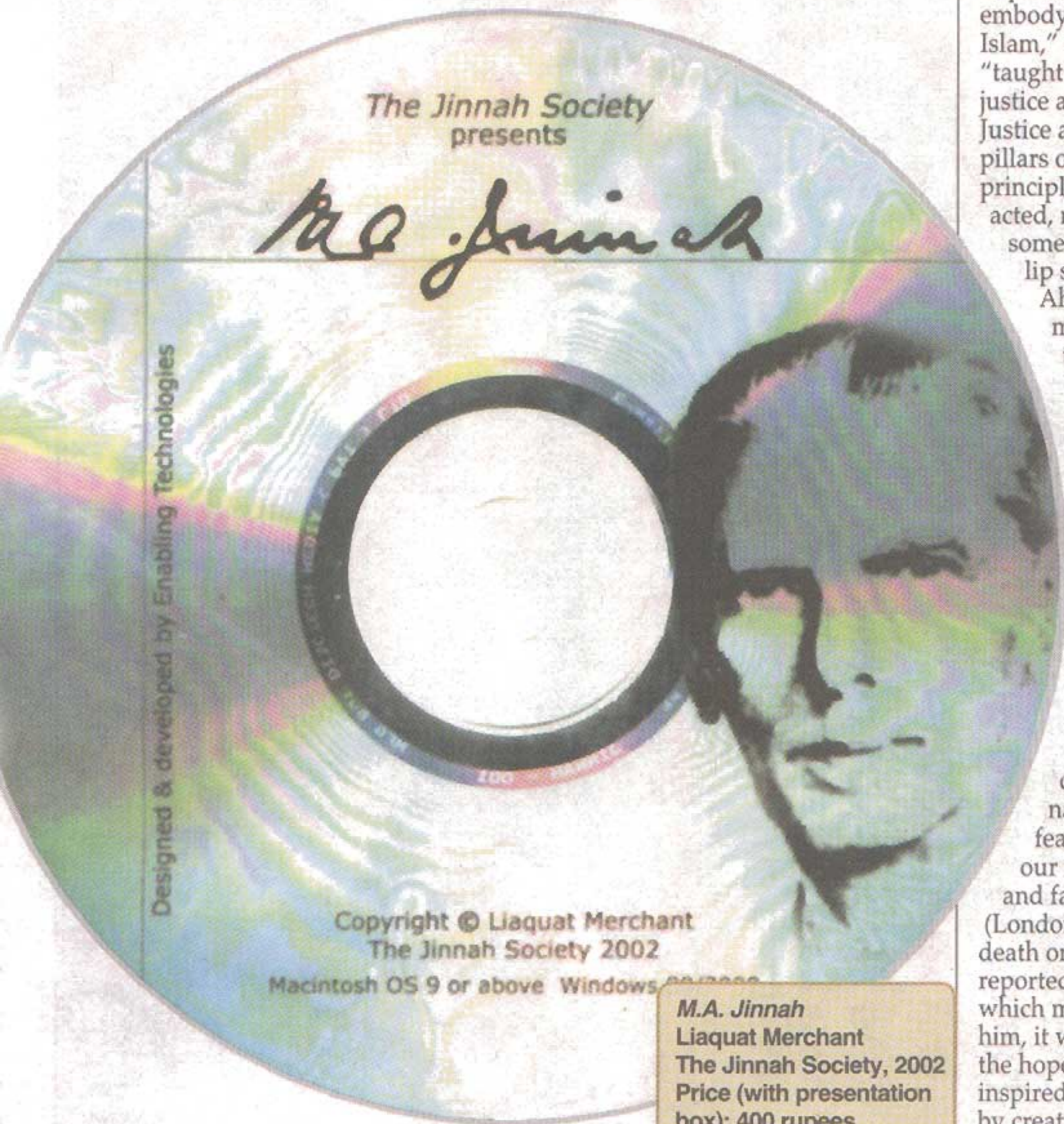
gravitas, the grace and dignity that were his ordinary companions, produced a union of effect... a luminous image suffused by integrity." Clearly, integrity was Jinnah's hallmark, helping to sustain his fearless spirit in the face of constant opposition – British as well as Indian – and the daily pain of fatal illness that afflicted his emaciated body during those last fateful years of life when he fought and won his monumental suit for Pakistan.

S.S. Pirzada quotes Nirad Chaudhri who rightly claimed that "Jinnah is the only man who came out with success and honour from the ignoble end

quotes from the only broadcast (in February 1948) that governor-general Jinnah made to the United States of America in which he expressed his views on the Constitution of Pakistan, then being debated in Karachi's Constituent Assembly. Jinnah hoped it would be "democratic... embodying [the] principles of Islam," which according to him "taught us democracy, equality, justice and fair play to everybody." Justice and fair play were the twin pillars of Jinnah's daily life, principles by which he lived and acted, not hollow ideals to which some of his followers paid mere lip service. Professor Akbar Ahmed's accolade to Jinnah is most eloquent, reminding us that "Jinnah emphasised the special treatment the Prophet (pbuh) accorded to the minorities – morality, piety, human tolerance."

The photos of Quaid-e-Azam's funeral are most moving and as we watch that enormous crowd of mourners in Karachi, Jinnah's deep inspiring voice is played over the images. "So march on... and I feel confident that a united nation of 70 millions need fear nothing... never forget our motto – unity, discipline and faith." As *The Times* (London) editorial obituary of his death on September 13, 1948, reported: "In the face of difficulties which might have overwhelmed him, it was given to him to fulfil the hope foreshadowed in the inspired vision of the great Iqbal by creating for the Muslims of India a homeland where the old glory of Islam could grow afresh into a modern State, worthy of its place in the community of nations."

The Jinnah Society's new *M.A. Jinnah* CD ROM is, indeed, a worthy tribute to the life and legacy of Pakistan's Quaid-e-Azam. I congratulate Merchant and his colleagues on producing it so tastefully and honestly. ■



of the British Empire in India. He never made a secret of what he wanted... never compromised... inflicting an unmitigated defeat on both the British Government and the Indian National Congress."

Among the many new gems in this collection of The Jinnah Society's archival records is a statement Jinnah made in January 1948 at the High Court of Sindh: "I want the Muslims to get rid of the disease of provincialism... a curse of the Muslims of the... subcontinent... We are all Muslims and all Pakistanis and citizens of the state." Now that sectarian violence has reared its ugly head again in Karachi, this is a timely reminder of Jinnah's wisdom.

In his brilliant "Interpretation" of Jinnah at the start of the CD, Merchant